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Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings about Afghanistan

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About this record

Press cuttings from British and Indian Newspapers regarding the Afghan War (today known as the 2nd Afghan-Anglo War), negotiations in Cabul [Kabul], the British Government's policy with regards to the Indian Frontier, and the movements of the Russians during the war.

The cuttings have been taken from a number of newspapers including the *Pall Mall Budget* , The *Pall Mall Gazette* , The *Globe* , *The Times* , The *Pioneer Mail* , The *Standard* , The *Daily News* , The *Daily Telegraph* , The *Evening Standard* , The *Saturday Review* , The *Spectator* , The *Morning Post* and The *World* .

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Sir L Pelly

Afghanistan
1878.

Press cuttings

Pall mall
Budget
Sept: 7th.

With reference to Russian proceedings in Central Asia, a St. Petersburg telegram says the *Turkestan Gazette* has published intelligence stating that the troops which were concentrated at Djama on the frontier of Bokhara were returning in eight columns, the last of which would re-enter Tashkend on the 30th of August. The telegraph is to be extended to Djama and Katta Kuraan, thus prolonging the existing line from Tashkend passing through Khodjent, Oaratube (?), and Dzizakh to Samarkand. The Ameer of Bokhara has offered to furnish the necessary material for the telegraph poles and forage for the Russian cavalry during their stay in the Khanate. A few days before General Kauffmann arrived at Samarkand, a special embassy from the Ameer arrived there to compliment the Russian commander in his name. General Kauffmann will shortly send a friendly letter to the Ameer. The *Turkestan Gazette* adds that as a result of the present state of things in Turkestan, the Russians have entered into direct communication with the Ameer of Afghanistan, and that the embassy of Major-General Stoletoff to the Ameer at Cabul is a first essay in this direction. The chief of the Russian Mission has been received by the Afghan authorities with great honours. During the summer the Russian authorities propose to explore the route between Djama Schirabati and Keliff.

Pall mall Buget
Sept: 7th.

Sir Neville Chamberlain and his staff have arrived at Simla, and will remain as guests of the Viceroy pending the receipt of an answer from the Ameer of Cabul to the letter of the Governor-General expressing his intention to despatch an Embassy. Major St. John, Royal Engineers, and Mr. Henry Walter Bellew, Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab, will be attached to the mission. Bellew, a man of ripe experience, accompanied Lumsden's mission to Cabul twenty-one years ago, and also formed one of the party despatched to Yarkand under the conduct of Sir Douglas Forsyth, on the fruitless mission of endeavouring to form a stable alliance, half political half commercial, with the very unstable Mahommedan dynasty at that time in possession of the Government of Kashgar. The latest press news from Simla states that a report has been received from Cabul, but not yet authenticated, to the effect that Yakoob Khan escaped from his confinement during the confusion ensuing on the death of Abdullah Jan. He fled towards Ghazni, and is said to have become half idiotic from long confinement and the severity of the Ameer's treatment. It is also rumoured that, although the terms offered the Ameer are studiously kept secret by the Government at Simla, the Ameer will be required to admit a permanent Resident at Cabul, together with British agents in other parts of his territories. It is further generally believed that the Ameer will refuse to accept from the Government these terms unless the fact is made distinctly intelligible that such refusal on his part will inevitably compel the Government to give effect to their policy by one less pleasing and peaceful, and by an armed occupation of Afghanistan. The Indian press generally approves the policy of the intended mission, and strongly advises the Government to adopt the measures of Russian statecraft so successfully practised in Central Asia, and to support the Cabul Embassy by a powerful military demonstration on the frontier. The latest authentic news received to-day from Simla states that no official confirmation has been received of Yakoob's escape, while the latest letters from Cabul rather throw doubt upon the report. The native Envoy started on Friday from Peshawur and reached Ali Musjid the same evening. He stopped first at the Cabul Fort, where he was hospitably received and entertained by the Afghan Governor. Advices from Cabul, dated the 21st of August, state that the Ameer, after much persuasion by the Mustaphi, attended a public durbar that day for the first time since Abdullah Jan's death.

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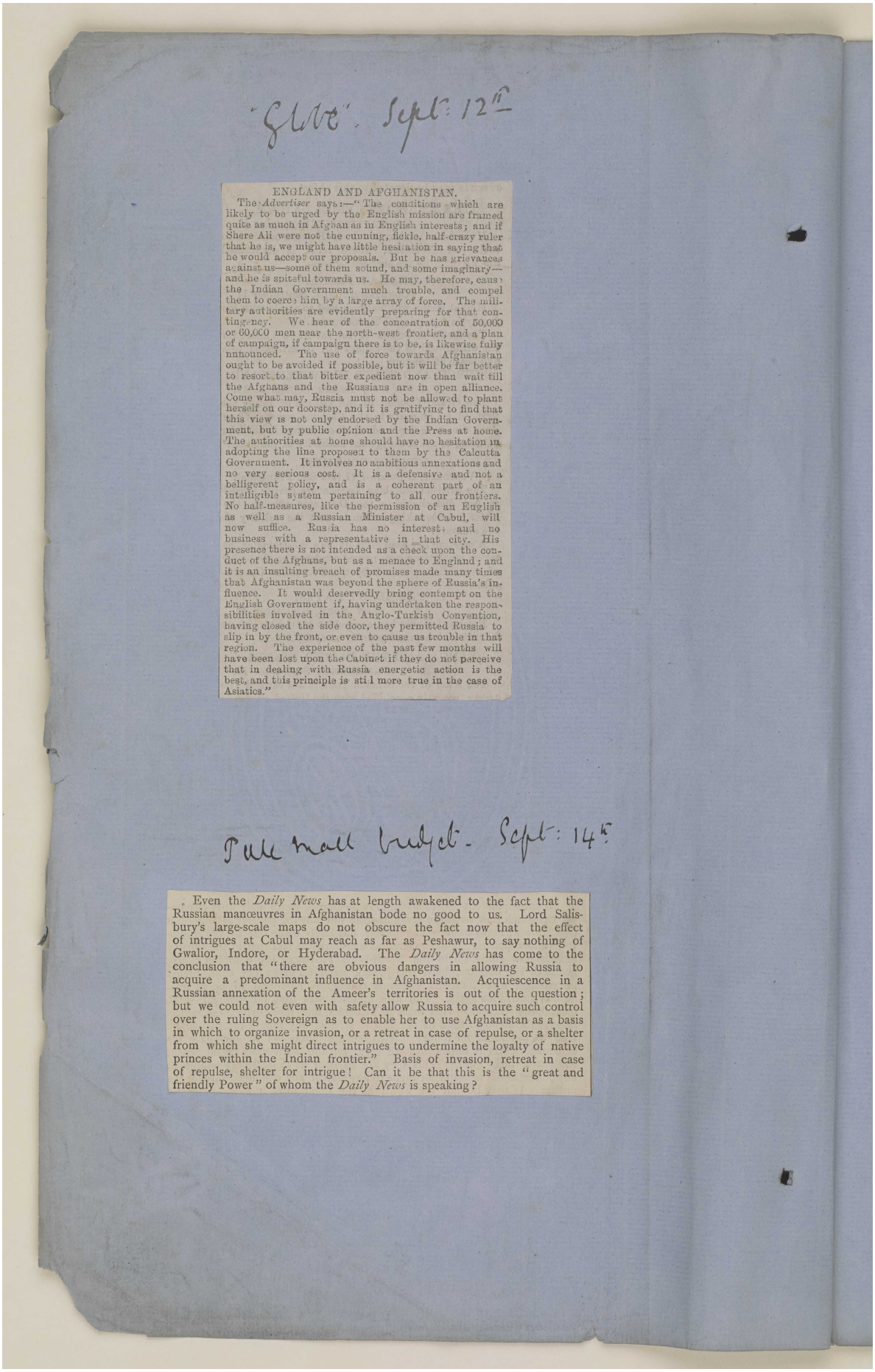

"Globe". Sept: 12th

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Advertiser* says:—"The conditions which are likely to be urged by the English mission are framed quite as much in Afghan as in English interests; and if Shere Ali were not the cunning, fickle, half-crazy ruler that he is, we might have little hesitation in saying that he would accept our proposals. But he has grievances against us—some of them sound, and some imaginary—and he is spiteful towards us. He may, therefore, cause the Indian Government much trouble, and compel them to coerce him by a large array of force. The military authorities are evidently preparing for that contingency. We hear of the concentration of 50,000 or 60,000 men near the north-west frontier, and a plan of campaign, if campaign there is to be, is likewise fully announced. The use of force towards Afghanistan ought to be avoided if possible, but it will be far better to resort to that bitter expedient now than wait till the Afghans and the Russians are in open alliance. Come what may, Russia must not be allowed to plant herself on our doorstep, and it is gratifying to find that this view is not only endorsed by the Indian Government, but by public opinion and the Press at home. The authorities at home should have no hesitation in adopting the line proposed to them by the Calcutta Government. It involves no ambitious annexations and no very serious cost. It is a defensive and not a belligerent policy, and is a coherent part of an intelligible system pertaining to all our frontiers. No half-measures, like the permission of an English as well as a Russian Minister at Cabul, will now suffice. Russia has no interests and no business with a representative in that city. His presence there is not intended as a check upon the conduct of the Afghans, but as a menace to England; and it is an insulting breach of promises made many times that Afghanistan was beyond the sphere of Russia's influence. It would deservedly bring contempt on the English Government if, having undertaken the responsibilities involved in the Anglo-Turkish Convention, having closed the side door, they permitted Russia to slip in by the front, or even to cause us trouble in that region. The experience of the past few months will have been lost upon the Cabinet if they do not perceive that in dealing with Russia energetic action is the best, and this principle is still more true in the case of Asiatics."

Pall Mall Budget. Sept: 14th

Even the *Daily News* has at length awakened to the fact that the Russian manœuvres in Afghanistan bode no good to us. Lord Salisbury's large-scale maps do not obscure the fact now that the effect of intrigues at Cabul may reach as far as Peshawur, to say nothing of Gwalior, Indore, or Hyderabad. The *Daily News* has come to the conclusion that "there are obvious dangers in allowing Russia to acquire a predominant influence in Afghanistan. Acquiescence in a Russian annexation of the Ameer's territories is out of the question; but we could not even with safety allow Russia to acquire such control over the ruling Sovereign as to enable her to use Afghanistan as a basis in which to organize invasion, or a retreat in case of repulse, or a shelter from which she might direct intrigues to undermine the loyalty of native princes within the Indian frontier." Basis of invasion, retreat in case of repulse, shelter for intrigue! Can it be that this is the "great and friendly Power" of whom the *Daily News* is speaking?

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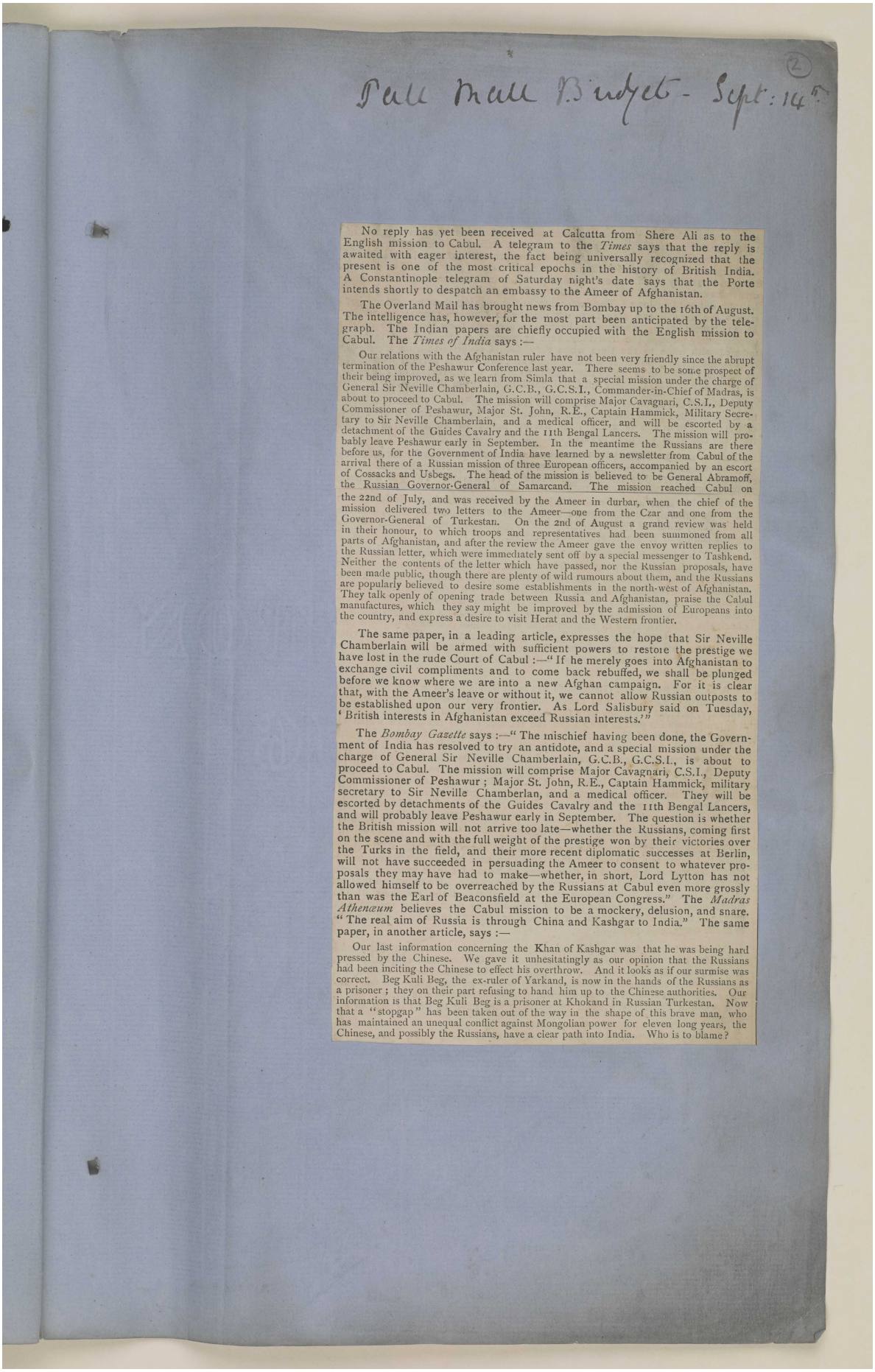

Pall Mall B. Budget - Sept: 14th

No reply has yet been received at Calcutta from Shere Ali as to the English mission to Cabul. A telegram to the *Times* says that the reply is awaited with eager interest, the fact being universally recognized that the present is one of the most critical epochs in the history of British India. A Constantinople telegram of Saturday night's date says that the Porte intends shortly to despatch an embassy to the Ameer of Afghanistan.

The Overland Mail has brought news from Bombay up to the 16th of August. The intelligence has, however, for the most part been anticipated by the telegraph. The Indian papers are chiefly occupied with the English mission to Cabul. The *Times of India* says :—

Our relations with the Afghanistan ruler have not been very friendly since the abrupt termination of the Peshawur Conference last year. There seems to be some prospect of their being improved, as we learn from Simla that a special mission under the charge of General Sir Neville Chamberlain, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., Commander-in-Chief of Madras, is about to proceed to Cabul. The mission will comprise Major Cavagnari, C.S.I., Deputy Commissioner of Peshawur, Major St. John, R.E., Captain Hammick, Military Secretary to Sir Neville Chamberlain, and a medical officer, and will be escorted by a detachment of the Guides Cavalry and the 11th Bengal Lancers. The mission will probably leave Peshawur early in September. In the meantime the Russians are there before us, for the Government of India have learned by a newsletter from Cabul of the arrival there of a Russian mission of three European officers, accompanied by an escort of Cossacks and Usbegs. The head of the mission is believed to be General Abramoff, the Russian Governor-General of Samarcand. The mission reached Cabul on the 22nd of July, and was received by the Ameer in durbar, when the chief of the mission delivered two letters to the Ameer—one from the Czar and one from the Governor-General of Turkestan. On the 2nd of August a grand review was held in their honour, to which troops and representatives had been summoned from all parts of Afghanistan, and after the review the Ameer gave the envoy written replies to the Russian letter, which were immediately sent off by a special messenger to Tashkend. Neither the contents of the letter which have passed, nor the Russian proposals, have been made public, though there are plenty of wild rumours about them, and the Russians are popularly believed to desire some establishments in the north-west of Afghanistan. They talk openly of opening trade between Russia and Afghanistan, praise the Cabul manufactures, which they say might be improved by the admission of Europeans into the country, and express a desire to visit Herat and the Western frontier.

The same paper, in a leading article, expresses the hope that Sir Neville Chamberlain will be armed with sufficient powers to restore the prestige we have lost in the rude Court of Cabul :—"If he merely goes into Afghanistan to exchange civil compliments and to come back rebuffed, we shall be plunged before we know where we are into a new Afghan campaign. For it is clear that, with the Ameer's leave or without it, we cannot allow Russian outposts to be established upon our very frontier. As Lord Salisbury said on Tuesday, 'British interests in Afghanistan exceed Russian interests.'"

The *Bombay Gazette* says :—"The mischief having been done, the Government of India has resolved to try an antidote, and a special mission under the charge of General Sir Neville Chamberlain, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., is about to proceed to Cabul. The mission will comprise Major Cavagnari, C.S.I., Deputy Commissioner of Peshawur ; Major St. John, R.E., Captain Hammick, military secretary to Sir Neville Chamberlan, and a medical officer. They will be escorted by detachments of the Guides Cavalry and the 11th Bengal Lancers, and will probably leave Peshawur early in September. The question is whether the British mission will not arrive too late—whether the Russians, coming first on the scene and with the full weight of the prestige won by their victories over the Turks in the field, and their more recent diplomatic successes at Berlin, will not have succeeded in persuading the Ameer to consent to whatever proposals they may have had to make—whether, in short, Lord Lytton has not allowed himself to be overreached by the Russians at Cabul even more grossly than was the Earl of Beaconsfield at the European Congress." The *Madras Athenæum* believes the Cabul mission to be a mockery, delusion, and snare. "The real aim of Russia is through China and Kashgar to India." The same paper, in another article, says :—

Our last information concerning the Khan of Kashgar was that he was being hard pressed by the Chinese. We gave it unhesitatingly as our opinion that the Russians had been inciting the Chinese to effect his overthrow. And it looks as if our surmise was correct. Beg Kuli Beg, the ex-ruler of Yarkand, is now in the hands of the Russians as a prisoner ; they on their part refusing to hand him up to the Chinese authorities. Our information is that Beg Kuli Beg is a prisoner at Khokand in Russian Turkestan. Now that a "stopgap" has been taken out of the way in the shape of this brave man, who has maintained an unequal conflict against Mongolian power for eleven long years, the Chinese, and possibly the Russians, have a clear path into India. Who is to blame?

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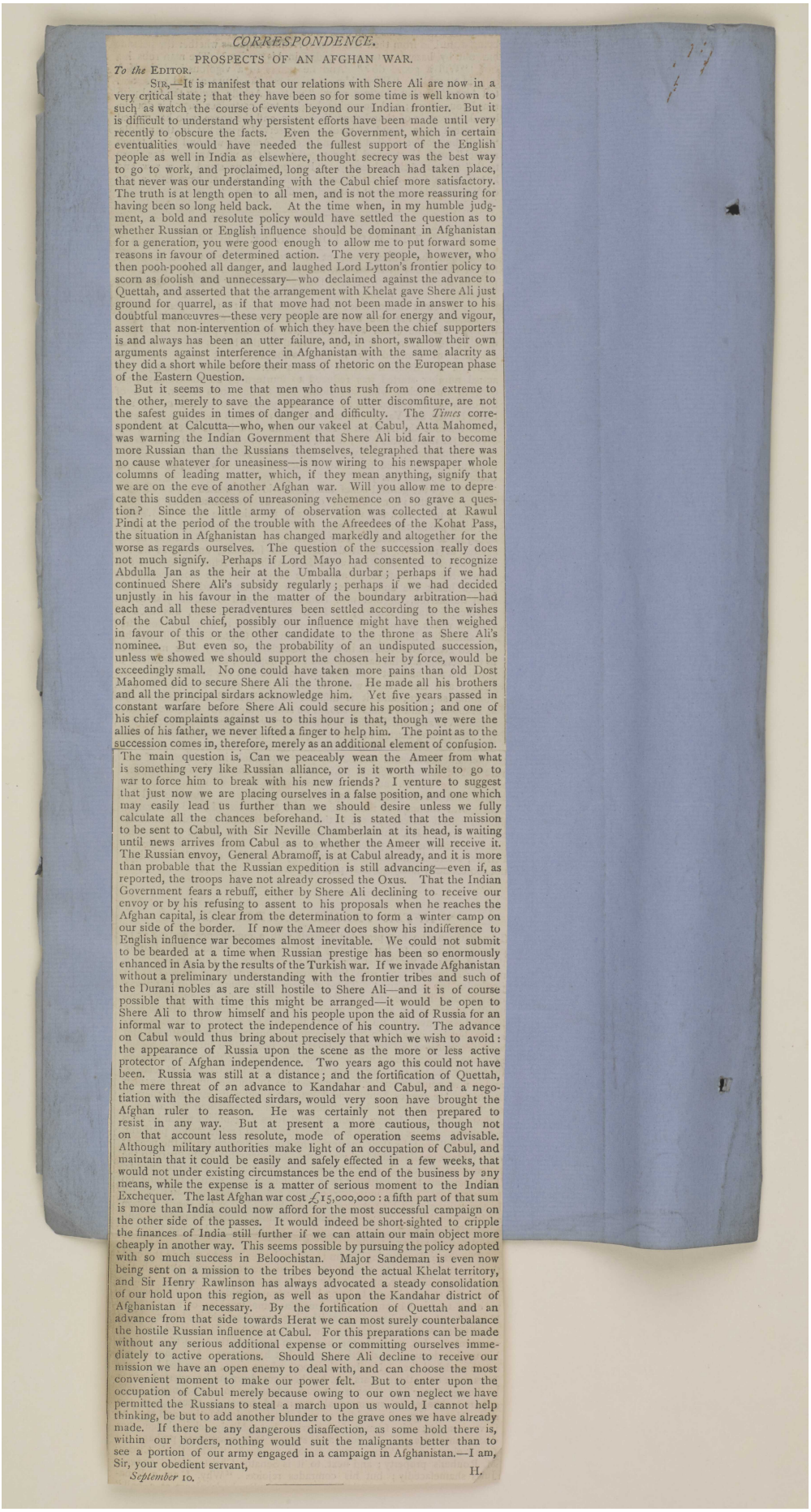

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROSPECTS OF AN AFGHAN WAR.

To the EDITOR.

SIR,—It is manifest that our relations with Shere Ali are now in a very critical state; that they have been so for some time is well known to such as watch the course of events beyond our Indian frontier. But it is difficult to understand why persistent efforts have been made until very recently to obscure the facts. Even the Government, which in certain eventualities would have needed the fullest support of the English people as well in India as elsewhere, thought secrecy was the best way to go to work, and proclaimed, long after the breach had taken place, that never was our understanding with the Cabul chief more satisfactory. The truth is at length open to all men, and is not the more reassuring for having been so long held back. At the time when, in my humble judgment, a bold and resolute policy would have settled the question as to whether Russian or English influence should be dominant in Afghanistan for a generation, you were good enough to allow me to put forward some reasons in favour of determined action. The very people, however, who then pooh-poohed all danger, and laughed Lord Lytton's frontier policy to scorn as foolish and unnecessary—who declaimed against the advance to Quettah, and asserted that the arrangement with Khelat gave Shere Ali just ground for quarrel, as if that move had not been made in answer to his doubtful manœuvres—these very people are now all for energy and vigour, assert that non-intervention of which they have been the chief supporters is and always has been an utter failure, and, in short, swallow their own arguments against interference in Afghanistan with the same alacrity as they did a short while before their mass of rhetoric on the European phase of the Eastern Question.

But it seems to me that men who thus rush from one extreme to the other, merely to save the appearance of utter discomfiture, are not the safest guides in times of danger and difficulty. The *Times* correspondent at Calcutta—who, when our vakeel at Cabul, Atta Mahomed, was warning the Indian Government that Shere Ali bid fair to become more Russian than the Russians themselves, telegraphed that there was no cause whatever for uneasiness—is now wiring to his newspaper whole columns of leading matter, which, if they mean anything, signify that we are on the eve of another Afghan war. Will you allow me to deprecate this sudden access of unreasoning vehemence on so grave a question? Since the little army of observation was collected at Rawul Pindi at the period of the trouble with the Afreedees of the Kohat Pass, the situation in Afghanistan has changed markedly and altogether for the worse as regards ourselves. The question of the succession really does not much signify. Perhaps if Lord Mayo had consented to recognize Abdulla Jan as the heir at the Umballa durbar; perhaps if we had continued Shere Ali's subsidy regularly; perhaps if we had decided unjustly in his favour in the matter of the boundary arbitration—had each and all these peradventures been settled according to the wishes of the Cabul chief, possibly our influence might have then weighed in favour of this or the other candidate to the throne as Shere Ali's nominee. But even so, the probability of an undisputed succession, unless we showed we should support the chosen heir by force, would be exceedingly small. No one could have taken more pains than old Dost Mahomed did to secure Shere Ali the throne. He made all his brothers and all the principal sirdars acknowledge him. Yet five years passed in constant warfare before Shere Ali could secure his position; and one of his chief complaints against us to this hour is that, though we were the allies of his father, we never lifted a finger to help him. The point as to the succession comes in, therefore, merely as an additional element of confusion.

The main question is, Can we peaceably wean the Ameer from what is something very like Russian alliance, or is it worth while to go to war to force him to break with his new friends? I venture to suggest that just now we are placing ourselves in a false position, and one which may easily lead us further than we should desire unless we fully calculate all the chances beforehand. It is stated that the mission to be sent to Cabul, with Sir Neville Chamberlain at its head, is waiting until news arrives from Cabul as to whether the Ameer will receive it. The Russian envoy, General Abramoff, is at Cabul already, and it is more than probable that the Russian expedition is still advancing—even if, as reported, the troops have not already crossed the Oxus. That the Indian Government fears a rebuff, either by Shere Ali declining to receive our envoy or by his refusing to assent to his proposals when he reaches the Afghan capital, is clear from the determination to form a winter camp on our side of the border. If now the Ameer does show his indifference to English influence war becomes almost inevitable. We could not submit to be bearded at a time when Russian prestige has been so enormously enhanced in Asia by the results of the Turkish war. If we invade Afghanistan without a preliminary understanding with the frontier tribes and such of the Durani nobles as are still hostile to Shere Ali—and it is of course possible that with time this might be arranged—it would be open to Shere Ali to throw himself and his people upon the aid of Russia for an informal war to protect the independence of his country. The advance on Cabul would thus bring about precisely that which we wish to avoid: the appearance of Russia upon the scene as the more or less active protector of Afghan independence. Two years ago this could not have been. Russia was still at a distance; and the fortification of Quettah, the mere threat of an advance to Kandahar and Cabul, and a negotiation with the disaffected sirdars, would very soon have brought the Afghan ruler to reason. He was certainly not then prepared to resist in any way. But at present a more cautious, though not on that account less resolute, mode of operation seems advisable. Although military authorities make light of an occupation of Cabul, and maintain that it could be easily and safely effected in a few weeks, that would not under existing circumstances be the end of the business by any means, while the expense is a matter of serious moment to the Indian Exchequer. The last Afghan war cost £15,000,000: a fifth part of that sum is more than India could now afford for the most successful campaign on the other side of the passes. It would indeed be short-sighted to cripple the finances of India still further if we can attain our main object more cheaply in another way. This seems possible by pursuing the policy adopted with so much success in Beloochistan. Major Sandeman is even now being sent on a mission to the tribes beyond the actual Khelat territory, and Sir Henry Rawlinson has always advocated a steady consolidation of our hold upon this region, as well as upon the Kandahar district of Afghanistan if necessary. By the fortification of Quettah and an advance from that side towards Herat we can most surely counterbalance the hostile Russian influence at Cabul. For this preparations can be made without any serious additional expense or committing ourselves immediately to active operations. Should Shere Ali decline to receive our mission we have an open enemy to deal with, and can choose the most convenient moment to make our power felt. But to enter upon the occupation of Cabul merely because owing to our own neglect we have permitted the Russians to steal a march upon us would, I cannot help thinking, be but to add another blunder to the grave ones we have already made. If there be any dangerous disaffection, as some hold there is, within our borders, nothing would suit the malignants better than to see a portion of our army engaged in a campaign in Afghanistan.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

H.

September 10.

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"Times" Sept: 11th

THE ENGLISH MISSION TO CABUL.—The *Times of India* of August 16 says:—"In the cosmopolitan bazaars of Bombay it is by no means uncommon to meet small parties of stalwart men, whose burly shoulders, swinging stride, and proud bearing distinguish them readily from the natives of Western India. These are wandering types of those Afghans of whom Edwardes tells us nothing is finer than their physique, nothing worse than their morals. 'We are content with discord,' said an old Afghan to Elphinstone, 'we are content with alarms, we are content with blood; but we will never be content with a master.' And this determination that the Afghans shall never have a foreign master is warmly shared by their Russian neighbours whenever the English approach them on this side, and by the English whenever the Russians approach them on the other. The Afghans naturally see their advantage in coquetting with each of the two great Powers whose Asiatic territories they may be said to divide, and, by dint of smooth promises and costly presents, we have certainly done our best to keep this tradition alive. Our Government have just heard with some alarm that a Russian Envoy has been received in state by Shere Ali at Cabul; and an English Envoy is at once to be sent thither to checkmate his machinations and turn the scale again in our favour. After the Khiva campaign the Russians gave us a distinct assurance that they would make no endeavour to carry their influence into Afghanistan itself; but the Russians would now probably retort that they have been driven to this step by the terms of the treaty Sir Lewis Pelly recently endeavoured to make the Cabul Envoy sign at Peshawur, and which, though they were never accepted, are popularly believed to have been aimed at Russia, at a time when war was all but inevitable. The *Turkistan Gazette*, in giving the Ameer's version of this draught treaty, said that 'Sir Lewis Pelly endeavoured to make him a vassal of the Indian Government, by requiring him to accept a permanent British Resident at Cabul, and by placing his troops under British officers.' This was manifestly an exaggeration, but articles which appeared in our Allahabad contemporary, and have been widely attributed to the inspiration of Sir Lewis Pelly, distinctly stated that the main object of the treaty was to allow British agencies to be established in Afghanistan. The Russians have certainly lost no time in pushing up their inquiries to the fountain-head, and coming as they do with all the *prestige* and glory of a nation who have defeated and despoiled the great Mahomedan power of Turkey, it behoves us to restore our shattered influence. For this reason alone we are glad to hear that the Government have at once organized an expedition strong enough to protect their Envoy and to impress the wild troops of Shere Ali. But we hope they will go armed with definite instructions, and backed up by a stronger frontier policy than any Lord Lytton has yet enunciated. They will from the first have some lee-way to recover. For when the Ameer recently rejected our advances he was distinctly told that the matter concerned him rather than ourselves and that we should leave him alone until he appealed to us. But the presence of a Russian Envoy and an escort of Cossacks and Usbegs in the middle of Afghanistan has very quickly made us change our minds. The mission under General Abramoff, the Russian Governor-General of Samarcand, arrived at Cabul on the 22d of July. On the 24 inst. a grand review was held in their honour, to which troops were summoned from all parts of the kingdom, and then a letter was presented from the Czar in formal durbar. A reply was sent off there and then by special messenger in answer to the Russian demands, which are said to have required the establishment of Russian agencies in the north-west of Afghanistan and the opening out of a regular trade between Afghanistan and Russia. The nature of the reply has not transpired, but may easily be gathered from the courteous ceremonial to which the Envoy and his escort were treated. That the reply was presumably unfavourable to British interests is clearly seen in the alacrity with which the Government of India have determined upon despatching an Envoy to a capital which has not been visited for 30 years, and which we had just expressed our determination to leave alone. Our special mission seems to be well chosen. The Government will be represented by Sir Neville Chamberlain, who should know something of the country, and whose blunt, soldierly, straightforward answers will be the best foil to Oriental diplomacy. The mission will comprise Major Cavagnari, who as Deputy Commissioner of Peshawur is well posted in the intrigues beyond his borders, and Major St. John, R.E., together with Sir Neville Chamberlain's private secretary and a medical officer. Escorted by a detachment of the Guides Cavalry and the 11th Bengal Lancers, they will leave Peshawur early in September, and as Cabul is only about 200 miles from the Khyber Pass, they should have had their first interview with the Ameer before a month has gone by. At the beginning of the year, when Lord Lytton talked of the necessity of a strong frontier policy his chief argument was based upon the effects that the exaggerated rumours of Russian successes must have upon the chiefs beyond our borders. Now, however, these rumours are realities, and these realities must have been brought very forcibly home to the Ameer by the representative of a conquering nation which has almost extinguished the power of Roum in Europe, and taken what territory she required in Asia. To counteract that influence we shall have to speak a great deal more to the purpose than we have cared to do for many years back. We are very far from desiring any extension of British territory in the direction of Cabul, and we should infinitely prefer a broad barrier like Afghanistan between the rival powers of Russia and England, to any mere geographical line over which we could shake hands or exchange bayonet thrusts according to the mood of the moment. But the Ameer should be made to understand that he has maintained his independence for so long by our goodwill, and that he will not be allowed to barter it away for all the promises of a country prodigal beyond all others in words and undertakings. It is, perhaps, unjust to condemn the Russian demands until we absolutely know what they are, but Russian presence at Cabul is in itself a gross breach of the undertaking made in 1872; and it is impossible to forget that in a hostile line of country held by troops and governed solely by military men, the local desire to push forward has often before been too strong to chime in with the published wishes of the Cabinet at St. Petersburg, which, preaching peace, has managed in several directions to become encumbered with a good deal of the property of neighbouring nations. If Sir Neville Chamberlain merely goes into Afghanistan to exchange civil compliments and to come back rebuffed, we shall be plunged, before we know where we are, into a new Afghan campaign. For it is clear that, with the Ameer's leave or without it, we cannot allow Russian outposts to be established upon our very frontier. As Lord Salisbury said on Tuesday, 'British interests in Afghanistan exceed Russian interests.'"

"Times" Sept: 13th

HERAT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Twenty years ago the late General Jacob wrote as follows:—

"Whenever the next occasion of war may arise Russia will, under the policy she is now pursuing in the East, be able to occupy not Herat only, but Kandahar, with an army of 50,000 Europeans and as much Persian rabble as she pleases, *before we have begun to think seriously about the matter.*"

The italics are General Jacob's. Further, he wrote:—

"However, looking onward to a great European war, with a fortress at Herat, and a garrison of 20,000 men there (which would not necessarily involve any increase to our Indian Army, or, at least, to its cost), India would be as firmly locked in our grasp as if surrounded by the ocean."

Further, General Jacob wrote:—

"But this is looking far forward to the time when Russia, having been shut out from her long-cherished schemes towards Constantinople, shall have again matured preparations for advance in a new direction, and have poured her whole strength on our Indian frontier."

So far General Jacob 20 years ago. But now it appears that a railway is in contemplation from Tiflis to Teheran, and thence to Herat. Instead of General Jacob's 50,000 Russians, we may therefore expect 200,000 of them at Herat whenever the next occasion of war with Russia may arise. Herat is, I believe, defended by colossal earthworks of unknown antiquity. With these railways in contemplation, and Afghanistan evidently Russian, it is high time to forestall Russia at Herat. Yours truly,

F. A. E. DALRYMPLE, Bengal Civil Service.

St. Boswell's, N.B., Sept. 9.

"Pioneer mail" Aug 21st 1878

Principal News of the Week.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain is expected at Simla about Friday next, and there will await the Ameer's reply to the proposal to despatch the mission to Cabul.

The escort which is to accompany the Cabul Mission will consist of three hundred sabres; Lieutenant-Colonel Jenkins, Commanding the Guides party, and Major Prinsep, the Bengal Cavalry.

The tribes on our North-West Frontier, though naturally manifesting a keen interest in the events attendant upon the arrival of a Russian Embassy at Cabul, are altogether friendly and orderly in their demeanour. The Khyberees seem indisposed to place any difficulties in the way of the passage of Sir Neville Chamberlain's party through their pass.

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"Pioneer mail" August 21st

Another camp is spoken of lower down the frontier, but its details are kept a close secret, and I am not at liberty to mention even the few particulars which have reached me. Our relations with Cabul are, I believe, a shade more favourable than they were, which is after all not saying much. Chetan Shah, the Assistant Surgeon whose services were lent to Sher Ali at the close of 1876, has recently returned to British territory, and rumour hath it is the bearer of a friendly message from his surly patient. It is unlikely that the Hindoo Galen will again trust his head in the lion's month, even on the temptation of such liberal pay and presents as Sher Ali always bestowed upon him; but if he can be induced to return, he may be the means of putting us on better terms with the Ameer than have existed between the two countries since Sir Lewis Pelly's breakdown at Peshawur last year. The Adam Kheyl Affridis are reported to have sent a *jirga* to Cabul *selon règle* to receive the usual present of *lúngis* and knives in return for nominal allegiance; and some of the Bonairwals, Swatis, and Mohmunds have started on the same errand. But our prestige on the Peshawur border has risen so considerably since the successes of last cold weather, that Sher Ali must find it a difficult task to induce any of the independent Pathan tribes to do him homage on any terms. These deputations have a pleasant time of it, feeding free, and receiving small presents on departure. A journey under such conditions is peculiarly acceptable to a Pathan, whose happiness in life (when not fighting) consists in feasting his friends or being feasted by them. The Ameer is of course anxious to exhibit his pretended power over our frontier tribes, with the object of forcing us to conciliate him by liberal concessions. But in reality he has no influence whatever with these wild republicans, who acknowledge no superior, not even amongst themselves, and who are so far sufficiently impartial to accept British bread and *lúngis* with as good a grace as Sher Ali's. These tribes fully understand our ability to punish them when they deserve it, and whole *kafilas* of scarves and daggers from Cabul would scarcely move them to raid on British territory unsupported by some personal grievance requiring adjustment. Grievances at present they have not. Major Cavagnari's series of *jolies surprises* during the past few months, combined with the Jowaki collapse, have read a chapter to the border Kheyls, which they will not easily forget.

OPINIONS OF THE INDIAN PRESS.

THE MISSION TO CABUL.—The *Times of India* considers "it is perhaps unjust to condemn the Russian demands until we absolutely know what they are, but Russian presence at Cabul is in itself a gross breach of the undertaking made in 1872; and it is impossible to forget that in a hostile line of country held by troops and governed solely by military men, the local desire to push forward has often before been too strong to chime in with the published wishes of the Cabinet at St. Petersburg, which, preaching peace, has managed in several directions to become encumbered with a good deal of the property of neighbouring nations. The Russian Mission after all may be an answer to the blunders of Sir Lewis Pelly's secret and ineffective and humiliating attempts. For this blunder our Government have to atone, and in the unusual energy with which they have appointed a counter mission, it would seem that they acknowledge the gravity of the situation. We hope, however, that Sir Neville Chamberlain will be armed with sufficient powers to restore the prestige we have lost in the rude Court of Cabul. If he merely goes into Afghanistan to exchange civil compliments and to come back rebuffed, we shall be plunged before we know where we are into a new Afghan campaign. For it is clear that, with the Ameer's leave, or without it, we cannot allow Russian outposts to be established upon our very frontier. As Lord Salisbury said on Tuesday, 'British interests in Afghanistan exceed Russian interests.'"

The *Bombay Gazette* observes that after the Pelly mission "Shere Ali still remained sulky; the Russians made the most of the opportunity, and now the Government of India is placed in the humiliating position of being the first to sue for a re-establishment of those friendly relations which Lord Lytton was good enough to offer to extend to the Ameer when that gentleman in his hours of repentance might choose to ask for them. The fact is a triumph to Shere Ali, and the contempt which he must feel for the Government of India when he finds he has frightened it into sending a special mission to Cabul after it had professed to wash its hands of him and his affairs, will make him an exceeding difficult person to persuade that England and not Russia is the Power which it will be most to his advantage to appease. Lord Lytton's great blunder was committed when he consented to Sir Lewis Pelly's mission to Peshawur without determining at the same time to show Shere Ali that the Government of India was prepared to give material support to the demands of its representative, or at all events those 'suggestions' which should have been demands. And now that Russian diplomacy, by its activity and alertness, has scored another victory over English policy, we cannot see how Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission can repair the blunder. Vigorous steps must, however, be taken immediately to secure the Khyber Pass just as the Bolan Pass has been already occupied. The time has gone by for shuffling, timid, and discreditable politic[illegible] relations with the Ameer of Cabul."

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future to be reckoned as made up of two parts : the one part consisting of the food conceived to be necessary for the support of healthy life, the other of a lump sum, not subject to fluctuation with the price of grain, to cover the cost of vegetables, salt, firewood, &c., and to be available for reduction as a penalty for short work. The system so prescribed has been introduced all over these provinces, but the results have not been at all satisfactory. The last general returns from relief works revealed an increase of numbers going on concurrently with an improvement of agricultural conditions. We believe that in due time the returns for the period now running on will show this unfortunate result in a still more striking manner. The rates established are such that the people actually prefer the relief works to the legitimate labour of the fields. They can get enough to eat, doing nothing ; if they like to work the lump sum supplies them with luxuries. Let well alone is their motto. From all directions we hear of protests being sent up to Government by district officers. They are disgusted at having to administer a system which leads to these palpably absurd results. And it is easy to conceive what the financial consequences must be for the province. The expenditure on relief ought to be contracting now to a minimum. True there are some districts where trouble still prevails, or has still prevailed up to a very late period. But considering the conditions which now exist over the North-West as a whole, it would be absurd to say that the burden of having to support over 150,000 of the labouring poor is one which at this date presses legitimately on the Government. The Government of India, in ordering an enhancement of the wages rate, has clearly been influenced by a wave of feeling which may have had its origin in generous philanthropy, but is certainly not compatible with the facts of Indian life.

The Pioneer Mail.

ALLAHABAD :—AUGUST 21, 1878.

THE CABUL MISSION.

The Cabul mission about to set forth from India is the complement of the Cyprus occupation. It is a measure for which the way has been carefully paved by the policy of the Indian Government during the last two or three years, and it should begin the establishment of our relations with the most important state on our northern frontiers on a satisfactory basis. Everything that Lord Lytton has done in connection with the North-West Frontier hitherto has been directed towards undoing the blunders of the past. That work has been one of time, because the way had to be picked rather carefully. There has been a powerful though wrong-headed opposition at home to circumvent. Old-fashioned theories of masterly inactivity have still maintained their tyranny over many minds. The bloodless pacification of Khelat itself has been the subject of uncalled-for sneers ; as, while still a project, it was the subject of preposterous apprehensions. The negotiations which led to the Peshawur conference were denounced as foolish meddling before their character was understood, and even after this had been thoroughly explained,—after the confusion of our previous entanglement with the Ameer had been laid bare, and the great practical advantages secured by Sir Lewis Pelly were made apparent for all who had eyes to see,—the old delusions were still brought to the front, the old fears regalvanised, the whole mass of general nonsense with which Central Asian politics have been clouded, blown in clouds of smoke about the subject over again. Nor can we hope that the new theory of our relations with Central Asia has yet been finally grasped by the rank and file of writers on the subject. The Cabul mission will be, in its turn, the object of as many misconceptions as the Peshawur negotiations. Afghanistan has been a land of nightmares for many Anglo-Indian politicians. Shah Sujah and Lord Auckland are names not merely of melancholy reminiscence but of gloomy import. The disasters of the Cabul campaign are regarded as fearful lessons which should warn every Indian Viceroy to keep his face for ever averted from the Khyber Pass, and the bare wish to see our relations with the Ameer put on a more satisfactory footing is held to be tantamount to a reckless desire that the whole empire may be plunged in hopeless warfare with a nation of unconquerable warriors and unlimited means. A few months will reduce many of these terrors to the condition of very ragged scarecrows, but there are politicians of the parochial school in India as well as in England, and we cannot hope to see a spirited progressive policy accepted with unanimous approval in reference to Indian any more than to Turkish affairs.

The general unity of design, however, which has distinguished Lord Lytton's treatment of frontier diplomacy, and its success, will go far to give reasonable men confidence in his new undertaking. At the commencement of the present *régime* the situation as regards the independent states on our north-west border was anything but creditable to a Government with the prestige of our own. On the side of Beloochistan the condition of all territory beyond our border was one of perpetual disturbance. Intercourse with the people was impossible. As regards the dominions of the Ameer the position was infinitely worse. The public may merely have been under the impression that the country was closed against us by the jealousy of its rulers, but the Government was alive to an embarrassing state of facts, besides which the mere inaccessibility of Afghanistan was a matter of no consequence. It was impossible to say how far we were in alliance with the Ameer, how far we had claims upon him, how far we were under heavy obligations to defend him from attack. The anomalous character of our relations with him was due to the way in which one Government of India after another had been desirous of establishing a better understanding with Cabul, but had always been pulled up by the authorities at home acting themselves in deference to the ever-ready outcries of the old partisans of inactivity. Now up to a certain point there was much to justify the Lawrence policy, while the advance of Russia was still concerned with the conquest of very distant territory ; while the feeling which prompted interference in Afghanistan rested upon the wild fancy that Russia might some day be in a position to invade India, there was no object to gain by taking too active an initiative in Central Asian affairs. There has never been a moment at which the dread of Russian advance as something that might at last overwhelm the British *régime* in this country has been otherwise than absurd. In that light it has always been regarded by every article on the subject which has ever appeared in these columns. But Government may sometimes be put in a position in which they are called upon to take notice of a menace which they are very far from fearing. It is eminently desirable for the maintenance of a proper feeling among the people of India, that the Government of the country should not merely be, but show itself, in a position to warn Russia off from any impertinent familiarities with the minor states on our frontier. A Central Asian policy may not be a matter of vital necessity to the welfare of India even now. Afghanistan itself might become a second Khiva, and still the British flag would be perfectly secure at Peshawur. But the people of India, instead of being proud of their Government, would be justly ashamed of it under such conditions. Instead of growing more and more identified with the country, the Government of British India would have to rely for the maintenance of its ascendancy on force alone. The whole position would be ignominious. From these considerations it ensues that the nearer Russia approaches, the more necessary it becomes for us to assert throughout an expanded zone of territory, the supreme influence which it is incumbent on Great Britain to maintain in the states adjacent to her Asiatic border. The propriety of doing this has not arisen yesterday. The policy which now makes the Cabul mission possible is not a growth of the present season. But having been patiently matured for the last three years, it now happens that a sensational step forward may be taken at a moment when the action of Russia, arising from the incidents of the late war, renders this step peculiarly appropriate.

The negotiations at the Peshawur Conference prepared the way for the present mission by giving the Government a clear field of operations. Readers who remember the explanations we published at the conclusion of those negotiations, will not have forgotten the nature of the negative advantages they secured. The encouragement given to the Ameer by Lord Mayo and even by Lord Northbrook, the half promises which appeared to have been made, checked in each case by the dull-witted interference of the India Office, as already pointed out, had left Lord Lytton and Lord Salisbury—pulling together in a way that had long been unusual with Viceroys and Secretaries of State—face to face with a condition of things in which they did not know what they would be bound to do and what they would be free to refuse in the event of interference on the part of Russia with the independence of the Ameer. Sir Lewis Pelly was sent to Peshawur to clear away the fog. That it was necessary, if the Ameer could show himself fairly entitled to British support in certain contingencies, to accept that liability frankly was self-evident. But none the less was it plain that international obligations are never one-sided. It could not be that the Ameer had obtained promises from Lord Mayo or from Lord Northbrook which would justify him in calling on us to defend him if attacked, but refusing us preliminary access to his country so as to obtain cognisance in time through our own agents of any impending attack that it might become our duty to resist. Sir Lewis Pelly was thus empowered to put into the clearest shape any neighbourly obligations which the Ameer could show us to have incurred, but to insist on corresponding rights in return, if that were done. The Ameer, it will be remembered, would not agree to receive British agents in his territory ; it was explained to him that no obligations on our part towards him could survive that refusal, and then the negotiations were interrupted by the illness of the Cabul representative and not again resumed. A sponge had been passed over the mistakes previously made. The Government of India accepted for the time the fact that we had no relations with Cabul, good or bad, and the Ameer was left to think over the situation by himself. That in progress of time such thinking has been profitable, appears as the broad conclusion to be deduced from the announcement now made. With a happy coincidence as to time which cannot be too much admired, Lord Lytton's frontier diplomacy is bearing fruit just now, when this is a perfect retort to the movements Russia is recently reported to have been making in the direction of Merv. That movement is supposed to have

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been prompted by the occupation of Cyprus, so that the present mission is, as we say, the complement of Lord Beaconsfield's great *coup*.

THE RIVAL EMBASSIES.

The fretful questions already asked in Parliament concerning the Cabul mission, foreshadow an effort on the part of Her Majesty's unpatriotic opposition to throw obstacles in its way, as far as they can. Probably, however, the Government will be spared the only reproach which, under the circumstances, would have a certain force—the only attack it might be difficult to parry. The skirmishers of the left will, no doubt, freely denounce the present enterprise, on the general principle that denunciation is their *métier*, but they will not be likely to see that in one of its aspects it really is discreditable. It has been postponed too long. The Russians have got in advance of us, and British emissaries are now hurrying forward to counteract an aggressive movement which they might, with greater dignity at an earlier opportunity, have rendered impossible. We have already traced the course of events leading up to the present mission. It is the culmination of the policy which pacified Khelat: It is the final *raison d'être* of the occupation of Quetta. And General Chamberlain will be spared the disagreeable work of clearing up past misunderstandings. All that was done at Peshawur in advance. There would be nothing wanting to the completeness of the whole process, but for the interference of the Russians at Cabul. To reach a sound estimate of the present situation therefore, two currents of thought must be followed. We must take note of the skilful and far-sighted way in which the mission, now so necessary, has been rendered possible by previous arrangements; and we must keep in view the circumstances which have given rise to a result it would be affectation to treat in otherwise than mortifying, —not to say ignominious,—the anticipation of our embassy by the Governor of Samarkand.

Russian progress in Asia is not necessarily opposed to British interests. It goes without saying that there must be a line beyond which the unwholesomely rapid growth of Russia's mere nominal supremacy must be stopped. But if common sense had always prevailed in English councils, this unreal development would never have given us any trouble. The consolidation of Russian power in tracts of Central Asia, where it finds a proper field for activity, should be regarded by Englishmen with sympathy. Russian civilisation is of a low order, but it is an advance on the indigenous civilisation of Turkistan. Russian activity in Asia has only been regarded with annoyance by English statesmen worthy of the name, when it ran into mere flag-planting. There is no end to that process, if it is not checked by some external force. And if there is one kind of activity worse than flag-planting, it is intriguing with native states to facilitate flag-planting in future. But the truth is, that though of late the energies of Russian governors and generals in Central Asia have been spent almost entirely in this way, Russia herself is hardly more to blame for that result than England. Flag-planting can only be checked by an external force, but the application of a very little external force is enough for the purpose. Looking back over the whole course of Central Asian politics for the last ten or fifteen years, it is impossible not to feel that every annoyance England has experienced in connection with them has been due to her own stupid inactivity. In a dull-witted way the Liberals accepted Lord Lawrence's doctrines as an unchangeable creed. We are very far from contending that they were wrong at the time, but no one can go home from India, stereotype the views of Indian affairs he entertained at the time of his departure, and force these on all succeeding Viceroys against their will without doing mischief. That is the course events have taken. The Liberals had a long reign; the Central Asian policy they espoused became a rigid law for Governors-General. No argument on the subject had the slightest effect. The opinions of the party, in reference to Russians, Afghans, and Turkestans, were prescribed by its professional adviser, and while the Liberals remained in the ascendant, those opinions had to be be translated into action,—or rather into inaction,—out here. The consequence has been that just as a very little water will spread far over a dead level, the pale Russian colour has crept over the map. In either of two ways its progress could have been stopped. English ministers at St. Petersburg, boldly instructed from home, could have stopped it. It might have been stopped by a counter development of British ascendancy in realms beyond the Himalayas. But successive ministries were too timid to speak to the Czar's Government, too much enslaved to the theory of non-intervention to let Indian Viceroys put a foot beyond their frontiers as by law established. The Russian Government itself has notoriously been averse to an over-rapid growth of its dominions in Central Asia, but its armies of occupation have been restless, its generals and colonels ambitious. It is a far cry to Loch Awe; and last of all if the Czar may have been inclined to hold them back rather than urge them forward, they have found by experience that pressing forward is, at all events, an offence that he readily forgives. So the shallow inundation spread; and if some Englishmen argued that a very little show of energy on our part would keep it back, the reply,—changing the issue,—always was the invasion of India by the Russians is impossible. Of course it is impossible—the conception a political absurdity, but that is not the point. The danger to be averted was a foolish belief among the natives that it was possible and impending. The benefit to be achieved by a progressive policy was a hearty belief in the continued vitality of our reign in all parts of the East where our prestige means civilisation and popular welfare. It would have cost us little, and it would have gained us much to have done in Lord Mayo's time what Lord Lytton is doing now. But the dead weight of an influence at home that was unintelligent but omnipotent paralysed the Indian Foreign Office,—and the result is the impudent intrusion of the Russians at Cabul.

A law of politics, as inviolable as those of astronomy, enacts that a country which—in an emergency that claims it—defers spirited action too long, must exert itself to show all the more spirit in the end, unless it is willing to pay the appointed penalty and accept humiliation. So things have fallen out as regards our relations with Cabul. As the legitimate sequel to the preparatory steps Lord Lytton has for the last three years been engaged in taking, the Cabul mission would have been entitled to be gentle and conciliatory. But the *dénouement* has been unluckily postponed. An act which would have shown activity and enhanced the prestige of a Government performing it spontaneously, cannot but be regarded now as hurriedly decided on, in self-defence, to avert a disaster. The *fact* of the Cabul mission will now be unimpressive. The good it may do will depend on the measures it may take. It is England's own fault, and from their point of view the Russians are not to be blamed; but a complication has now arisen in which the Government of India must make up its mind to take a high tone with the half organised State to which it is sending its present embassy. At the first blush, the situation in which the Ameer finds himself will be very flattering to his vanity. He is courted by both his giant neighbours. Evidently it will be his to weigh the rival offers they may make! His mind should be disabused of that idea at the earliest possible date. From its own free good will the Indian Government might have had much to offer the Ameer. But directly the proposal is to play off Russia and ourselves one against the other, the aspect of affairs has changed. The Indian Government might have respected an independent Cabul to the end of time. But a semi-independent Cabul under Russian influence is quite a different thing. Rather than submit to that, England would be forced to undertake the complete conquest of Cabul. This view of the subject should be explained both to Russians and Afghans with the utmost frankness.

A WEST-ASIAN CONFEDERATION.

There is a democratic ring about the phrase which speaks rather of Europe than of Asia. The East is not the land where to look for local self-government, constitutional liberties, or confederations of autonomous States. But an irresponsible politician is not the man to regard the political unities, and Sir George Campbell is irresponsible as he is irrepressible. In his book on the Turkish question he said that administration was his trade. Constitution-mongering appears to be his foible. No sooner is the agreement between the Ministry and the Porte for the better protection of the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan published, than Sir George Campbell is ready with a complete scheme for their self-government. He wishes to see a West-Asian Confederacy established in the provinces of Asia Minor. The time is favourable, he considers, for the attempt. The agreement made with the Porte gives England a voice in the future administration of the Asiatic provinces. We have promised to defend them in the event of any aggression on the part of Russia. In a subsequent paragraph the Sultan promises to provide for the better government of the people and the protecton of the Christian races. The measures to be adopted are to be subsequently settled. These are the terms of the Anglo-Turkish arrangement, and they are brief enough. The letter of the agreement hardly binds England to anything more than the military guarantee. We do not undertake to administer Asia Minor. We do not even give the military guarantee on the condition that the provinces shall be better governed. We have simply obtained for ourselves the right of resisting the advance of Russia beyond the new frontier of Kars and Batoum. Sir George Campbell, however, has jumped at the conclusion that the arrangement with Turkey puts that country "precisely on the footing of one of the protected Indian States of the second degree." An Indian State of the first degree, it must be explained, is a State which has obtained our military protection without any formal agreement to be guided by us in its internal affairs. A State of the second degree is one that, in consideration of military defence and protection, has bound itself to reform its administration and take advice. Asia Minor is now, according to Sir George Campbell, in precisely the same position as Oudh was at the beginning of the century. There is nothing in the agreement with the Sultan to warrant this inference. The analogy is altogether a false one. In Oudh our support was essential to the maintenance of the Nawab Vizier against internal dissension. His territories would have gone to pieces of themselves had not the weak hand of the ruler been strengthened by British troops. From the first we were compelled to take an active part in an administration which was utterly effete. Asia Minor, on the contrary, may be badly governed by the Porte, but there is no question about the vitality of the Government. But for the in-

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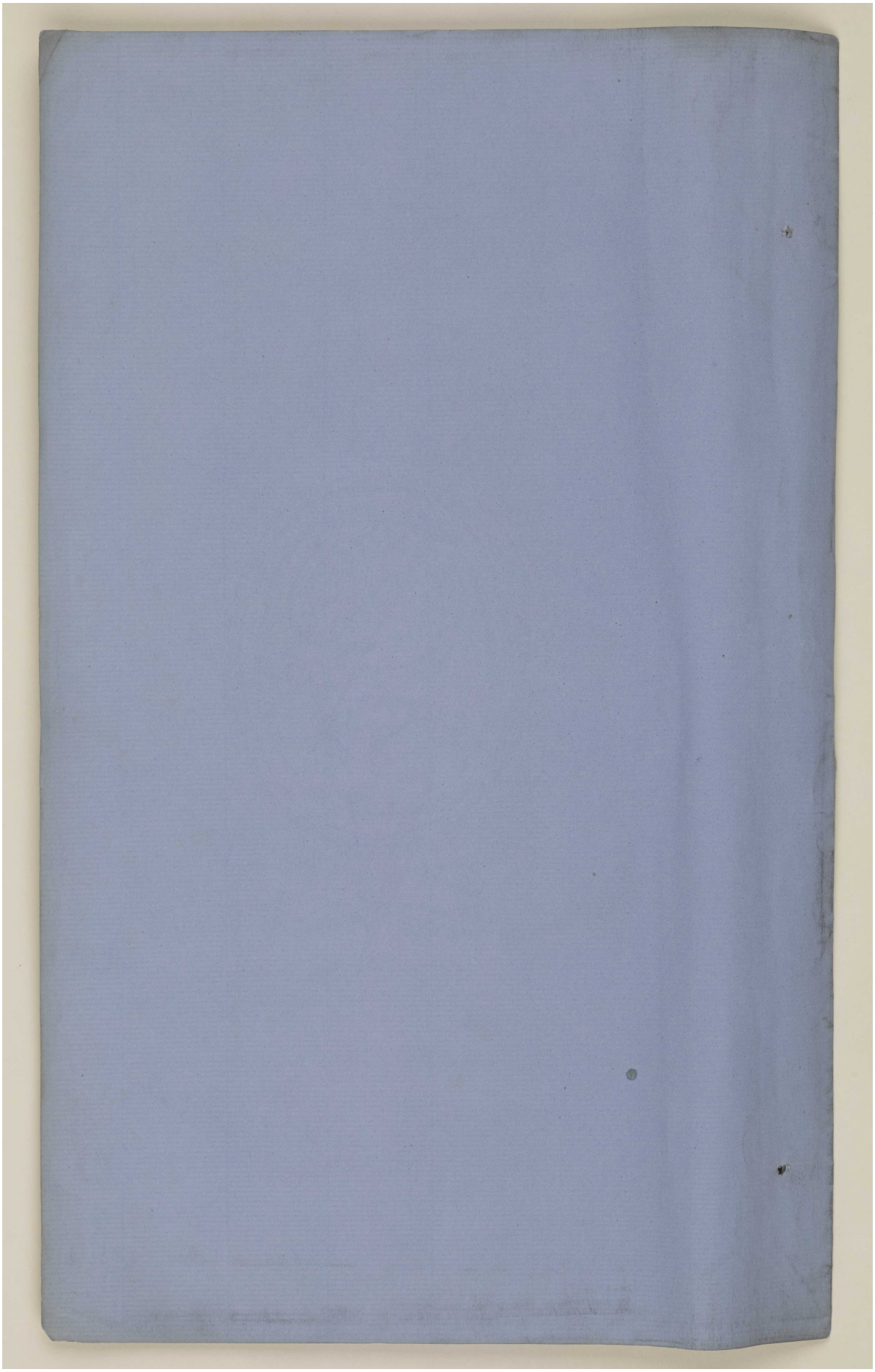

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THE PALL MALL BUDGET.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1878.

UNACKNOWLEDGED TRUTHS ABOUT INDIA.

To our view, no controversy was ever more romantic than that which represents the country as divided between two great parties: one heroically bent on extending the area of the empire, the other desirous of sitting down to the comfortable enjoyment of what we have got, without hankering for more territory and more grandeur. We must suppose that these parties not only exist, but that they are in a fair way of settling their differences once for all, to the great gain or the lasting injury of England. We ought to believe it, because so we are assured on all hands. At this moment it is the main topic of all political discussion, whether in the press or on the platform. In one only of this month's miscellanies there are no fewer than three papers by men eminent in political debate; and the text of all three is the question whether England will elect to continue her career of conquest and acquisition, or whether she will not rather choose to content herself with the husbandry of her present possessions. It may be presumptuous to say so, but all this strikes us as very wonderful, somewhat pathetic, and altogether portentous. Does it really and truly seem to so many perceptive minds that our country is in this excellent position? It is not a party way of putting things, a general election being near? Actually it is believed that the main thing to be discussed and decided by England is how she will choose—whether to help herself to a little more greatness and responsibility, or to fall back on the peaceful enjoyment of the goods she has already gained. Happy land! Where else in the world does the "great question of the day" resolve itself into such a choice? Nowhere else;—nor is it the great question here. We study our *Daily Telegraph*, we labour over the *Times*, we listen to Mr. GLADSTONE, Colonel STANLEY, Mr. GREG, Mr. GRANT DUFF, and to others with more words and less meaning; and though we would fain believe in their view of the great question for England we find it impossible to do so. Our own conviction is that England is by no means so blest as these authorities make out; that, in fact, the only choice before her, in a time of vast and rapid change, is as to whether she will or will not make the necessary efforts to keep her empire in existence.

If the condition of affairs in India were commonly known, if those who are aware of it were not studious to conceal what they lack courage enough to face the country with, there would be no doubt about the truth of our conclusion. The fact is, however, that if Englishmen at home take little interest in India, Indian officials are by no means anxious to encourage close inquiry. But, unless we are mistaken, a time is at hand when a good deal of interest will be taken in India; and if the curiosity of the public is then allowed the same scope in Indian as in other affairs, it is not improbable that they may complain of grave concealments and of shirkings too long continued. To be sure, there is no need of official revelation or official teaching in respect of much that is going wrong in India. We have all ample means of observing how fast the financial administration of the country is sinking into collapse; how manifest it is that its burdens must still increase rather than diminish; how hopeless it is to look for more revenue to populations impoverished to a degree which no Bulgarian peasant ever heard of. And more than this we may know without the assistance of official reports. We may be sure that millions of men in a chronic state of starvation can hardly form a contented community; we may be sure that when these millions believe that their poverty is intensified by grinding taxation, contentment is still less probable; and still less when they reflect, or when they are reminded, that the tax-gatherers are foreigners, alien in blood, in religion, in everything that separates man from man. So far, no doubt, there has been comfort in the assurance that these humble remote people do not reflect upon such things, and are not reminded of them. So far, perhaps, though it seems somewhat unlikely. But the schoolmaster is abroad in India as well as elsewhere. It has been our duty to see to that. Roads are made to run hither and thither, upon which not only merchandise but knowledge and ideas, speculation and device, are current. Natives are "educated" in large and increasing numbers; and it seems that natives have always found rapid means of communicating with each other over wide distances. There is a native press, too, not a very strong one or approaching to "the largest circulation in the world;" but one that has a reader and exponent in many a village and will soon find one in very many more. Some things like these are known to us, we say, by the commonest means of information; and considering that as a rule, and quite naturally though of

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course erroneously, the natives do not like us, and considering that the further they advance in knowledge the further they will creep into self-confidence, the signification and tendency of such circumstances are perfectly clear.

But whether such a state of things as we have lightly glanced at is a matter of serious or immediate anxiety depends upon another question—namely, whether there are any active discontents, any powerful ambitions, to work upon it; and it is here that the ordinary means of information begin to fail us, and here that official glozing and official secrecy keep the country in darkness. On occasion a little positive assertion or a burst of high ministerial ridicule is also ventured, when it seems expedient to banish from the public mind some shadow of the truth. A change in this respect, however, appears imminent. Circumstances over which the Government declined control are already compelling them to allow a little of the truth to come out through the usual ministerial channels; and presently it will be allowed that in India active discontent and powerful ambitions *are* at work in the conditions we have described. If over a large area of our own Indian dominions the schoolmaster is abroad, the independent States are nowadays well informed, too, on a variety of matters connected with our sovereignty, its conditions and its prospects. Through various means easily imagined personages like HOLKAR, SCINDIA, and SALAR JUNG know as well as most people—(of course it is their business to know)—what our relations are with the rest of the world, for instance; how we stand in comparison with other fighting Powers, if we are still a fighting Power; what at a given time are the probable combinations open to us or against us; what is the condition of our domestic factions, and so forth. And the progress of enlightenment has destroyed a variety of secular superstitions in the minds of these little Indian potentates. If they ever regarded us as naturally a kind of demigods, they are disabused of that degrading idea. If they ever dwelt in illusions as to our actual strength, statistics, comparison, and the teaching of foreign agents, busy in every considerable town in India, have dissipated their ignorance. If they were unaware that in warfare science and arms of precision make up for paucity of numbers, they know all about it now; and for years past and up to this day they have been ardently employed in making the most of the discovery. This our Ministers and other officials know who are now willing that the English "man in the street" shall learn the importance in a military sense of the native States of India. It has been pointed out that the Nizam's army is 45,000 strong, with 700 guns; that HOLKAR'S "regular" army is 10,000 men; that Baroda has some 20,000 soldiers; that while SCINDIA'S force is numbered at 22,000 men and 210 guns, it is believed that he can put 50,000 men into the field; that the Rajpoot princes command some 70,000 men; that the independent States of Cashmere and Nepaul can muster—the one 20,000, the other 100,000 disciplined soldiers; and so forth. But armies like these might be maintained by perfectly contented States, as little likely to quarrel with us as other foreigners are. That, however, is not the case, as our governors both at home and abroad are aware. Two or three of the most influential, intelligent, and powerful of these princes, and those who enjoy most intercourse with Europeans, have a long-cherished and bitter grievance against England. Each believes himself robbed (justly or unjustly we do not say), and they have looked so long and vainly for a remedy that at last they despair. And what if, under such circumstances, they incline to combine, as do the most peaceful of malcontents, and are already on the move with that object? What if they are secretly drilling more men than figure in the returns, and are not only buying arms of precision in great quantities (which is why the Indian Arms Act was passed), but are forging guns and manufacturing rifles at home, under the supervision of foreign experts, in a methodical if somewhat secret way? Would not all this, taken with other matters, incline us to think rather of the laws of self-preservation than of the glories of conquest or the joys of peace?

Now we say that all we have here set forth has lain clearly before our Government for some years. In its worst and most threatening aspect it lay before them a year ago, when they had to decide whether they would allow Russia to plant herself in the most commanding positions to operate on such a state of things. We know what course they chose to take; and how they came bragging back from Berlin with their cry of "Peace with honour;" and how sure they were that Russia had been overawed by their resolute policy; and how now at this moment they are forced to contemplate armed operations which are in fact nothing less than war for India against Russia; that is to say, against the Power whose ability to disturb the empire it pleased our Government to ridicule while they were helping her to do it. We leave our readers in contemplation of that fact, begging them to look back from it over all we have said above. If they do so, they will, we think, allow that the observations at the head of this article are justified, as well as much else that we have been constrained to say of late.

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"Times" Sept: 16th

(6)

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

(By Indo-European Telegraph, *vid* Teheran.)

(from our correspondent.)

CALCUTTA, Sept. 15.

The Cabul Mission remains the one topic of universal interest. All other subjects have become dwarfed into complete insignificance in comparison with the paramount importance attached in India to the present momentous departure from the long-established principles of Indian foreign policy. That policy, successful though it proved as long as there appeared no immediate possibility of the English and Russian Powers clashing in Asia, has at length, in consequence of the recent action of Russia in Afghanistan, been replaced by one of a more energetic character, and this not because the policy in itself was wanting in wisdom and foresight when framed and adopted, but simply for the reason that Russian energy and military enterprise in Central Asia have made such astoundingly rapid progress of late as completely to surprise all expectations. The key-note to the whole policy of abstention from interference with Central Asian politics existed in the absence of any idea that Russian influence could ever be established at Cabul otherwise than by conquest. On every occasion when closer relations between India and Cabul were sought to be established by the rulers of Afghanistan, the invariable reason alleged was dread of Russian aggression and desire for English protection. It was in consequence assumed almost as an axiom that if ever the time should arrive when a conflict in Asia between England and Russia was inevitable, the danger to India from Russia at least must be postponed until the country and people of Afghanistan should be entirely conquered and subdued. With this assumption a policy of non-interference was prudent. It was believed that Afghanistan if left alone would constitute for all practical purposes a barrier completely impassable between the two Powers, and that strong feeling of national independence, supported by the natural features of their country, would render the conquest of the Afghans by Russia a task of insuperable difficulty, considering the distance of the Russian base of operations and the consequent danger of interruption to her communications. It was felt, moreover, that in the event of Afghanistan not being able unaided to resist Russian aggression, it would be open to the British Power to accord her succour and assistance, subject to such conditions and terms as might seem desirable whenever the necessity for energetic action should arise, the Government being completely unfettered by treaty stipulations. Present events, however, have wholly cut the ground from under our feet, and a policy has now to be initiated which may be calculated to deal successfully with a very different set of possibilities. Every conceivable device of Indian diplomacy, supported by the all-cogent argument of immediate resort to military compulsion if the occasion demand it, will have to be exerted now and henceforth to prevent Afghanistan from becoming converted into a Russian camp. The Ameer has distinctly shown his hand, and unless he entirely withdraws from his present attitude of hostility it will be deemed indispensable for the protection of India to adopt in self-defence an infinitely more active foreign policy than that previously accepted. One of our great military authorities has lately stated as the result of his deliberate and well-considered opinion that our present frontier line is indefensible, that a mountain chain that can be pierced at many points is no protection, and that if we desire the Himalayas to serve as a natural barrier for the protection of India, we must as a mere defensive measure insist upon holding the outlets of the passes.

Preparations are being vigorously pushed forward at Peshawur for the despatch of the Mission. The latest information states that the number of the Mission will amount to about 1,000, including camp-followers. Every effort is being made to keep the number within reasonable bounds, but it is necessary to carry supplies for the road. The escort will be increased by an Infantry detachment, and possibly by a troop of the 10th Hussars. Arrangements have been effected with the Khyberees for a safe conduct through the Khyber Pass, and we have received hostages for the due performance of this undertaking. The Commissioner will accompany the Mission as far as Pakha, on the other side of the Khyber Pass, where a strong body of the Ameer's troops is stationed. The Nawab Ghulam Hussein Khan, the bearer of the Viceroy's letter, is said to be popular with the Ameer and his nobles, to whom he is well known in consequence of having acted as our agent at Cabul for many years.

Shere Ali is reported to be in favour of the succession of his grandson, Ahmed Ali Jan, son of Mahomed Ali Khan, who was killed in 1865 near Khilat Ghilsi while fighting for his father's throne against Sirdar Azim Khan. Ahmed Ali is described as an intelligent youth of about 18, with a pleasing demeanour and fairly well educated. The mother of Abdulla Jan is said to have another son still living, but incapacitated for rule by being totally deaf and dumb. The report of Yakoob's escape is still unconfirmed.

The Viceroy entertained Sir Neville Chamberlain at a banquet given in his honour prior to his departure for Peshawur. Lord Lytton made an impressive speech on the occasion, to which Sir Neville returned a fitting reply. It is universally felt that a task of no slight danger and difficulty has been imposed upon him, and he will carry with him the sympathy and good wishes of all. As a measure of the passionate animosity towards the British which it will be his duty to endeavour to convert to feelings of goodwill, it may be sufficient to quote the following extract from the Ameer's speech publicly uttered in open Durbar :—

"I have seven crores of rupees by me, every rupee of which I will hurl at the head of the British Government, and I will roll the border tribes against them like blasts of fire."

It is quite true that this beneficent intention was expressed some time ago, but we have no reason for believing that the Ameer's feelings have in the slightest degree been mollified since these words were uttered—unless, indeed, this has formed one of the results of the visit of the Russian Envoy, a supposition possible, but hardly probable, and one on which it would hardly be wise for General Chamberlain to rely for the protection of his Mission without taking other precautions.

The latest reports from Madras state that the prospects are favourable. In the Kistna uplands the crops are recovering from the damage done them by the recent excessive rains. The total number on the works is 102,000, those gratuitously relieved being 62,402.

The frontier is reported quite tranquil. The left wing of Jacob's Rifles and a detachment, 250 strong, of Scinde Horse are ordered to proceed to Quettah.

Prices are falling in Mysore, and prospects are good. The number on the works is 31,129, those gratuitously relieved being 13,199.

In the North-West Provinces and Oude prospects are good, and prices are falling. In the Punjab prospects are generally good and prices are showing a downward tendency. In consequence of severe floods in the Jullundar district, upwards of 1,000 houses have been destroyed. There is a slight improvement in exports; imports are dull. Sixty ships, carrying 85,784 tons, are unfreighted.

A committee has been appointed to report on the rent laws of Behar with a view to legislation.

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LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1878.

Our Calcutta Correspondent supplies further details this morning as to the mission to Cabul. It will be composed of infantry and cavalry detachments which, with camp followers, will bring up the number of the mission to 1,000 men. A safe conduct through the Khyber Pass has been secured, and hostages have been given by the native tribes who hold the pass in proof of their good faith. Thus SHERE ALI will very soon have to choose his part. As to the words said to have been uttered by him in open Durbar, they no doubt bear evidence of the passionate animosity towards the British Government which is attributed to him by our Correspondent. Much depends, however, upon the time at which they were uttered and the influences which gave rise to them. It will be the duty of SIR NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN to counteract these influences, and to show, as the fact is, that the AMEER'S interest is really bound up with our own, and that his independence can only be upheld by the maintenance of British rule. Those further measures which Indian rumours proclaim will follow a refusal to receive SIR NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN have probably been scarcely yet definitely shaped in the councils of Simla or Downing-street. The necessity for them is not likely to arise. To withhold from the VICEROY the courtesy extended to the CZAR would be a policy in which the AMEER must know that England could not acquiesce. But that cloud will, we hope and we believe, break, and not in tempest. It is of more permanent importance, perhaps, to compute the British strength and weakness within India than without. Scares like this from Cabul have their use in compelling Great Britain to essay her own armour while estimating the shock it might possibly have to resist. The survey we have lately published of the armies maintained by the great Indian feudatories contributes an element too often overlooked to the consideration. An empire resting on 200,000 bayonets cannot afford to be indifferent to the significance of other 300,000 soldiers garrisoning India, but not paid or officered by England. The Princes whom they serve are the QUEEN'S very good friends, and receive with loyal gratitude from her bounty salutes of cannon and ribands and crosses. If their troops are troops bound and certain to uphold whatever cause Great Britain may take up, nothing but pleasure could be felt at their efficiency. If there is any room for doubt in that respect, it is as well to compute the danger and the means of meeting it. Such peril as there is in the neighbourhood of native armies owning allegiance to native Indian Princes varies indefinitely in its kind and degree. No one acquainted with India has any fear of direct attacks on the British dominion by Rajpoot soldiery. Rajpoots are brave and manly, and their Princes are unapproachable in India for nobility of descent. But their ambition is not likely to kindle unless the whole peninsula should be in flames; and in such a contingency we should like to feel sure that if their troops did not swell the British army, neither would they paralyze its movements. The rulers of Nepaul and Cashmere occupy no such negative position. They help to guard our frontier, and they might assail it. The MAHARAJAH, however, is sufficiently persuaded of the completeness with which his power is bound up with English supremacy to be incapable of disloyalty. The same reasons which secured the friendship of Nepaul in the days of JUNG BAHADOOR and the Indian Mutiny may be supposed to operate still. It will be the fault of Anglo-Indian diplomacy if they do not. In any case, the danger, little or great, is there before us. Nepaul is an independent Power, and we can measure its strength, whether as friend or foe. When we come to the NIZAM and the Mahratta Princes the problem is more complex. The NIZAM arms 50,000 soldiers, and the three Mahratta States between 50,000 and 60,000. In addition, SCINDIAH has borrowed the policy of STEIN, and is passing through his army of 22,000 men the whole male portion of his three million subjects. To the ordinary English mind, SCINDIAH, HOLKAR, the GUIKWAR, and the NIZAM are in much the same class as the Maharajah of BURDWAN. That they possess armies may be known, but the fact makes little impression. Their military apparatus is regarded either as all pomp and parade, or the troops of Indore, Gwalior, Guzerat, and Hyderabad are merely English troops under another name.

In truth, it is still hanging in the balance what should be the head under which to classify them. Native foundries cast cannon for their forts and field batteries, and every improvement European skill can devise is introduced forthwith into their tactics. The pacification of old family feuds which has been effected by the native Ministers of SCINDIAH and HOLKAR more than doubles the striking power of the two Sovereigns. There is no necessity for imagining a formed conspiracy against British dominion in India in order to feel the danger there might be in such a condition of things. Both the three prominent divisions of the Mahratta people and the NIZAM'S subjects come of warlike races. The acknowledged rulers of Gwalior and Indore, and the actual rulers of the other two States, are not sunk in apathy and indolence, like many Indian Princes. We cannot wish that they should be, though their energy disturbs the repose of the Calcutta War Office. They have their rivalries and emulation with each other. SCINDIAH in multiplying his soldiers may not be thinking of their efficiency so much against an English army as against his fellow feudatories. Statesmen so sagacious as SIR DINKUR RAO in Gwalior, SIR SALAR JUNG in Hyderabad, and SIR MAHDAVA RAO in Baroda appreciate the worth of friendship with the Indian Government. When they countenance the expenditure of native resources on forces which are utterly useless so long as Great Britain guards the peace of India, it is not necessary to assume that they are meditating an assault upon British rule. It is believed that they are in fact looking forward to a possible occasion when British protection may be no longer available, and when the present feudatory States may be left directly confronting one another. To Englishmen the prospect must appear visionary. Symptoms are, happily, altogether wanting in favour of a suspicion that the administration of India is dropping from the grasp of England. It might be wrested out of English hands by main force; and England would survive the loss, as she has survived the secession of her North American colonies. She would not survive the listless abdication of such a splendid trust as that of her Indian Empire. Native principalities, as SIR SALAR JUNG and SIR DINKUR RAO must know, would be far from gaining independence by the forcible substitution of another foreign sceptre for that of Great Britain. On the other hand, they are strangely deceived if they think that India is growing ripe for being left to itself. Short of such a fancy they may yet consider it their duty to develope the military as they do the other resources of their countries. An able Minister of a feudatory State, in proportion to his consciousness of his own capacity, is likely, without any definite calculation of British eclipse, to regard as more or less accidental the connexion with England which Englishmen naturally hold to be essential. He administers his State, so far as he may, as if it were not so much independent as self-dependent. What he would desire most to encourage among his Prince's subjects is a sense of nationality; and an efficient army is one among the means towards this end.

The sentiment we respect. Attempts to cultivate an instinct of political unity in the native States ought not to be frowned down. But the idea, however good in itself, can scarcely be permitted to develope indefinitely in the direction of increasing the local troops and arming the population. In the first place, India is tasked sufficiently by the charge of 200,000 troops in the QUEEN'S service. Directly and indirectly, the NIZAM'S and SCINDIAH'S soldiers are so much dead weight added to Indian burdens. India, it cannot be too often repeated, is a poor country. Individuals are rich; but their riches are simply the riches of the whole peninsula concentrated in a few hands. The expenditure of this so-called private wealth on superfluous soldiers and artillery is an absolute loss and impoverishment to the land. The mere wastefulness of armies in States guaranteed by the power of Great Britain against assault both from without and from within is not a ground on which the discretion of the NIZAM'S or the Mahratta Governments could, perhaps, be questioned, though it may obviate any sentimental objection to interference with the growth of such a feeling of national unity as the possession of a national army encourages. The reason, however, why England is entitled to require to be taken into council when military changes are introduced by a native Government cannot be set forth too clearly and frankly. SIR DINKUR RAO and SIR SALAR JUNG know and acknowledge that the military guardianship of India is the duty and the right of England. Their military energy need not be abruptly checked, but they should be invited themselves to suggest how it can be made to combine with, and play its proper part in, the general scheme of Indian defences. SCINDIAH is showing himself receptive of the fruitful idea by which Prussia fitted herself to renew her military vitality from the midst of political death. Good rather than harm both to England and to himself might result from the change if he would also in some shape or other incorporate his local soldiers in the Imperial Army of India, which Great Britain leads. The final choice of the feudatory States must be between no army and one which should be a wing of the confederate Indian forces. Officered jointly by natives and by Englishmen, and manœuvred on proper occasions as part of an Imperial army, native forces might, perhaps, be made a new source of internal strength to India. At present they are a motive and a nucleus for disturbing conjectures and delusions, which injure none more than the princes and populations whose resources are squandered upon them.

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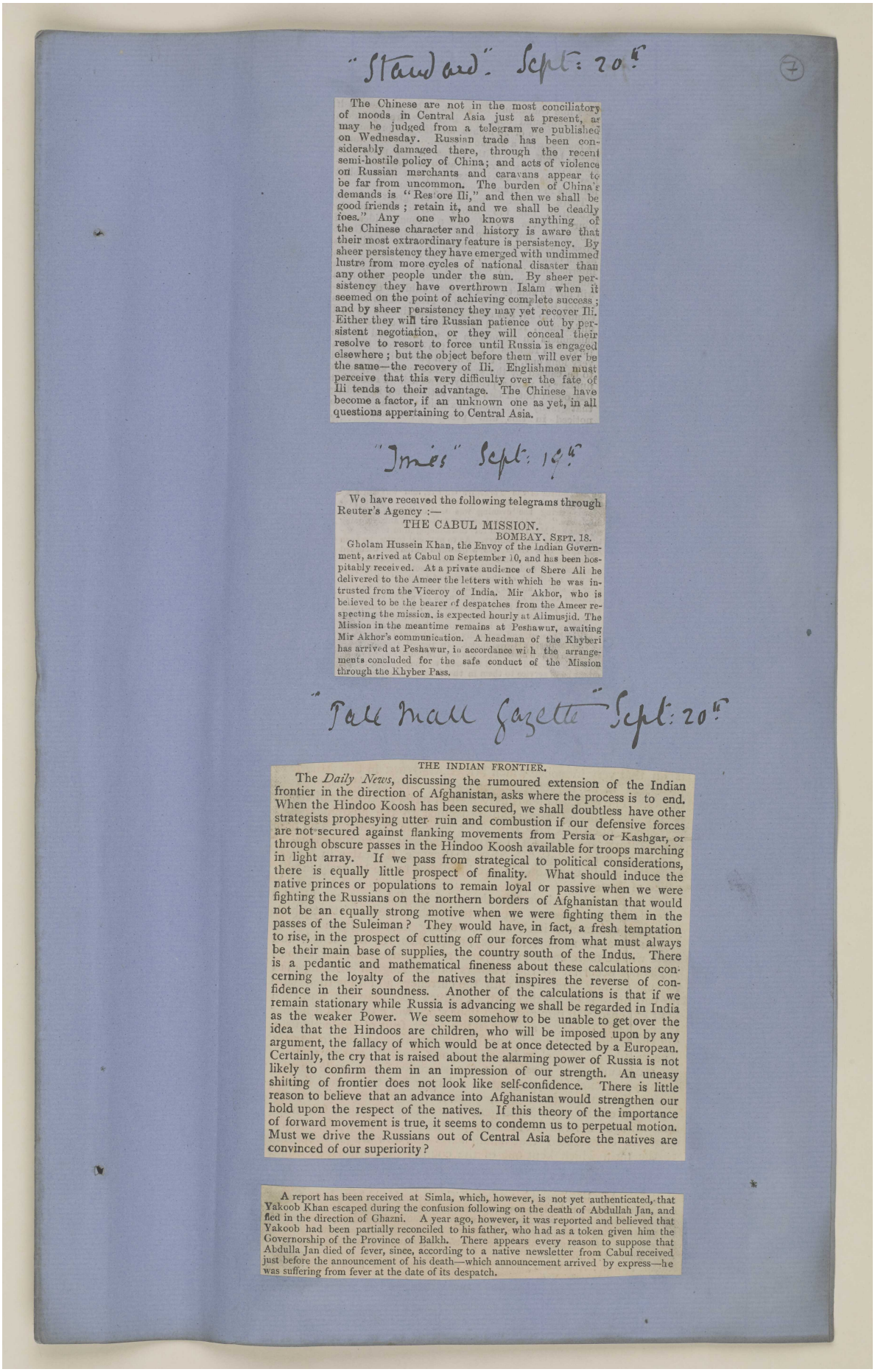

"Standard" Sept: 20th

(7)

The Chinese are not in the most conciliatory of moods in Central Asia just at present, as may be judged from a telegram we published on Wednesday. Russian trade has been considerably damaged there, through the recent semi-hostile policy of China; and acts of violence on Russian merchants and caravans appear to be far from uncommon. The burden of China's demands is "Restore Ili," and then we shall be good friends; retain it, and we shall be deadly foes." Any one who knows anything of the Chinese character and history is aware that their most extraordinary feature is persistency. By sheer persistency they have emerged with undimmed lustre from more cycles of national disaster than any other people under the sun. By sheer persistency they have overthrown Islam when it seemed on the point of achieving complete success; and by sheer persistency they may yet recover Ili. Either they will tire Russian patience out by persistent negotiation, or they will conceal their resolve to resort to force until Russia is engaged elsewhere; but the object before them will ever be the same—the recovery of Ili. Englishmen must perceive that this very difficulty over the fate of Ili tends to their advantage. The Chinese have become a factor, if an unknown one as yet, in all questions appertaining to Central Asia.

"Times" Sept: 19th

We have received the following telegrams through Reuter's Agency :—

THE CABUL MISSION.

BOMBAY, SEPT. 18.

Gholam Hussein Khan, the Envoy of the Indian Government, arrived at Cabul on September 10, and has been hospitably received. At a private audience of Shere Ali he delivered to the Ameer the letters with which he was intrusted from the Viceroy of India. Mir Akhor, who is believed to be the bearer of despatches from the Ameer respecting the mission, is expected hourly at Alimusjid. The Mission in the meantime remains at Peshawur, awaiting Mir Akhor's communication. A headman of the Khyberi has arrived at Peshawur, in accordance with the arrangements concluded for the safe conduct of the Mission through the Khyber Pass.

"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 20th

THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

The *Daily News*, discussing the rumoured extension of the Indian frontier in the direction of Afghanistan, asks where the process is to end. When the Hindoo Koosh has been secured, we shall doubtless have other strategists prophesying utter ruin and combustion if our defensive forces are not secured against flanking movements from Persia or Kashgar, or through obscure passes in the Hindoo Koosh available for troops marching in light array. If we pass from strategical to political considerations, there is equally little prospect of finality. What should induce the native princes or populations to remain loyal or passive when we were fighting the Russians on the northern borders of Afghanistan that would not be an equally strong motive when we were fighting them in the passes of the Suleiman? They would have, in fact, a fresh temptation to rise, in the prospect of cutting off our forces from what must always be their main base of supplies, the country south of the Indus. There is a pedantic and mathematical fineness about these calculations concerning the loyalty of the natives that inspires the reverse of confidence in their soundness. Another of the calculations is that if we remain stationary while Russia is advancing we shall be regarded in India as the weaker Power. We seem somehow to be unable to get over the idea that the Hindoos are children, who will be imposed upon by any argument, the fallacy of which would be at once detected by a European. Certainly, the cry that is raised about the alarming power of Russia is not likely to confirm them in an impression of our strength. An uneasy shifting of frontier does not look like self-confidence. There is little reason to believe that an advance into Afghanistan would strengthen our hold upon the respect of the natives. If this theory of the importance of forward movement is true, it seems to condemn us to perpetual motion. Must we drive the Russians out of Central Asia before the natives are convinced of our superiority?

A report has been received at Simla, which, however, is not yet authenticated, that Yakoob Khan escaped during the confusion following on the death of Abdullah Jan, and fled in the direction of Ghazni. A year ago, however, it was reported and believed that Yakoob had been partially reconciled to his father, who had as a token given him the Governorship of the Province of Balkh. There appears every reason to suppose that Abdulla Jan died of fever, since, according to a native newsletter from Cabul received just before the announcement of his death—which announcement arrived by express—he was suffering from fever at the date of its despatch.

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"Daily news" Sept: 20th

THE MISSION TO CABUL.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, AUGUST 26.

The sole topic just now is the mission to Cabul. Years ago, in 1869 and 1873, the Ameer sent representatives to this place, offering us his alliance on certain terms, but we refused. That England's masterly inactivity has much to answer for in the present state of affairs in Cabul few doubt. The Indian papers ask in what position we shall be if the Ameer refuses to accept our mission. It will be remembered that it was in 1873 that Sir John Strachey was officiating Governor-General, and it was then, I think, that the Ameer's representatives predicted to our Government that the Russians would advance; but they were not listened to. Why the Government of India should have refused the proposition of the Ameer of Cabul when so little was to be lost and so much was to be gained it is as impossible to say as it is to foretell the result of the Afghanistan mission.

Sir Neville Chamberlain, who is now here, is to await the Ameer's reply, and if he goes will be accompanied by Majors Cavagnari and St. John. Both of them are very highly thought of. The former made his mark some short time ago on the frontier, while the latter is thoroughly well informed on the affairs of Afghanistan and Beloochistan, and the state of feeling in Central Asia. The death of the heir-apparent to the throne of Cabul will probably cause some little delay in the departure of the mission, in consequence of the public mourning. At whatever time Sir Neville Chamberlain starts on his journey he is sure to have powerful assistance close at hand, the number of troops accompanying him being 400. Rumours are flying about that instead of having manœuvres this year we shall send an army of observation into Afghanistan, its probable destination being Herat! That we could be so weak as to send a force, large enough to take care of itself, to Herat, I cannot bring myself at present to believe, considering the great difficulty in feeding such a force so far from Peshawur. The Kyber Pass, which we shall probably occupy, would also intervene. But if the Government out here only come to the belief that things could not be worse than they are in Afghanistan, they may do anything, without reference to the past or the future.

The leading Liberal paper in this country says, with reference to our advance to Quetta and our mission to Cabul, that the latter is only "the next step in the development in our Imperial policy," and that we shall "advance to Candahar and Herat, for which our Imperialists have only been biding their time." It points out that the "attitude" of "unconcern and non-interference" assumed by our Indian Government in '73 is "now pronounced a mistake," and that "the mission is likely to be not the culmination" of anything, but "the beginning of serious complications and troubles to us, on which Russia from Central Asia will look on in quiet and safe enjoyment." That our commissariat arrangements in this country would enable us to furnish supplies to the number of men required to hold Herat, Candahar, and Quetta is a question that few men would like to answer positively in the affirmative. The country round the two latter places failed to supply 9,000 men in 1839 when the mustered establishment of the army of the Indus, amounting to that number, had to remain on half rations for two days on their arrival at Candahar, after having been forty-two days on half rations. What assistance we could now derive from the supplies of the countries of Afghanistan and Beloochistan if they were required is yet to be learned, but all the points I have mentioned would have to be taken into consideration before anything like a force could be launched so far from Sindh and the Punjab, for the only two big roads by which to supply any number of men from India lie through the Kyber and Bolan passes.

The *Indian Weekly Review* says with reference to the Russian movements: "There is another point to be considered, which is that it would be hardly worth the while of the Russians to go some 250 miles out of their way to Herat in order to turn the Bamian while a tolerably direct route exists from Balk or from Khulm lying just south of the ferries to Cabul. This route crosses the Bamian certainly, but that is not a very formidable pass, if Afghanistan were not generally hostile. Such a movement would certainly be the best they could make, for at the worst they could establish themselves north of the Oxus, when there are no forces sufficiently well armed to oppose them, while if they had any luck they might get hold of Balkh or Khulm, and thus form a *tête de pont* across the Oxus, from which they could keep up a constant irritation and annoyance to the Government of India. Moreover, a move by Herat or to Herat would at once rouse England to its centre, for every one at home has been taught to consider Herat as a point which must be kept out of the hands of Russia; whereas in the case of Balkh or Khulm, although absolutely nearer to our frontier, the names of the places are unknown to the majority of Englishmen at home, and the danger might not be seen until the seizure had been accomplished."

The new departure that is apparently contemplated in Indian foreign politics in the mission that has actually started for Cabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, and which is only the first step in the scheme vaguely foreshadowed, induces us to lay before our readers a map of the Central Asian countries. It will be in the memory of some of our readers that we gave a map of this region on April 6, 1876, in which the mountain section was prominently shown. Following that idea, we give here considerable prominence to the country, which has an absolute elevation of more than 5,000 feet. In the notes which illustrated that map we pointed out that the Kashgar Yarkand Plain, then in the possession of the Atalig Amir, or Atalik Ghazi, to whom we had but just sent a mission, and with whom we had concluded a commercial treaty, was an integral part of the Chinese Empire, and that we might expect the Chinese sooner or later to endeavour to recover this province from the rebels. This event has come about somewhat sooner than we expected. On December 19, 1877, the Chinese troops entered Kashgar. Beg-Kuli-Beg, the son of the Atalik Ghazi, Yakub Beg, who died in June, 1877, fled into Russia (Khokand), and the Chinese Government was re-established. We also stated that Russia wanted a mercantile marine for the development of her commerce, and for this purpose she required ports that are open all the year round; and we added, "It is in the direction of warm water that her next moves will probably be, and the disruption of Turkey, with purchases or exchanges with Persia, might give her what she seeks." How far we were right in this, the history of the Berlin Congress helps to elucidate. She has got Batum, a port open all the year round, and she has conciliated Persia by insisting on the restitution of the Kotur Valley, that has been in Turkish occupation for many years. Russia is essentially a plain country. She has not a hill of 2,000 feet high within a thousand miles of her capital, and you may travel the whole breadth of her vast and thinly-populated empire, a distance of more than 4,000 miles, without seeing a mountain. Except the Urals, which are really but an insignificant ridge, the mountains are only found on her extreme borders. It is like a vast garden bounded by a wall of from one to five miles high. Over this expansive plain large bodies can move but slowly, and the habits and customs of, and appliances suitable for, a plain country have all to be unlearned or altered in the mountains.

The frontier of Russia has not altered within the area that our map illustrates since 1876, it is therefore unnecessary to go over the ground again in describing it. The thick broken lines used for the boundaries of India and Russia are sufficiently distinct of themselves, while the scale in the right bottom corner will enable our readers to measure roughly how near England and Russia approach each other in point of direct distance;

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but it must not be forgotten, however, that the whole area tinted with black dots indicates mountainous country of more than 5,000 feet, and where the boundaries most nearly approach each other of nearly 20,000 feet absolute height. The passage of these mountains is attended with considerable danger for even small parties, with all the appliances and means to boot. Surgeon-Major Bellew says, in speaking of the journey over the passes from India to Kashgar, made by the Embassy to Kashgar in 1874, that four hundred yaks were provided to carry their luggage, and that even these animals pant distressingly. That many of the attendants were affected by the elevation with headache, nausea, and giddiness, so that several tumbled off their ponies and grazed their cheeks and hands upon the rocks and ice. He adds: "Just as I was going to sleep, in the hopes of forgetting the pain that racked my head, and the nausea that well-nigh floored me, I was started up by a sense of immediate suffocation. A few deep but unsatisfying gasps and a reeling giddiness brought my head on the pillows again to dose dreamily awhile, only to start up afresh and go through the same process over again, and so on till the bugle bade me rise. The exertion of dressing, a luxury I henceforward carefully denied myself till we got down to a dressing level, well-nigh finished me." We might multiply this testimony by reference to all the recent travellers who have crossed the passes anywhere between the Mustagh, on the east of our map, and the Bamian, west of Cabul, showing conclusively the impracticability of this country for the march of any modern army. The only route by which India can be approached by land is from the direction of Astrabad, on the Caspian Sea, by Herat, Girishk, Kandahar, Kalat-i-Ghilzi, Cabul, and the Khyber Pass, or perhaps by the Gumal Pass, or leaving this line at Kandahar and proceeding by Quetta and the Bolan Pass. These lines have been well described by a recent writer, in a pamphlet published under the title, "Is a Russian Invasion of India Feasible?" He says:

Suppose the general commanding an invading army at Herat decides his principal line of operations should be through the Khyber Pass. To reach Firozpur on the Sutlej the distances are as follows:

Herat, via Girishk to Cabul	637 miles, or	56	marches.
Cabul to Firozpur	413 „	52	„
	1,200 miles requires	108	days.

If one day's halt be allowed after every seven marches, infantry would occupy a hundred and twenty-three days in travelling the distance—say, four months and a half.

But as the Punjaub is intersected by five large rivers, the most favourable season of invasion is when these streams are at their lowest, which is during the first few weeks of January, when the climate in Upper India is very suitable for field operations. The distance of 885 miles from Herat to the Khyber, or fifty-nine days' march, should be accomplished before the last day of the year, and with this object Herat should be quitted in the early part of October. It would be imprudent for an invader of India to rely entirely on Afghan neutrality or amity, and it is probable he would not advance from Herat until he had arranged by negotiation or force for garrisoning certain towns to protect the lines of his communication with his base, which, if he had originally moved from Persia, would be Herat, and, if a railway under his military control connected Samarkand and Cabul, would be Central Asia; or he might move two armies at the same time from both bases respectively, the Persian force moving on the Bolan via Kandahar, the Central Asian force advancing on the Khyber by Samarkand and Cabul. It is possible that the Afghans would temporise with a European invader in possession of Herat, and in command of a large and highly disciplined army, and perhaps join him, in the hope of sharing the spoils of India. With the treachery habitual to the Afghan, it might prove unfaithful to him in the event of reverses. No prudent general, therefore, would move without a convention for the surrender of certain places, which he would fortify and garrison.

The Khyber will then have to be forced, and the neutrality of its tribes purchased, or their alliance perhaps bought with promises of the plunder of Hindostan.

To sum up possible accidents of an invasion by the Khyber, to be successful 885 miles of communication have to be protected, a great pass forced or gained, and perhaps five great battles fought before the Punjaub was lost to the defenders of India.

Let us now suppose that the Bolan pass be selected for an invasion from Herat. The distances to be traversed will be as follows:—

Herat, via Girishk to Kandahar ...	300 miles, or	28	marches.
Kandahar by the Bolan to Sukkur	393 „	34	„
Sukkur to Firozpur.....	457 „	36	„
	1,150 „	98	„

Allow, as before, a day's halt after a week's march, and the journey for infantry marching will take one hundred and twelve days, or four months within a week.

The task before the army advancing in this direction would be, first, to capture and fortify Kandahar if it was not surrendered peacefully; next, to force the Bolan Pass, and to occupy Sukkur and Northern Scinde before moving up towards Firozpur.

The Bolan is hardly a pass, but a succession of ravines and gorges, having a gradual descent from west to east, and not being inhabited by tribes as fierce or as numerous as those who have guarded from time immemorial the hills of the Khyber, no great difficulty would be experienced by a modern and well-appointed European army in forcing a passage, unless opposed, as most likely would happen, by British troops at Quetta. The southern extremity of the Bolan defile is ten marches from Sukkur, and it is probably here an invader would meet with his first supreme danger or disaster. But the pass is of great length—66 miles—and in width narrows from three miles at the southern extremity to 150 feet at the northern end.

General Havelock says:—"The predatory tribes of the Bolan or of the ranges of hills between them and Kandahar are not formidable enemies in their defiles, but the difficulties of the descent after passing the Bolan are, to a large army, from the want of forage and water, appalling." Of the difficulty attending a passage through the Khyber in the face of hostile tribes, we have sufficient evidence in the retreat of the British army in 1842 from Cabul, when out of a force of some 4,500 men and 20,000 or so of camp followers only one lived to reach Peshawur to tell the awful tale.

On the British side, which we have considered as the defending force, an army fully equipped could be sent out from England and massed on any part of our present frontier in less than six weeks. We have now railway communication from Kurrachee by Hyderabad to Sukkur on the Indus. Here there is a break, as the river cannot yet be bridged; but on the opposite shore the railway takes up again and runs to Mooltan, Lahore, and along the Ganges Valley to Calcutta, with connection to Bombay. A branch line from Lahore, already completed as far as the River Chenab, is being rapidly pushed forward to Peshawur. From Peshawur the British mission, after receiving the hostages of the Khyberi, or tribes that inhabit the neighbourhood of the Khyber Pass, will traverse that pass and proceed to Cabul, which lies in a sort of *cirque* or blind valley, at an elevation of 6,000 feet above the sea, with mountains of from 12,000 to 20,000 feet towering over them on all sides. The passes across these in the west and south are not so difficult as those described in the Hindu Kush and Karakorum ranges.

A small force has already moved up to occupy Quetta, at the head of the Bolan Pass, and probably Residents will soon be stationed amongst the independent tribes that fringe the Indian frontier, and serve as a sort of buffer between India and Afghanistan. Finally, an interesting and useful study might be made by comparing what has been actually accomplished lately, and with what loss and outlay, by a Russian force moving from its base through a friendly country, where supplies could be readily obtained, and where railway and road were ready to hand, with a force moving ten times the distance from its base through a country where large tracts are waste and waterless, sometimes hard, sometimes sandy, interspersed with stretches of salt desert, and occasionally rugged and cut up, as though it had been purposely rendered roadless and difficult of transit, where much of the country produces barely enough to support the present sparse population, and where for long distances it is totally uninhabitable.

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"Daily News" Sept. 20th

OUR AFFGHANISTAN POLICY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—Your excellent article of this date on our Affghanistan policy gives a very necessary warning as to a very serious danger into which we are being led by our rulers. It is with the utmost concern that we must view the total abandonment of their policy of "masterly inactivity" in respect of Affghanistan which was the key-note of the foreign policy of Sir John Lawrence, and which has been approximately maintained by his successors, until the present Viceroy of India, under the inspiration of Lord Beaconsfied, takes up the lines of the old policy of forty years ago, which led to the miserable blunder and discomfiture and ruinous expense of the Affghan war. When Mr. Owen Meredith reproduced, without acknowledgment, for the benefit of the English public, the German of *Tannhäuser*, there was some justification of the performance in the excellence of the original, but to plagiarise Lord Auckland is altogether unworthy of Lord Lytton's adaptive powers. If it is vain to hope that we shall peaceably acquire a paramount influence over Shere Ali and his turbulent subjects it is still more vain to expect that such influence, acquired by physical force, could add to the strength of our position in India. If, as I believe, the present Government have for the last two years been successfully playing Russia's game in Europe, much more will Russia rejoice to see us leave our natural military base in Asia, and advance more than three hundred miles across a wild and hostile country, to within easy striking distance of her armies. The military pretence that the Hindoo Khoosh range is a more defensible barrier-line than the Suleiman, is not much to the purpose. *Per se*, it may be a better strategic position; *propter alia*, it certainly is not. As Sir John Kaye said in his admirable article in the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1867, "Affghanistan is a land, in Lord Wellesley's contemptuous phrase, of rocks, sand, deserts, ice, and snow. Take a small force into the country and you are beaten; take a large one and you are starved."

It seems to be the one object of the Government, contrary to all recognised rules of statecraft, to diffuse the national resources as widely as possible, as if we had a plethora of men and money, and as if the motto "Divide et impera" were to be understood as inculcating a minute subdivision of the forces of the Imperial aspirant. To me it appears that we are by this course creating, of our own accord, a grievous hazard to the stability of our Indian Empire. And especially is it unwise at the present juncture. If I may ask the question without incurring Mr. Hanbury's wrath, is our Indian Empire so well knit together that we can afford thus voluntarily to disturb its peace? Have we dealt so justly and so generously with the Nizam in the matter of the Berars that we can confidently expect his Prime Minister to prove himself the ardent ally of 1857? Are the native princes as well satisfied with the dignities accorded to them, and so sure of their permanence under the present régime, that they would with their large armies cover our retreat in case of reverses, or even abstain from active co-operation with the foe, whether Russian or Affghan? Doubtless the reed upon which the English Government lean, both in Europe and Asia, is Mohammedanism. But is it not a reed of uncertain character, which, whether it breaks under the strain or not, is likely to pierce the bearer's hand? Any enforcement of our suzerainty over Affghanistan would certainly shatter the reed at once. At present all the fervour of Islam is hot against Russia, but if by high-handed measures we arouse the ill-will or the fears of Shere Ali, will not the English giaour be equally hateful throughout the East? One more question I would submit for the consideration of a nation that is content to be led blindfold by statesmen falsely so called. Does the ill-gotten revenue from opium weigh so heavily on the conscience of the counsellors of the Empress of India that they cannot take to themselves the Biblical assurance—in quietness and confidence shall be your strength? Otherwise no motto could at the present moment be more appropriate, none more conducive to our true welfare.—Yours, &c.,

Bournemouth, Sept. 17. E. I. SANDARS.

THE INDIAN PRESS AND THE CABUL MISSION.

The Calcutta *Englishman* of August 26 thus writes concerning the mission of Sir Neville Chamberlain to the Ameer of Cabul:

Whether the approaching mission to Cabul should be the forerunner of a hostile expedition, or whether it should result in an amicable understanding between the Ameer and the British Government, it is absolutely indispensible that British influence should henceforth be a much more potent factor in Afghan politics than hitherto. However weighty may be the arguments in favour of the policy of masterly inactivity, that policy is tenable only as long as no other Power intervenes. This fact has long since been recognised, and is admitted in principle by even the staunchest advocates of non-intervention. The Manchester school themselves would scarcely maintain that, without being false to our own interests, we could allow any foreign influence to dominate Cabul politics; and whatever difference of opinion may exist on the subject merely concerns the question at what point interference would become necessary. It is notorious that we should long since have entered into much closer relations with Cabul but for the reliance, real or factitious, which the British Foreign Office placed upon assurances from St. Petersburg. In 1873 the Ameer Sheer Ali, who either understood better than ourselves the true value of such assurances, or was less disposed to dissemble his real opinion of their value, sent an envoy to Lord Northbrook, at Simla, to seek a defensive alliance with England. This envoy foretold, step by step, the subsequent Russian advances in Asia, and spared no argument to disabuse the Government of India of its misplaced confidence in Russian promises. But Prince Gortschakoff had just then, for the hundredth time, solemnly reiterated the old pledge that the Russian Government absolutely repudiated all concern with Cabul affairs, and considered the territories of Afghanistan entirely outside its sphere of action. The envoy was consequently dismissed with a polite refusal, and returned to Cabul marvelling at British gullibility. Apart altogether from subsequent grounds, real or imaginary, of dissatisfaction, it is hardly to be wondered at if the Ameer has turned from those who would neither help nor believe him to a Government which has given such convincing proofs of its power to strike in his immediate neighbourhood, which shows no signs of halting in its career of aggression, which is troubled by no scruples about smooth promises, and which courts the alliance we have scouted. Had we not rejected Sheer Ali's advances in 1873, we should not now have had to elect between humiliation none the less tolerable for being merited, and the risk of being drawn into an attitude of aggression, none the less ungenerous under the circumstances, because dedicated by imperious political necessities. The tone which the mission may adopt towards Sheer Ali, in the first instance, will depend largely upon the extent to which he may have compromised himself in the negotiations with Russia. Every disposition will no doubt be shown to treat with leniency past errors, which we have in a measure forced upon him, but only on conditions regarding the future which he may or may not accept. There is, in short, no disguising the fact that, in sending this mission, we must be prepared, should occasion require, to offer Sheer Ali his choice between accepting, at our bidding, an alliance which we refused to enter into at his invitation, and the sword. Should he receive the mission, and should he unreservedly throw in his lot with ourselves, all will be well; but should he refuse to receive the mission, or should he reject our overtures, we shall be compelled, for our own protection, to adopt measures in regard to which his interests will be a subordinate consideration, and which, if he resists them, we shall have to carry into effect by force. The tone of public opinion in England is a sufficient guarantee that there will be no retreating or wavering in the policy of the Government, even if that were otherwise possible. The delay in the despatch of the mission, necessitated by the death of Abdullah Jan, will be but slight, its arrival at Cabul being so timed as to take place in the beginning of October, when the period of forty days' mourning will have terminated.

The Simla Correspondent of the *Englishman* writes:

Opinions on the subject seem most varied. Many of the military men seem to think that we are late in the field, and that we ought to have been there long before the Russians. But it is difficult to see how this could have been carried out, as long as the Ameer objected to our doing so. It is quite true it might have been done by force, but then it is questionable whether the game would have been worth the candle, as now the Ameer has admitted Europeans and a mission with escort from Russia, it is thought out of his power to refuse to grant a similar position to the English, without coming to an open rupture, which does not seem to be generally considered a probable occurrence. Of course there are many ardent soldiers who look upon the latter as a consummation devoutly to be wished, just as there are men of an opposite school of thought who look upon our having anything to do with Afghanistan in any way as an error, and with whom the remembrance of our misfortunes in that country is much stronger than that of the victories which followed.

A paragraph in the same paper states:

It is generally believed in Cabul that Sardar Sher Dil Khán, Shâhghasi, the late Governor of Balk, was poisoned, having fallen under the Ameer's suspicion of intriguing with the Russians. His property was forfeited to the State. The Ameer is said to be becoming more and more the slave of a savage and ungovernable temper, and liable, whilst under its influence, to sacrifice the lives of subjects on the faintest pretext; and the death of his favourite son and heir is not likely to improve his temper.

An article in the *Times of India*, of August 30, says:

The selection of Sir Neville Chamberlain as chief of the mission has given great satisfaction in India, for it would be difficult to find anywhere a man better fitted for the trust. Majors Cavagnari and St. John are equally well chosen, both officers having given abundant promise of a distinction which may one day match that of Sir Neville himself. Our Simla correspondent writes:—"The chief topic of interest which is discussed here at present is the mission to Cabul and its members. The news of the Ameer having received the Russian Embassy, while admission to our representatives has all along been so rigorously opposed, has startled, as it well might do, our statesmen not only here but at home. They have at last woke up to the fact of the ridiculous, not to say dangerous, position that would result from Cabul becoming a tributary State to Russia, and have determined, though somewhat late in the day, to put matters with the Ameer on a more satisfactory basis. In doing so, however, the task is anything but an easy one, owing to the *laissez faire* policy with regard to Central Asian matters that has latterly been adopted by the Home Government. Our last negotiations with the ruler of Cabul did not occur so long ago but that they are still well remembered, and the sudden change of policy is so marked as to deserve a word in passing.

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"Daily news" Sept: 20th

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It was thought for some time that the Ameer's dependence had been purchased by lavish gifts of money and arms, and that he could be relied on to form a kind of buffer to Russian conquest in the direction of our Indian Empire. Circumstances, however, arose which tended to expose the fallacy of this idea, and it was with the view of ascertaining the exact state of affairs between our Government and that of Cabul that the Peshawur Conference was held. The Ameer had no objection to receiving lakhs of rupees, or hundreds of rifles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, these being in his view of the case a somewhat negative sign of his vassalage, but when this Government naturally demanded a certain *quid pro quo* in the shape of Residents at one or two places of importance in his territory, the plenipotentiary discreetly became suddenly ill, necessitating the closing of the durbar. Thus it was seen that rather than accept our favours and renounce his independence, the Ameer chose to do his utmost in keeping the Khyber shut against us. Probably it would have been better for him had he chosen the former alternative. Recent events have shown how thoroughly in earnest the scheming Russ is in his endeavours to become the paramount power in Central Asia, and Government is now quite alive to the necessity of a more intimate acquaintance with what goes on behind the Black Mountain. The Ameer, therefore, will find it somewhat less easy than before to put off the Government demands. It may be a little flattering to his pride to find both Russia and England anxious to win him over, but he will probably not be prepared to find that whether he likes it or not, he will have no opportunity of gainsaying what is now to be demanded of him. Another camp of exercise is, I hear, likely to be formed near the Bolan Pass, and the troops will probably assemble there as well as at Hassan Abdul some time in October. The Quetta garrison is also to be strengthened, so that altogether frontier matters are looking up, and in the somewhat remote event of the Ameer not acquiescing in the views of Government some of the Punjaub regiments may ere long find themselves in the strongholds of Cabul." Our Jullander correspondent tells us that the mission is looked upon with great anxiety by all who are able to appreciate the incalculable mischief that a mistake might cause. "There is (he says) at present unquestionably a restless spirit abroad in the bazaars, and even in the villages; the wild rumours with which we have been favoured by the *Times* as to three converging Russian columns marching for the Indian frontier, distorted and exaggerated, are eagerly discussed; and any fresh insolence on the part of the Ameer, any apparent diplomatic check in the duel of statecraft in which we have chosen to engage, is likely to produce a very unfavourable impression on the native mind. Personally I regard the present trans-frontier policy of the Indian Government with the deepest distrust. It is a most dangerous path to embark on, if we are insulted and defied, and are not ready at once to punish the offender in an exemplary manner."

"Daily news" Sept: 21st

OUR AFFGHANISTAN POLICY.—(To the Editor of the *Daily News*.)—Sir,—Thoroughly agreeing with the remarks contained in Mr. Sandars' letter on Affghanistan policy in your issue of to-day, may I be permitted to observe that "the admirable article in the *Edinburgh Review* of January, 1867," which he attributes to the pen of Sir John Kaye, was written by the late John W. S. Wyllie, while Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Viceroyalty of Lord Lawrence? That essay, which expounds the grounds for adhering to our present line of Indian defence has, with others by the same author, been republished by Dr. W. W. Hunter ("Essays on the External Policy of India": Smith, Elder and Co.), and well deserves notice at this moment, when the policy of Imperialism is leading to an inevitable occupation of Affghanistan. The aim of a succession of Viceroys was to give no umbrage to the Affghans, and if possible to obtain the friendship of their ruler, but Lord Lytton's actions have produced the most opposite results. John Wyllie, while pointing out that the strategic advantages of an occupation of Quetta were doubtful, observed that the political disadvantages were obvious, one of them being the certainty of arousing the jealousy of the Affghans. Time has verified this view. We are in occupation of Quetta; and the ruler of Affghanistan, whose friendship we seek, declares in a tempest of passion that sooner than give it to us he will expend against us every rupee in his treasury, and roll the whole border in fire.—I am, &c., E.—Devonshire Club, St. James's, S.W., Sept. 20.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 21st

OPINION IN THE WEEKLY REVIEWS.

ENGLISH POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN.

The *Saturday Review* observes that if such an enterprise as the occupation of Cabul and Herat is undertaken, there is reason to suppose that it will be successful. The disaster of forty years ago was caused by the incapacity of a general appointed with exclusive regard to his family connection, and by the misconduct of other military and civil officials. English officers understand their business better in 1878 than in 1839; and modern arms of precision are more formidable than the old-fashioned cannon and muskets, which had not been improved since the days of the great French war. On the other hand, the Afghans in case of war would be encouraged and backed by a Power which was then separated by several hundreds of miles from Cabul, while it now possesses the adjoining territories. Nevertheless, it is scarcely probable that in case of war Shere Ali would be joined by a Russian contingent. The question to be considered is one rather of expediency than of political morality. As far as the justice of the proposed policy is concerned, it only remains to ascertain whether Shere Ali in receiving the Russian mission has furnished sufficient ground for menace or for actual war. If Sir Neville Chamberlain is not admitted to the Ameer's Court, it will be difficult not to accept the challenge which will have been offered. Whether it will be expedient to prosecute a not unlawful quarrel is a question to be determined on military, political, and financial grounds. The strategical issue has on many occasions been fully stated, and civilians must depend on professional authority for a solution. The main objection to the policy which apparently finds favour at Simla is that it would involve an increase of the army and a heavy additional charge on the Budget. But the question is not whether the North Western border of Afghanistan is more defensible than the present frontier, but whether the benefit to be derived from a movement in advance would be worth its cost. By far the best solution of existing difficulties would be a friendly understanding with Russia, if only it were possible.

The *Spectator* says the question whether Shere Ali will yield or fight is a question which greatly interests English taxpayers, for the answer may make the difference to them of 3*d.* in the income tax for five years at least. The Ministry have apparently decided, without the smallest consultation with the country, that they will invite Shere Ali, the Ameer of Afghanistan, to enter into a strictly subordinate alliance with the Indian Government, and to guard his whole territory against Russia on behalf of British interests. If he accepts the invitation, nothing further will be done beyond signing another treaty, and appointing Residents to carry it out; but if he refuses, Afghanistan will be invaded from two sides, Shere Ali will be deposed, and his dominions will be added to the Indian Empire. The Ministry, however, believe that the expense of this operation may be avoided, for Shere Ali, once confronted with Sir Neville Chamberlain, is sure, they think, to yield all the demands he will be ordered to present. The *Spectator* is unable to agree with her Majesty's Ministers. Apart altogether from a very strong belief that the proposed extension of frontier is unwise, and without advancing the argument that the war will be hopelessly immoral, as immoral as a German war against France because France may one day grow strong, the *Spectator* doubts whether Shere Ali will see the Ministerial arguments in the light in which their supporters at home affect to see them. The man himself is a most exceptional being, able, determined, and energetic, with a history of blood and success behind him, master in his own dominions, and proud to excess alike of his great father and himself; but there is a streak in his character of insane gloom, such as the sacred chronicler ascribes to Saul. It is not hypochondriac gloom, however, but the gloom of a man who can wake out of it to a burst of furious, bloodthirsty energy, such as his Sirdars and his children have acutely learned to dread. An overmastering impulse of this kind may seize Shere Ali, and then arguments will be as much thrown away as promises, and we shall have a valueless Bosnia to subdue, with a loftier Alps behind our invading armies. The *Spectator* does not say that we cannot do it. But the Government is straining its prepared resources—we do not say its ultimate resources—with every new project, and while facing Russia, and coercing Turkey, and garrisoning Cyprus, and claiming ascendancy in Egypt, and threatening to occupy Asia Minor—vide *Times* of Wednesday—is light-heartedly pledging itself to commence a war of conquest at the back of the Asiatic world.

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THE AFGHAN SUCCESSION.

THE death of Abdulla Jan, the youngest and favourite son of Shere Ali and heir apparent to the throne, has added the question of Afghan succession to the many subjects which Sir Neville Chamberlain will have to discuss with the Ameer. The troubled history of Afghanistan, after the death of Dost Mahomed, will not be lost upon the English envoy, for the good relations which this country had maintained with the last Ameer were wrecked in the strife among his sons. If Sir Neville Chamberlain obtains satisfactory terms from Shere Ali, it will be necessary to provide for the maintenance of those terms by an undisputed succession, and the best way to make it undisputed will most probably be the early recognition by the English Government of Shere Ali's nominee. A brief outline of the history of the Ameer's family will show how dangerous it may be to leave this question unsettled till after Shere Ali's death.

The present ruler of Afghanistan had five sons, so far as is known in current history, the eldest and youngest of whom are dead. The eldest, Mahomed Ali, fell at the head of his father's army, at Kajbaz, in 1865, in a hand-to-hand encounter with his uncle, Amin Khan. Amin was fighting against Shere Ali for the Afghan throne; nephew and uncle met on the field of battle, and Amin shot the heir apparent through the head. Five Kabulis avenged their leader's death, and Amin Khan fell, riddled with bullets, by the side of his brother's son. Mahomed left a child, named Ahmed Ali, who is now about seventeen years of age; and last week's telegram from Calcutta announces the probability of Shere Ali naming this young man as his heir, instead of either of his three surviving sons. The Ameer has always been favourably disposed towards his grandson, and after Mahomed Ali's death it seemed likely that the lad would be selected for the Wali Ahadship in the place of his father. But the mother of Abdullah Jan, who played an important part in those troubled times, secured the succession to her own son, and Ahmed Ali's chances of coming to the throne retired into the background.

Shere Ali's eldest surviving son is Ibrahim Khan. He is a man of no parts, and the Ameer treats him as of small account. He is a dull, heavy creature, and it is suspected that he is of weak intellect. He loyally assisted his father in the war of succession, but was always on the losing side, and was present with his father in the flight to Herat. He has been Governor of Cabul, but was not popular in that capacity.

Yakoob Khan, the third son of the Ameer, is of a very different mould. When sixteen years of age—he is now about thirty-three—he was left in charge of the governorship of Herat, while his father travelled to Cabul to claim the throne, and he continued in that post till 1866. In that year Shere Ali sustained a serious defeat at the hands of his brothers, and a conspiracy in the interest of one of those brothers broke out in the western capital. Yakoob discovered the promoters, and put them down. Within a few months, however, he was compelled to fly, and Herat was captured by Afzul Khan, Shere Ali's eldest brother. Yakoob and his father became exiles, and Yakoob ineffectually endeavoured to obtain assistance from the Persians. The latter declined to take Shere Ali's part; but, undaunted by the failure of his negotiations, Yakoob got a small band around him, won some substantial advantages in the villages near Herat, and at length took that place by a *coup de main*, at the head of 5,000 men. His gallantry drew many adherents, and in 1868 he regained Candahar on behalf of his father. He also rendered material assistance to Shere Ali in the recapture of Cabul. It was at this period—the autumn of 1868—that Shere Ali became distrustful of him. Yakoob had discovered that Abdulla Jan's mother was intriguing to secure the succession to her son, who had just been appointed Governor of Candahar. Accordingly, Yakoob also resorted to intrigue with the view of keeping his hold upon Herat as Governor; and at the same time he demanded to be recognized as heir apparent. The Ameer gave him no direct answer, and Yakoob followed up his demands by others more sweeping, most of them relating to an enlarged share in the administration of the country. Shere Ali temporized by making partial concessions, which gave Yakoob a voice in the government of the capital, but at the same time he surrounded his resolute ambitious son with adherents of Abdulla Jan. Yakoob's position soon became untenable. He perceived that nothing would prevent Abdulla Jan's nomination as heir apparent; and in 1870 he fled from Cabul, accompanied by his full brother Ayub, a boy of thirteen or fourteen years. Yakoob endeavoured to provoke a rebellion; but Shere Ali's influence had now become too strong for all that his sons could do against it. Yakoob and his few adherents were beaten off from Candahar, Ghazni, and Girishk, and once more he took refuge in Persia. In the spring of 1871—this time with some Persian assistance—Yakoob again laid siege to Herat, and it fell into his hands. Through the influence of Lord Mayo, father and son became reconciled. Yakoob presented himself at Cabul and declared himself penitent; and in September of 1871 he was made Governor of Herat, but with a strong body of Shere Ali's adherents around him. Yakoob and Shere Ali's nominees were never in accord, Yakoob endeavouring to keep them from any real share in the administration, and they reporting to Cabul everything that might turn to Yakoob's disadvantage. There can be little doubt that Yakoob justified their reports, especially after the formal nomination of Abdulla Jan as heir apparent in 1873. He intrigued with the Persians and the Turcomans; and it is believed that he also asked help of the Russians to assist him against his father; but he failed all round. The Ameer declined his request to hold the governorship of Herat in perpetuity, free from Cabul influence, and in the autumn of 1874 summoned him to Cabul. Yakoob suspected treachery, and demanded a safe conduct, which was granted. No sooner, however, had the young man arrived in the capital than his father put him under arrest, and he has been in confinement ever since. The Indian Government interceded with the Ameer to spare his life, and to treat him well; but the first request only was granted. Yakoob's imprisonment has been, according to the best accounts, very rigorous; and the story has filtered from Cabul into India that his intellect has been seriously affected by the harshness of his treatment. Yakoob was a man of rare energy and talent, but he suffered from the disadvantage of having a mother of low birth—a circumstance which will seriously affect his chances of coming to the throne, if even it be untrue that he is insane, and supposing it possible for Shere Ali to become reconciled to him. Captain Marsh's interview with Yakoob at Herat in 1873 revealed a not unfriendly disposition on Yakoob's part towards England, and the traveller discovered that Yakoob was one of the few Afghans who could speak English.

Ayub Khan, the full brother of Yakoob, took no part in public affairs till he fled with Yakoob from Cabul in 1870. The two lived together at Herat till Yakoob set out on his hapless journey to Shere Ali in 1874; and when Ayub heard of his brother's arrest he endeavoured to prepare Herat for resistance against his father and to foment a rebellion in the neighbourhood, a project which failed. A few months afterwards he fled into Persian territory, where, meeting one of the Afghan generals who had been treacherous to Yakoob's cause, he endeavoured to put him to death. The Persians prevented this. With Yakoob's example before him, Ayub declined Shere Ali's invitation to return to Cabul, and we believe that Ayub has ever since lived in exile. He married a daughter of Shere Ali's half-brother Aslam, for whose murder Shere Ali was mainly responsible.

Another claimant to the throne is Abdul Rahman, the son of Shere Ali's elder brother Afzul. Rahman took a very active part in his father's cause against Shere Ali, and in the earlier stages of the war between Shere Ali and his brothers he displayed as much military skill as his cousin Yakoob. In the end, however, Shere Ali defeated him, and he took refuge at Tashkend. For the past five years the Russians have given this man £3,000 a year as a subsidy, so that they may have a nominee of their own at hand if disputes shall again arise in the Afghan succession. Abdul Rahman has been to St. Petersburg; he is thoroughly Russianized, is considered a very able man, and Shere Ali is greatly in fear of his influence in the district of Balkh.

It will be gathered from this account that Shere Ali is not likely to set up one of his three surviving sons as heir apparent. Ibrahim is a dullard; Yakoob is in prison, and has offended his father, apparently beyond forgiveness; and Ayub is in exile. The nephew, Rahman, can only hope to succeed by Russian influence. So that the prospect points with considerable probability to Shere Ali's grandson, Ahmed Ali. Save in the case of Rahman, the English Government can have very little preference for one man over another. They may have much sympathy for Yakoob Khan, but his birth on the mother's side is against his cordial acceptance by the Afghan nobles. It is not certain that in his later days at Herat he did not endeavour to intrigue with Russia; and being older than Ahmed, with great experience as a ruler, he may be a more self-willed man than his nephew. His long imprisonment has deprived him of much influence, if it has not also made him incapable of ruling a most troublesome people.

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"Pall Mall Budget" Sept: 21st

land was, again, very much that of the Afghan table-land. There was no country in its neighbourhood which might not have been attacked by it with every hope of success and with little fear of retaliation. It is true that the Swiss were for awhile better soldiers than those of any neighbouring State; and it may be true that the miscarriage of the English army in the last Afghan war was due to incredible blundering, which would not be likely to occur again. But nobody seriously denies that an Afghan army, somewhat like that which SHERE ALI displayed to General ABRAMOFF, but drilled into greater military efficiency by Russian skill and provided with arms of precision from Russian stores, would be about as formidable a force as the East could produce. It is not the Afghans under their present ruler, but Afghanistan in Russian hands, which causes such grave anxiety; and we now know the way in which the Russians intend to make good their footing in Afghanistan.

It is extremely probable that a certain number of "superior persons" will reason about Afghanistan and its ruler as Mr. SAMUEL PLIMSOLL argued the other day in a speech to his constituents. SHERE ALI is allowed to be an independent ruler, and he may be assumed to know his own interest best. What business is it of ours that he receives this or that mission or holds this or that review of his troops? The answer is not the less conclusive because it is not very obvious to the general run of "superior persons" perhaps. SHERE ALI is an untaught Oriental ruler. He is too ignorant to understand his own interest; and his fierce suspicions of his neighbours rob him of all independence. There is little question that the once famous policy of "masterly inactivity" went on the assumption that the Ameer of Cabul must know his own interest. What this interest is ought to be perfectly plain. He is a zealous Mahommedan, ruling after the Mahommedan fashion; and he has to do, on one side, with a Power which long ago swallowed up one after another the Central Asian khanates, the homes of Mahommedan orthodoxy and of pure and strict Mahommedan government, and which only yesterday all but destroyed, if it has not quite destroyed, the Turkish Sultan, the only living being with a claim to be the chief of the whole world of Mahommedan believers. England, on the other hand, after violent internal controversy, has shown herself unmistakably friendly to the Sultan and to the maintenance of his empire, and in India she is sick of annexations and wishes for nothing better than internal and external peace. But all these facts are probaby half-known to the Oriental ruler, and perhaps those that are known to him are quite wrongly appreciated. Even supposing he is convinced that the Russian Emperor has inflicted a great injury and wrong on the Turkish Sultan, this may only seem to him a strong reason for agreeing quickly with a mighty Power which GOD has for some reason or another made the instrument of chastisement to Mahommedans in so startling a way. Who, moreover, can say what impression the Treaty of Berlin has made on SHERE ALI in so far as it is known to him? Who can say what account General ABRAMOFF gave of the Treaty of San Stefano and of the Berlin Congress? Who will question what the effect would be which they would produce probably, even if they were reported at Cabul with the utmost correctness? And as the Ameer is ignorant, so he is almost certainly suspicious in proportion to his ignorance. He may see that Russia has absorbed some khanates, half-digested others, and humiliated all; but England once invaded Afghanistan, and for a while conquered it; and England has lately come to Quettah. The most important events to SHERE ALI are doubtless events in his own country and family—the death of one son whom he loved, and the hostility of another whom he treacherously imprisoned; but, next to these cares, he may be believed to be racked by contending doubts and fears, as one who is placed between the upper and the nether millstone.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS AND RAILWAY APPLIANCES.

THE Sittingbourne accident has revived the long-standing controversy between those who wish to see the adoption of the newest contrivances for preventing these disasters imposed at once upon the railway companies by Act of Parliament and those who contend that, as these contrivances have not yet been brought to a state of perfection which can be regarded as final, railway
not to be put to useless expense by being mad
what they may be called upon to discard to-mor
were as narrow as it is here represented, railway managers would undoubtedly have something to say for themselves. The progress of invention is very rapid, and methods of ensuring safety which a few years back were thought perfect have already become antiquated. The relative position of a railway co
opinion of the Board of Trade is constantly ch
pany which not long ago stood highest in the s

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"Pall Mall Budget" Sept: 21st

(11)

A Bombay telegram dated the 18th inst. says that Gholam Hussein Khan, the Envoy of the Indian Government, arrived at Cabul on September 10, and has been hospitably received. At a private audience of Shere Ali he delivered to the Ameer the letters with which he was entrusted from the Viceroy of India. Mir Akhor, who is believed to be the bearer of despatches from the Ameer respecting the mission, is expected hourly at Alimusjid. The mission in the meantime remains at Peshawur, awaiting Mir Akhor's communication. A headman of the Khyberi has arrived at Peshawur, in accordance with the arrangements concluded for the safe conduct of the mission through the Khyber Pass. The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* in a despatch dated the 15th inst. states that preparations are being vigorously pushed forward at Peshawur for the despatch of the mission to Cabul. The latest information states that the number of the mission will amount to about 1,000, including camp-followers. Every effort is being made to keep the number within reasonable bounds, but it is necessary to carry supplies for the road. The escort will be increased by an infantry detachment, and possibly by a troop of the 10th Hussars. Arrangements have been effected with the Khyberees for a safe conduct through the Khyber Pass, and we have received hostages for the due performance of this undertaking. The Commissioner will accompany the mission as far as Pakha, on the other side of the Khyber Pass, where a strong body of the Ameer's troops is stationed. The Nawab Ghulam Hussein Khan, the bearer of the Viceroy's letter, is said to be popular with the Ameer and his nobles. to whom he is well known in consequence of having acted as our agent at Cabul for many years. The correspondent continues :—

Shere Ali is reported to have been in favour of the succession of his grandson, Ahmed Ali Jan, son of Mahomed Ali Khan, who was killed in 1865, near Khilat Ghilsi, while fighting for his father's throne against Sirdar Azim Khan. Ahmed Ali is described as an intelligent youth of about eighteen, with a pleasing demeanour and fairly well educated. The mother of Abdulla Jan is said to have another son still living, but incapacitated for rule by being totally deaf and dumb. The report of Yakoob's escape is still unconfirmed. The Viceroy entertained Sir Neville Chamberlain at a banquet given in his honour prior to his departure for Peshawur. Lord Lytton made an impressive speech on the occasion, to which Sir Neville returned a fitting reply. It is universally felt that a task of no slight danger and difficulty has been imposed upon him, and he will carry with him the sympathy and good wishes of all. As a measure of the passionate animosity towards the British which it will be his duty to endeavour to convert to feelings of goodwill, it may be sufficient to quote the following extract from the Ameer's speech publicly uttered in open Durbar :—"I have seven crores of rupees by me, every rupee of which I will hurl at the head of the British Government, and I will roll the border tribes against them like blasts of fire." It is quite true that this beneficent intention was expressed some time ago, but we have no reason for believing that the Ameer's feelings have in the slightest degree been mollified since these words were uttered—unless, indeed this has formed one of the results of the visit of the Russian Envoy, a supposition possible, but hardly probable, and one on which it would hardly be wise for General Chamberlain to rely for the protection of his mission without taking other precautions. The frontier is reported quite tranquil. The left wing of Jacob's Rifles and a detachment, 250 strong, of Scinde Horse are ordered to proceed to Quettah.

A telegram from Calcutta says it was generally reported there on the 19th inst. that the King of Burmah was dead.

The *Turkestan Gazette* announces that Khudojar Khan, ex-ruler of Khokand, has fled to Afghanistan, and is now at Cabul. The same paper states that the Russian troops, on reaching Scharkodeh, whither they had been despatched to restore order, heard a rumour that Chinese bands had threatened to set fire to all the artillery depôts and powder magazines at Kuldja, with a view to deprive the Russians of the power of making war against the Chinese. The sentries were therefore increased, and all the material removed to places of greater security.

The overland mail has brought files of papers to the 23rd of August from Bombay. The papers are chiefly occupied with discussions on the Cabul Mission, and the news contained in them, however, is of little general interest.

"Daily Telegraph" Sept: 23?

ENGLISH MISSION TO CABUL.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 21.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain, accompanied by the English mission, left Peshawur this morning. Arrangements have been made with the Afreedees for a safe conduct as far as the outposts of the Ameer of Afghanistan, and Major Cavagnari, with a small escort, will precede the rest of the mission to Alimusjid, to arrange for a further safe conduct. It is believed that Mir Akhor, the envoy of Shere Ali, is at Alimusjid, with orders from the Ameer.

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

CONSTANTINOPLE, SEPT. 20 (BY TELEGRAPH FROM SYRA).

The envoy from the Ameer of Afghanistan, who recently arrived here, is stated to be endeavouring to induce the Porte to conclude an alliance with Russia.

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"Daily Telegraph" Sept: 23d

LORD CARNARVON ON GOVERNMENT POLICY.

On Saturday Lord Carnarvon entertained a portion of his Nottinghamshire tenantry at dinner in the village school-room, Teversall.

In reply to his health, proposed by Alderman CROMPTON, of Derby,

Lord CARNARVON, after some words of advice to his tenantry, said: I have been asked to make the present occasion one on which to offer some remarks of a public character. Now I have always been a strong advocate for full and effective armaments, and I look upon them as necessary, not merely for the honour and credit of the country, but as the best and only insurance at a time when Europe is filled with large armies, and nations go to war with each other on a colossal scale at a week's notice; and in the same way I have always been an advocate for a dignified policy, which secures credit and honour abroad and enables Englishmen to walk erect amongst the other peoples of the world. (Cheers.) But at the same time, to use a homely proverb, "We must not ride the young horse too far." There are limits to everything. Fireworks are very convenient and very fine, and sometimes very desirable, but they ought to be displayed only occasionally. ("Hear, hear," and a laugh.) If fireworks are let off every year there is some risk of the house itself being burnt down. I remember that very wise king, Leopold of Belgium, once said of the late Emperor Napoleon, when he was in the height of his prosperity and power, that nothing could apparently affect or hurt him if he would only remain quiet. Unfortunately, however, the Emperor felt himself constrained to go on from one surprise and from one adventure to another, and the result, as we know, was the loss of his own crown and the temporary collapse of his own country. I don't say that applies to the present state of things, but the moral may, of course, be drawn from it; and I should be sorry indeed—feeling every good disposition towards the Government—if they allowed the country to think that they were engaged upon a sensational and restless policy; that we were scrambling from peace into the probability of war, and from the probability of war back again into an uncertain peace. (Cheers.) Well, now, gentlemen, there is one thing to give point to these remarks. I have always noticed, when India becomes very prominent in the people's minds, it generally means that there is some trouble going on there. During the last two or three weeks we have heard a great deal about India. I do not pretend to know what precisely is the case with which her Majesty's Government have to deal, but one or two things are easily to be seen. The first is, we are making suddenly a very great and important change in our policy as regards those great Indian feudatory princes who own large armies. We desire, apparently, to take those armies more or less into our control, and virtually to absorb them in our Empire. Well, that is a very natural thing. But, on the other hand, it is equally natural that the Indian princes should object to be stripped of their power. I don't say that her Majesty's Government are not right in their desire to consolidate these nations, but I do say it is a very delicate, a very difficult, and very hazardous task to undertake, which should be taken not only with the greatest precaution, but at a time when we are satisfied we shall not be met by serious difficulties. (Hear, hear.) Now, what is the time that is taken for it? To my mind, a very questionable one, because, whilst these operations are going on, we hear reports on all sides of possible war in Afghanistan. Now, what does that mean? Afghanistan, as every one knows, is a large tract of country lying on the north-west frontier of India, occupied by vast races who have been untamed for generations and generations past, and have been trained up from father to son in one sole occupation. Afghanistan is best remembered by Englishmen in memory of the greatest disaster which our army sustained in modern days. Some thirty-six years ago the English army was cut to pieces between Cabul and the Indian frontier. That history is the saddest in some respects, and one of the noblest in others. It is a history which is in portions full of mismanagement and incompetence, and in others of memorable displays of heroism which the English army may boast of. There is nothing finer, in my mind, than the part Sir Robert Sale and his brigade took at Jelahabad. It was in the ramparts of that town, in the winter of 1842, that a solitary horseman, bowed down with fatigue and anxiety, was seen advancing across the plain. That solitary horseman was the one man who had escaped from the wreck of the British Army. That terrible disaster—a disaster for which there has been no precedent before, and which, thank God, had found nothing of a similar nature since—that disaster was avenged and washed out very speedily; but from that time to this one and the same policy had been observed—we have had nothing to do with entangling ourselves with Afghanistan, and it has been laid down by a succession of men that the policy of abstention was the wise one. His lordship concluded as follows: Well, now, and not for the first time, we are sending a mission to the capital of Afghanistan. It goes under the command of a very skilful and experienced officer, and perhaps the mission is very powerful in point of numbers. I am not sure that there is much advantage in that. One might be inclined to say of the numerical strength of the mission, at was said of another army in the East in ancient times, that it was too large for a mission and too small for an army. The expedition goes, however, and goes, it is said, with stringent terms. Now I shall deeply regret it if the result should be hostilities. I don't know what the terms are that Sir Neville Chamberlain is required to propose, but I think a war with Afghanistan would be, to say the least of it, a very great disaster. But if war is a disaster, the result of war, to my mind, would be an infinitely greater disaster. I dread much more than war the conquest and occupation of Afghanistan, and I am satisfied it gives none of the conditions which are essential to military or political supremacy. If, indeed, we are jealous of the influence and intrigues of Russia, it would be far better to meet in fair fight in Europe than to entangle ourselves in such a theatre of war as Afghanistan. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, there have been of late rumours of some further action in the East on the part of her Majesty's Government. I know not what importance to attach to them; but I do say this, most distinctly, that if eventualities of a more serious nature should arise, our strength may be taxed to the utmost, and nothing can be more impolitic or unwise than at such a moment to entangle ourselves in an enormous difficulty of this nature, and to take upon ourselves an unnecessary burden—(cheers)—in this country. Wrestling used to be a favourite pastime; but I apprehend no Nottinghamshire wrestler would, before the contest, have weighted himself unfairly against his opponents. This is, however, what we are doing if we give ourselves to this scheme. I apprehend that neither profit nor glory can be obtained from such a war. I consider rather that it would be a great misfortune, and would result in a very considerable blunder if it were allowed to go on. I don't consider that a war of that sort could be carried on by India and the Indian resources without the help of this country. In India you have few sources of revenue, and those few sources seem to have reached pretty nearly their full power. You have an income which is comparatively stationary, and you have an expenditure which is growing; you have also, as you all know, a great and exceptional call upon the revenue. Well, gentlemen, I can only say that the result of all that, to my mind, is that for all Englishmen who take an interest in these questions—and these questions are very important to us in a hundred ways—the one important thing to do is to watch very carefully what is now going on. I need not say that I have personally nothing but good feeling towards her Majesty's present Government, amongst whom there were—indeed, I may say there are—some personal friends of my own. When I left that Government I left it because of the course then taken, and when, at the end of the session, I condemned the Treaty of Berlin—and that was the first and only time when I had expressed censure—I condemned it because I foresaw that it would turn out exactly as it did turn out; and now I feel anxious because, as it seems to me, we are undertaking duties and obligations which it is wholly beyond our strength to carry out. I think in all these things it is a matter of the least importance which party is in office; but what I do think as of great importance is that the Queen's Government should be carried on effectually and for the safety and honour of the country. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, that I believe to be the real feeling that lies at the bottom of the hearts and minds of the majority of the English people. (Renewed cheers.)

"Times" Sept: 23d

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

THE MISSION STOPPED.

(By INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH *viâ* TEHERAN.)

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 22, 10 22 P.M.

Our relations with the Ameer have assumed a very critical character. The Cabul ruler has at last thrown off every semblance even of outward friendliness and courtesy, and has chosen to adopt, in preference, an attitude of marked and open hostility. Your Special Correspondent with the Mission telegraphs that it left Peshawur yesterday and proceeded as far as Jumrood, a place on the actual frontier, though within British territory. Thence it was recalled by a telegram from the Viceroy, and accordingly it marched back to Peshawur. This morning private advices from Simla, upon which absolute reliance can be placed, state that on the Mission being ordered to march to Jumrood Major Cavagnari rode forward to Ali Musjid, escorted by Khyberries, in order to ask for a safe passage. The Ameer's officer, however, at Ali Musjid positively refused to permit the Mission to advance. He threatened resistance, and crowned the surrounding heights commanding the route with armed men in order to dispute the passage. The interview between the Chief and Major Cavagnari lasted three hours, and, though the former was warned over and over again that the Ameer would be deemed responsible for his conduct, he expressed an unflinching determination to resist the passage of the Mission by force. Not the faintest shadow of a doubt is entertained that this officer was acting under full instructions from the Ameer, inasmuch as Mufti Shah and Akhor, two responsible officers of the Ameer, have been despatched from Cabul to Ali Musjid within the last few days. Both of these officers have been mentioned in Cabul news-letters as favourably disposed towards and engaged in direct communication with the Russian Embassy. Two important facts require to be noted—the first that this insolent rebuff occurred in presence of the two Indian Princes attached to the Mission, who were personal witnesses of the interview between Major Cavagnari and the Ameer's officer; the second is that the Russian Envoy is still residing at Cabul.

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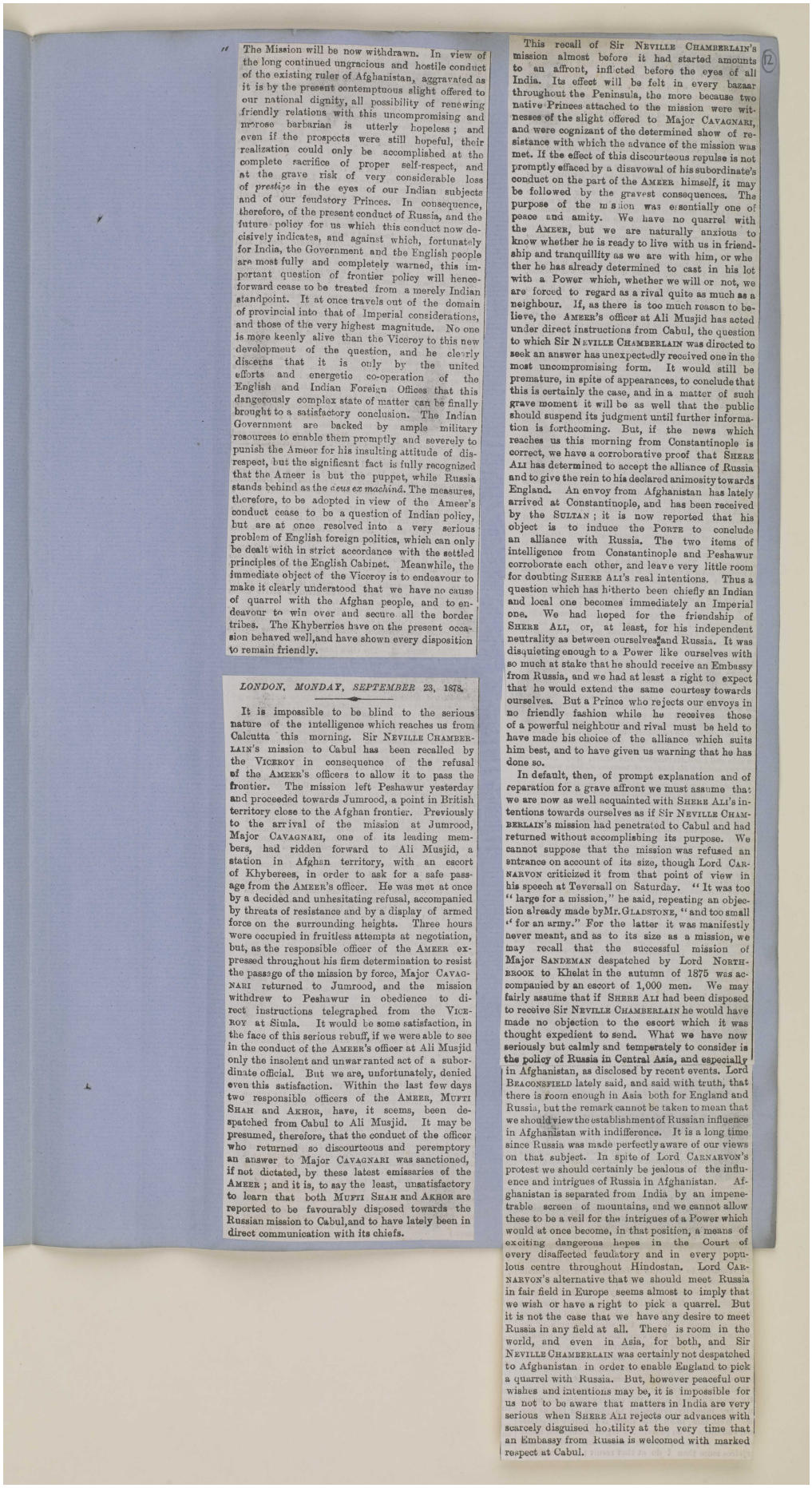

The Mission will be now withdrawn. In view of the long continued ungracious and hostile conduct of the existing ruler of Afghanistan, aggravated as it is by the present contemptuous slight offered to our national dignity, all possibility of renewing friendly relations with this uncompromising and morose barbarian is utterly hopeless; and even if the prospects were still hopeful, their realization could only be accomplished at the complete sacrifice of proper self-respect, and at the grave risk of very considerable loss of *prestige* in the eyes of our Indian subjects and of our feudatory Princes. In consequence, therefore, of the present conduct of Russia, and the future policy for us which this conduct now decisively indicates, and against which, fortunately for India, the Government and the English people are most fully and completely warned, this important question of frontier policy will henceforward cease to be treated from a merely Indian standpoint. It at once travels out of the domain of provincial into that of Imperial considerations, and those of the very highest magnitude. No one is more keenly alive than the Viceroy to this new development of the question, and he clearly discerns that it is only by the united efforts and energetic co-operation of the English and Indian Foreign Offices that this dangerously complex state of matter can be finally brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The Indian Government are backed by ample military resources to enable them promptly and severely to punish the Ameer for his insulting attitude of disrespect, but the significant fact is fully recognized that the Ameer is but the puppet, while Russia stands behind as the *deus ex machinâ*. The measures, therefore, to be adopted in view of the Ameer's conduct cease to be a question of Indian policy, but are at once resolved into a very serious problem of English foreign politics, which can only be dealt with in strict accordance with the settled principles of the English Cabinet. Meanwhile, the immediate object of the Viceroy is to endeavour to make it clearly understood that we have no cause of quarrel with the Afghan people, and to endeavour to win over and secure all the border tribes. The Khyberries have on the present occasion behaved well, and have shown every disposition to remain friendly.

LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1878.

It is impossible to be blind to the serious nature of the intelligence which reaches us from Calcutta this morning. Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission to Cabul has been recalled by the VICEROY in consequence of the refusal of the AMEER'S officers to allow it to pass the frontier. The mission left Peshawur yesterday and proceeded towards Jumrood, a point in British territory close to the Afghan frontier. Previously to the arrival of the mission at Jumrood, Major CAVAGNARI, one of its leading members, had ridden forward to Ali Musjid, a station in Afghan territory, with an escort of Khyberees, in order to ask for a safe passage from the AMEER'S officer. He was met at once by a decided and unhesitating refusal, accompanied by threats of resistance and by a display of armed force on the surrounding heights. Three hours were occupied in fruitless attempts at negotiation, but, as the responsible officer of the AMEER expressed throughout his firm determination to resist the passage of the mission by force, Major CAVAGNARI returned to Jumrood, and the mission withdrew to Peshawur in obedience to direct instructions telegraphed from the VICEROY at Simla. It would be some satisfaction, in the face of this serious rebuff, if we were able to see in the conduct of the AMEER'S officer at Ali Musjid only the insolent and unwarranted act of a subordinate official. But we are, unfortunately, denied even this satisfaction. Within the last few days two responsible officers of the AMEER, MUFTI SHAH and AKHOR, have, it seems, been despatched from Cabul to Ali Musjid. It may be presumed, therefore, that the conduct of the officer who returned so discourteous and peremptory an answer to Major CAVAGNARI was sanctioned, if not dictated, by these latest emissaries of the AMEER; and it is, to say the least, unsatisfactory to learn that both MUFTI SHAH and AKHOR are reported to be favourably disposed towards the Russian mission to Cabul, and to have lately been in direct communication with its chiefs.

This recall of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission almost before it had started amounts to an affront, inflicted before the eyes of all India. Its effect will be felt in every bazaar throughout the Peninsula, the more because two native Princes attached to the mission were witnesses of the slight offered to Major CAVAGNARI, and were cognizant of the determined show of resistance with which the advance of the mission was met. If the effect of this discourteous repulse is not promptly effaced by a disavowal of his subordinate's conduct on the part of the AMEER himself, it may be followed by the gravest consequences. The purpose of the mission was essentially one of peace and amity. We have no quarrel with the AMEER, but we are naturally anxious to know whether he is ready to live with us in friendship and tranquillity as we are with him, or whether he has already determined to cast in his lot with a Power which, whether we will or not, we are forced to regard as a rival quite as much as a neighbour. If, as there is too much reason to believe, the AMEER'S officer at Ali Musjid has acted under direct instructions from Cabul, the question to which Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was directed to seek an answer has unexpectedly received one in the most uncompromising form. It would still be premature, in spite of appearances, to conclude that this is certainly the case, and in a matter of such grave moment it will be as well that the public should suspend its judgment until further information is forthcoming. But, if the news which reaches us this morning from Constantinople is correct, we have a corroborative proof that SHERE ALI has determined to accept the alliance of Russia and to give the rein to his declared animosity towards England. An envoy from Afghanistan has lately arrived at Constantinople, and has been received by the SULTAN; it is now reported that his object is to induce the PORTE to conclude an alliance with Russia. The two items of intelligence from Constantinople and Peshawur corroborate each other, and leave very little room for doubting SHERE ALI'S real intentions. Thus a question which has hitherto been chiefly an Indian and local one becomes immediately an Imperial one. We had hoped for the friendship of SHERE ALI, or, at least, for his independent neutrality as between ourselves and Russia. It was disquieting enough to a Power like ourselves with so much at stake that he should receive an Embassy from Russia, and we had at least a right to expect that he would extend the same courtesy towards ourselves. But a Prince who rejects our envoys in no friendly fashion while he receives those of a powerful neighbour and rival must be held to have made his choice of the alliance which suits him best, and to have given us warning that he has done so.

In default, then, of prompt explanation and of reparation for a grave affront we must assume that we are now as well acquainted with SHERE ALI'S intentions towards ourselves as if Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission had penetrated to Cabul and had returned without accomplishing its purpose. We cannot suppose that the mission was refused an entrance on account of its size, though Lord CARNARVON criticized it from that point of view in his speech at Teversall on Saturday. "It was too "large for a mission," he said, repeating an objection already made by Mr. GLADSTONE, "and too small "for an army." For the latter it was manifestly never meant, and as to its size as a mission, we may recall that the successful mission of Major SANDEMAN despatched by Lord NORTHBROOK to Khelat in the autumn of 1875 was accompanied by an escort of 1,000 men. We may fairly assume that if SHERE ALI had been disposed to receive Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN he would have made no objection to the escort which it was thought expedient to send. What we have now seriously but calmly and temperately to consider is the policy of Russia in Central Asia, and especially in Afghanistan, as disclosed by recent events. Lord BEACONSFIELD lately said, and said with truth, that there is room enough in Asia both for England and Russia, but the remark cannot be taken to mean that we should view the establishment of Russian influence in Afghanistan with indifference. It is a long time since Russia was made perfectly aware of our views on that subject. In spite of Lord CARNARVON'S protest we should certainly be jealous of the influence and intrigues of Russia in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is separated from India by an impenetrable screen of mountains, and we cannot allow these to be a veil for the intrigues of a Power which would at once become, in that position, a means of exciting dangerous hopes in the Court of every disaffected feudatory and in every populous centre throughout Hindostan. Lord CARNARVON'S alternative that we should meet Russia in fair field in Europe seems almost to imply that we wish or have a right to pick a quarrel. But it is not the case that we have any desire to meet Russia in any field at all. There is room in the world, and even in Asia, for both, and Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was certainly not despatched to Afghanistan in order to enable England to pick a quarrel with Russia. But, however peaceful our wishes and intentions may be, it is impossible for us not to be aware that matters in India are very serious when SHERE ALI rejects our advances with scarcely disguised hostility at the very time that an Embassy from Russia is welcomed with marked respect at Cabul.

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"Daily News" Sept. 23rd

LATEST TELEGRAMS

THE BRITISH MISSION TO CABUL.

REFUSAL OF THE AMEER TO RECEIVE THE MISSION.

THREATENED ATTACK UPON THE BRITISH PARTY.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SUNDAY.

After repeated delays consequent upon the public mourning for the death of the Heir Apparent, and the Ameer's discourteous tardiness in replying to the Viceroy's messenger as to whether he would receive the Mission or not, Sir Neville Chamberlain started from Peshawur yesterday. Reaching the mouth of the Khyber Pass, he learnt that the Ameer's commandant had advanced an outpost to the centre of the pass, and was prepared to dispute the passage.

Sir Neville Chamberlain had been instructed by the Viceroy not to risk an encounter, and accordingly sent forward an officer (Major Cavagnari), accompanied by two native princes and a small escort.

After a long conference the commandant, whose force lined both sides of the pass, declared that he would attack the party if they attempted to proceed. The mission was then ordered to return to Peshawur.

The Ameer's officer in charge of the frontier relations, who has been won over to Russian interests, visited the outpost recently, as did also the Mirakhor, who is an enemy of the English. He left Cabul after the Viceroy's emissary had arrived there. Efforts have been made throughout to avoid offending the Ameer, and, in future measures, care will be taken to avoid offending the Afghan subjects, multitudes of whom are friendly to us.

The British situation is serious, the Ameer having twice formally refused to receive British officers, or even allow them to pass through the country. He entertains Russian officers, and at the same time threatens to fire on a friendly British mission.

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

CONSTANTINOPLE, SEPT. 20.

(By telegraph from Syra.)

The envoy from the Ameer of Afghanistan who recently arrived here is stated to be endeavouring to induce the Porte to conclude an alliance with Russia.

LONDON, MONDAY, SEPT. 23.

A telegram from our Special Correspondent at Simla states that after repeated delays Sir Neville Chamberlain, the British Envoy to the Ameer of Cabul, left Peshawur on Saturday. On reaching the mouth of the Khyber Pass he learnt that the Ameer's commandant had advanced an outpost to the centre of the pass, and was prepared to dispute the passage. A party, consisting of Major Cavagnari, two native princes, and a small escort, advanced to meet the commandant, who, after a long conference, declared that he would attack the party if they attempted to proceed. The mission was then ordered to return to Peshawur. Our Correspondent states that the Ameer's officer in charge of the frontier relations, who has been won over to Russian interests, visited the outpost recently. The British situation is considered to be serious, the Ameer having twice formally refused to receive British officers, or even to allow them to pass through the country. At the same time he entertains Russian officers.

OUR Special Correspondent at Simla sends us by telegraph news of the gravest importance with regard to the mission to Cabul. The AMEER, according to the information which has reached our Correspondent, has positively refused to receive Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN. He has not merely refused to receive the English mission; he has ordered the Khyber Pass to be occupied to its centre, and has intimated his determination to prevent Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN and his party from making their way through it. The ominous delay in the AMEER'S reply to the message of the VICEROY, asking whether he would receive the mission, has been followed by this momentous decision, and the hostile words which the AMEER is said to have let drop in open durbar do not seem to have been spoken in a sudden fit of thoughtless ill-temper. As the AMEER did not think fit to reply in reasonable time to the message of the VICEROY, Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN started, our Correspondent tells us, from Peshawur on Saturday, and on reaching the mouth of the Khyber Pass he learned that the outposts of the AMEER were already advanced to its centre, and were prepared to dispute his advance. Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was instructed by the VICEROY not to risk an encounter; and indeed it is obvious that he could not proceed to force his way, no matter what strength he could command, without some further parley. It would be necessary to try to find out why the AMEER declined to receive our mission before proceeding to compel him to receive it. A conference was therefore opened with the officer of the AMEER, but the result was only to show that the occupation of the pass by the ruler of Cabul was deliberate and hostile. The AMEER'S officer declared that he would attack the English party if they determined to advance. Nothing was left for the English mission but to return to Peshawur. Thus for the second time the AMEER has refused to receive an English mission, or to allow English officers to pass through his country. More than once before he sought to establish an alliance with us, but his overtures, or at least the conditions with which they were accompanied, were rejected. Not unlike this was the story of DOST MOHAMMED. So far as human intelligence can judge, DOST MOHAMMED was sincere in desiring an English alliance to strengthen him against the influence and the ambition of Russia. He became our enemy when he found that to all appearance we were determined to treat him as an enemy. If the Ameer of CABUL is now resolved to show himself our foe, the probabilities are that he has fancied himself driven to assume that attitude by the significant movements of our new Imperial policy.

It is not possible, we presume, that the Viceroy of INDIA will accept the refusal of the AMEER as one puts up with the churlishness of a sullen farmer who refuses to allow him to pass through a field, or that of an ill-conditioned picture-buyer who declines to let a stranger look at his art treasures. When the mission was determined on, the VICEROY and the Home Government must either have felt certain that it would be received or they must have made up their minds as to the course to be pursued in the event of a refusal. That course, we presume, can hardly have been to allow the whole incident to drop, and the "Imperial policy" to be snubbed at its very first movement. We fear, therefore, that we must expect to see some steps taken to force a way for us into a conference with the AMEER, and a resumption of the principle of active intervention in the affairs of Cabul. Now, we may say at once that if we approved of the policy which our Government appear to have in view, we should not be deterred from recommending it merely by the example of what happened in the same regions nearly forty years ago. Nothing could indeed be more disastrous and more ghastly than the failure alike of our political enterprise and of our principal military operations then. But it is hardly possible that such utter collapse and ruin could come upon an English commander and an English army again. The unjustifiable intervention which we attempted then was brought to confusion and shame by the preposterous incapacity and mismanagement of those on whom the responsibility was left of upholding the political and military credit of England.

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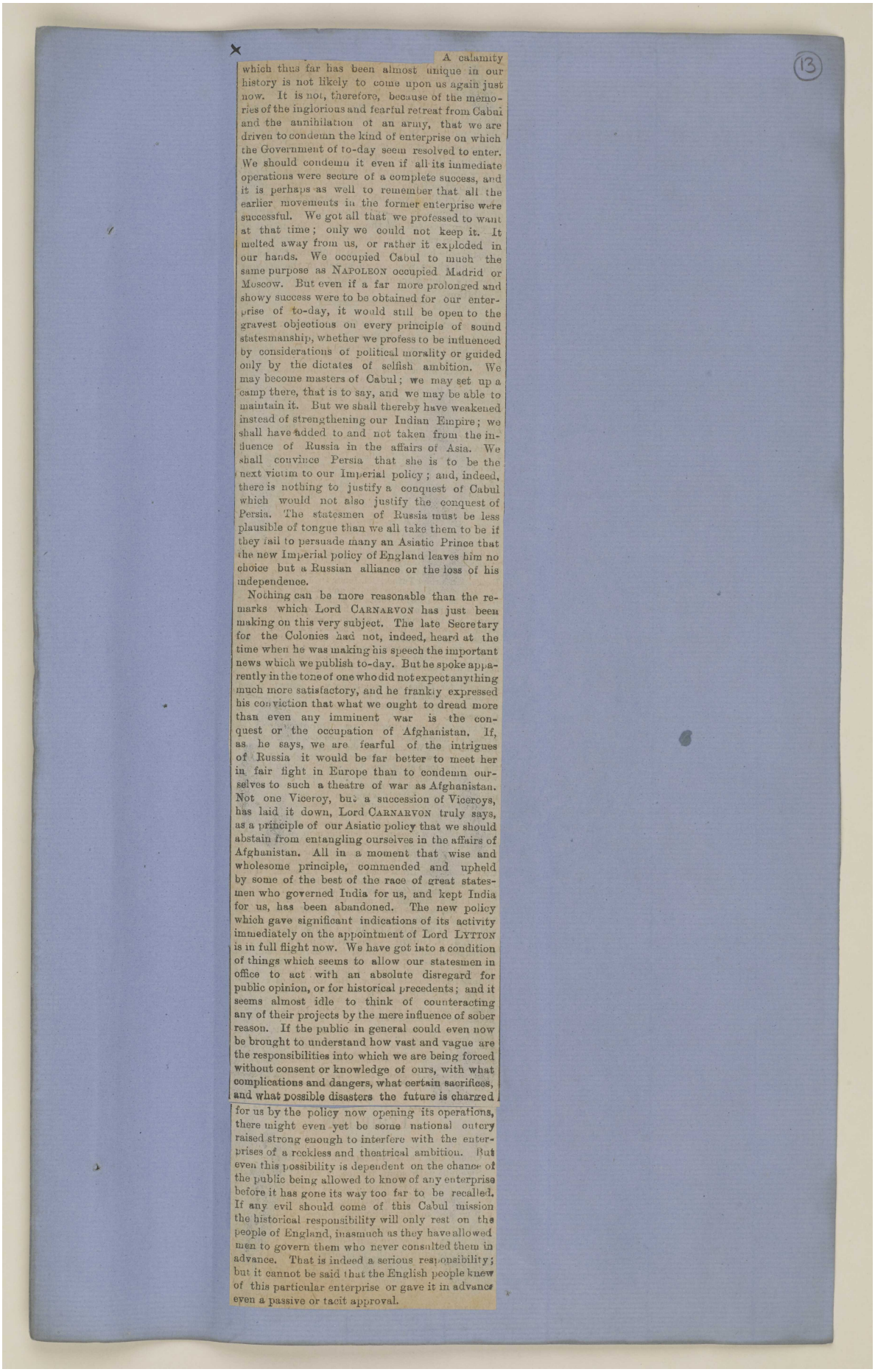

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A calamity which thus far has been almost unique in our history is not likely to come upon us again just now. It is not, therefore, because of the memories of the inglorious and fearful retreat from Cabul and the annihilation of an army, that we are driven to condemn the kind of enterprise on which the Government of to-day seem resolved to enter. We should condemn it even if all its immediate operations were secure of a complete success, and it is perhaps as well to remember that all the earlier movements in the former enterprise were successful. We got all that we professed to want at that time; only we could not keep it. It melted away from us, or rather it exploded in our hands. We occupied Cabul to much the same purpose as NAPOLEON occupied Madrid or Moscow. But even if a far more prolonged and showy success were to be obtained for our enterprise of to-day, it would still be open to the gravest objections on every principle of sound statesmanship, whether we profess to be influenced by considerations of political morality or guided only by the dictates of selfish ambition. We may become masters of Cabul; we may set up a camp there, that is to say, and we may be able to maintain it. But we shall thereby have weakened instead of strengthening our Indian Empire; we shall have added to and not taken from the influence of Russia in the affairs of Asia. We shall convince Persia that she is to be the next victim to our Imperial policy; and, indeed, there is nothing to justify a conquest of Cabul which would not also justify the conquest of Persia. The statesmen of Russia must be less plausible of tongue than we all take them to be if they fail to persuade many an Asiatic Prince that the new Imperial policy of England leaves him no choice but a Russian alliance or the loss of his independence.

Nothing can be more reasonable than the remarks which Lord CARNARVON has just been making on this very subject. The late Secretary for the Colonies had not, indeed, heard at the time when he was making his speech the important news which we publish to-day. But he spoke apparently in the tone of one who did not expect anything much more satisfactory, and he frankly expressed his conviction that what we ought to dread more than even any imminent war is the conquest or the occupation of Afghanistan. If, as he says, we are fearful of the intrigues of Russia it would be far better to meet her in fair fight in Europe than to condemn ourselves to such a theatre of war as Afghanistan. Not one Viceroy, but a succession of Viceroys, has laid it down, Lord CARNARVON truly says, as a principle of our Asiatic policy that we should abstain from entangling ourselves in the affairs of Afghanistan. All in a moment that wise and wholesome principle, commended and upheld by some of the best of the race of great statesmen who governed India for us, and kept India for us, has been abandoned. The new policy which gave significant indications of its activity immediately on the appointment of Lord LYTTON is in full flight now. We have got into a condition of things which seems to allow our statesmen in office to act with an absolute disregard for public opinion, or for historical precedents; and it seems almost idle to think of counteracting any of their projects by the mere influence of sober reason. If the public in general could even now be brought to understand how vast and vague are the responsibilities into which we are being forced without consent or knowledge of ours, with what complications and dangers, what certain sacrifices, and what possible disasters the future is charged for us by the policy now opening its operations, there might even yet be some national outcry raised strong enough to interfere with the enterprises of a reckless and theatrical ambition. But even this possibility is dependent on the chance of the public being allowed to know of any enterprise before it has gone its way too far to be recalled. If any evil should come of this Cabul mission the historical responsibility will only rest on the people of England, inasmuch as they have allowed men to govern them who never consulted them in advance. That is indeed a serious responsibility; but it cannot be said that the English people knew of this particular enterprise or gave it in advance even a passive or tacit approval.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 23d

FIRST-FRUITS OF ENGLISH POLICY IN EASTERN AFFAIRS.

TO-DAY'S news from India is the most striking comment which events have yet supplied on Lord BEACONSFIELD'S declaration that the Russian Government had become most pacific, having at last seen that "a restless and warlike spirit is one that must debase and perhaps even ruin their country." Apparently this statement must be taken as applying only to Europe—where Russia, having got pretty much all that she could hope to get, may naturally feel that there is no longer any occasion for restlessness or any need for war. At any rate, it is not true of Asia. If there is no restlessness about Russia, why has she sent a mission to Cabul? If the warlike spirit has been finally laid to rest, why have her agents moved the Ameer to resort to measures indistinguishable from open hostility? The refusal to receive an English mission is not a sudden resolve on the Ameer's part. He has no doubt been slowly making up his mind to it in the interval during which he has delayed giving a definite answer to the Viceroy's request. Tired of waiting, Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN started from Peshawur on Saturday and returned there the same day. In that time he had satisfied himself as to the nature of the Ameer's intentions. At the mouth of the Khyber Pass he heard that the centre of the pass was occupied by the Ameer's troops, and sent forward Major CAVAGNARI, accompanied (for what reason is not very clear) by two Indian Princes, to ask for a safe passage. The Commandant, who a short time before had had a visit from the Afghan officer who has charge of the frontier relations, declared that he would attack the mission if it attempted to come through the pass; and, as a three hours' conference made no change in his resolution, Major CAVAGNARI returned and the mission was at once ordered back to Peshawur. The situation is very well summed up in the telegram from the Simla correspondent of the *Daily News*. The Ameer "entertains Russian officers, and at the same time threatens to fire on a friendly British mission." The designs of Russia may not be "warlike:" indeed, considering how much profit she may reap from the present state of affairs without moving a soldier, it is highly probable that they are not; but they certainly are not free from that restlessness which Lord BEACONSFIELD assured us had been brought into discredit at St. Petersburg, through the boldness of his own policy.

The Government have now two choices open to them. They may put up with the Ameer's refusal and try to persuade their own subjects and those of SHERE ALI that they really never cared much about an English mission to Cabul, and that if the Ameer really dislikes the idea there is no reason why he should have one forced upon him. This alternative may at once be dismissed. Even a Government which had blundered into the scheme of a mission could not accept so direct an insult as this, much less a Government which regards the mission as part of a policy which has only been adopted after much deliberation. That the Viceroy will take some measures to compel the Ameer to grant what he has just refused may be assumed. After this point has been reached, however, there may remain a further choice for the Government to make; or, rather, they may have to face a choice which they cannot themselves determine. A war with the Ameer may either involve a declared and official war with Russia, who stands at his back, or it may involve an undeclared and unofficial war with her. It will be open to Russia to encourage the Ameer in his refusal, to declare that his unwillingness to see the English establish themselves in Afghanistan is perfectly justifiable, and to add that Russia will see with pain and displeasure an independent Sovereign in alliance with the Czar coerced into a condition of dependence. This would probably lead to an official war with Russia. On the other hand, Russia, having brought the Ameer to the point of threatening to fire upon Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN if he attempted to enter his territories, may think she has done enough for present purposes. She may proclaim herself perfectly neutral as between England and the Ameer, and may even go the length of withdrawing her embassy in order not to give any pretext for suspicion on the part of England. This would be quite compatible with rendering very substantial assistance to the Ameer in the event of his determining to quarrel with the Indian Government. There would be abundance of sympathy with the Ameer in Russia; and, even if sympathy were wanting, the trading spirit could be trusted to furnish the Afghans with such supplies and arms as they might need. Russia would stand to Afghanistan in much the same relation as she stood to Servia when Servia was at war with Turkey. She would be in the background, capable of becoming an ally under certain circumstances, and looked to for intervention and mediation in the event of the war going rapidly and decisively against her humble friend.

This policy seems to offer so many advantages to Russia that she may fairly be expected to adopt it. An Afghan war will certainly cost England a large sum of money. It will probably cost her some considerable number of lives. It will tend to concentrate the attention of the Government on the remoter East, and so tempt them to forget or postpone any active prosecution—

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if they have ever dreamed of such a thing—of their professed designs in Asia Minor. Russia has nothing to lose by sitting still—as a Government—while we are pouring troops through the Khyber Pass. Supposing that we bring the Ameer to terms at once, she may regret that she pulled at the pear a little before it was ripe, but she will feel that the recollection of another defeat will not make the Afghans more friendly to England. If the war proves a long one she will have time to make up her mind as to what she shall do, and the opportunity, perhaps, of profiting by something that the chapter of accidents may have in store for her. The Afghans may prove as little amenable to an English occupation as the Bosnians have shown themselves to an Austrian occupation. They may continue to give us trouble long after the avowed resistance of the Ameer has ceased. At all events, an English invasion of Afghanistan will give the Russian agents abundance of opportunities both for ascertaining the temper of our Indian subjects, and of the semi-independent Princes particularly, and of making that temper what they would like to see it. An Afghan war can hardly fail to be a time of great excitement in India. Whatever there is of discontent or of native ambition will be stimulated by hopes of a possible disaster to the English armies. There is no need, therefore, for Russia to put herself any more forward than she has done already. The ball has been set rolling, and she has now only to wait and see how much damage it will do before it stops.

These are the prospects which now confront the Government; and when once the inevitable decision has been taken, and the Viceroy prepares to show that England is not to be defied with impunity, they are prospects which no act of theirs can greatly influence. Whatever power they once had of influencing events has passed away. They must be content to pursue, not so much the policy which they believe to be best, as the policy which the conduct of the Ameer (with or without Russian advice and assistance) happens to dictate. In short, this is a matter in which, important as it is, we are very nearly helpless. Whether we shall or shall not submit to the insulting blow delivered by the Ameer is the only choice before us. But since submission would mean ruinous humiliation, we have hardly that choice either; while as to the consequences of a blow in return, they must be pretty much what our enemies, on deliberation, determine. And how does this come about? In this way. When the Russian war was begun the Czar was warned by certain European Powers that he was to make no conquests in Europe: which was their concern. But England left the Czar at liberty to make whatever conquests, whatever acquisitions, he deemed satisfactory in Asia. And, by way of giving us peace with honour, our Government confirmed him in those conquests and those acquisitions. At that moment, in the eyes of the Ameer, in the eyes of all the East, Russia became England's master.

This Evening's News.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times* correspondent at Calcutta, telegraphing last night, gives the following details respecting the stoppage of the British mission to Cabul:—

Our relations with the Ameer have assumed a very critical character. The Cabul ruler has at last thrown of every semblance even of outward friendliness and courtesy, and has chosen to adopt, in preference, an attitude of marked and open hostility. Your special correspondent with the mission telegraphs that it left Peshawur yesterday and proceeded as far as Jumrood, a place on the actual frontier, though within British territory. Thence it was recalled by a telegram from the Viceroy, and accordingly it marched back to Peshawur. This morning private advices from Simla, upon which absolute reliance can be placed, state that on the mission being ordered to march to Jumrood Major Cavagnari rode forward to Ali Musjid, escorted by Khyberries, in order to ask for a safe passage. The Ameer's officer, however, at Ali Musjid positively refused to permit the mission to advance. He threatened resistance, and crowned the surrounding heights commanding the route with armed men in order to dispute the passage. The interview between the chief and Major Cavagnari lasted three hours, and, though the former was warned over and over again that the Ameer would be deemed responsible for his conduct, he expressed an unflinching determination to resist the passage of the mission by force. Not the faintest shadow of a doubt is entertained that this officer was acting under full instructions from the Ameer, inasmuch as Mufti Shah and Akhor, two responsible officers of the Ameer, have been despatched from Cabul to Ali Musjid within the last few days. Both of these officers have been mentioned in Cabul news-letters as favourably disposed towards and engaged in direct communication with the Russian Embassy. Two important facts require to be noted—the first that this insolent rebuff occurred in presence of the two Indian Princes attached to the mission, who were personal witnesses of the interview between Major Cavagnari and the Ameer's officer; the second is that the Russian envoy is still residing at Cabul. The Mission will be now withdrawn. In view of the long-continued ungracious and hostile conduct of the existing ruler of Afghanistan, aggravated as it is by the present contemptuous slight offered to our national dignity, all possibility of renewing friendly relations with this uncompromising and morose barbarian is utterly hopeless; and even if the prospects were still hopeful, their realization could only be accomplished at the complete sacrifice of proper self-respect, and at the grave risk of very considerable loss of prestige in the eyes of our Indian subjects and of our feudatory princes. In consequence, therefore, of the present conduct of Russia, and the future policy for us which this conduct now decisively indicates, and against which, fortunately for India, the Government and the English people are most fully and completely warned, this important question of frontier policy will henceforward cease to be treated from a merely Indian standpoint. It at once travels out of the domain of provincial into that of Imperial considerations, and those of the very highest magnitude. No one is more keenly alive than the Viceroy to this new development of the question, and he clearly discerns that it is only by the united efforts and energetic co-operation of the English and Indian Foreign Offices that this dangerously complex state of matter can be finally brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The Indian Government are backed by ample military resources to enable them promptly and severely to punish the Ameer for his insulting attitude of disrespect, but the significant fact is fully recognized that the Ameer is but the puppet, while Russia stands behind as the *deus ex machinâ*. The measures, therefore, to be adopted in view of the Ameer's conduct cease to be a question of Indian policy, but are at once resolved into a very serious problem of English foreign politics, which can only be dealt with in strict accordance with the settled principles of the English Cabinet.

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"Times"

LONDON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1878.

The rejection of our Mission by the Ameer of CABUL is a turning-point in our North-Western Frontier policy. The despatch of our Envoy was a step taken openly in the view of the whole world, and it is impossible that we should be content with simply retracing it and allowing our relations with the AMEER to continue on their former footing. The first question that will be asked in this country is, what are we to do next? The answer, we are bound to suppose, has been already well considered by the Government. Nothing has happened which must not have been foreseen as at least possible, nothing for which it was not incumbent on us to be prepared beforehand. The crisis is scarcely a surprise. Events for some time past have made it almost certain that it would come at some time or other, and by our own choice it has come now. But the reasons for which we adopted our present frontier policy are as strong as ever, and the danger of mere inaction is even more distinctly visible. If the Ameer of CABUL is determined not to be our friend, it is just as well that we should learn the fact in good time. There is nothing just now that can make him formidable as our foe. If he persists in refusing the demands we may see fit to make upon him, he can calculate upon no effectual support outside his own territory. Our reckoning will be with him, and with him alone, and such a prospect can hardly be thought alarming. There is nothing worse before us than one of those troublesome little wars to which we have so often found ourselves committed in every quarter of the globe. A comparison of resources in such a case is well-nigh ridiculous. We are, of course, by far the stronger, and can choose our own way with the certainty of following it at our will. We have no love for the adventure, but we shall have no thought of shrinking from it if its necessity is clear.

We need not conclude, as yet, that we shall be obliged to resort to force before we can establish satisfactory relations with Afghanistan. There is room still left for an explanation of what has happened. We are not very hopeful that such an explanation will be given, but it will be at least incumbent on us to ask for it. The Ameer of CABUL has not yet stated his own case. The resistance offered to our Mission was the act of a subordinate, and it may possibly be disclaimed by the AMEER himself. In any case, we shall be compelled to wait for some months before we can begin operations. If we have to deal a blow, it would be all the better for being sharp and decisive, and at any rate must come with an irresistible force. Time, however, will be required before our preparations can be complete. Nothing, probably, can be done until next spring. During winter the mountain passes would be found blocked with snow, and winter begins early in the passes. There is no need for us to be hasty. We can wait our own time, and it will suit us in every way to allow our discourteous neighbour the fullest opportunity for reconsidering his conduct. The news that we are preparing to move will not be without its effect. To insult a British Envoy may be agreeable enough and safe enough for the moment; but when it is evident that the insult will not be suffered to pass unpunished, the case is a good deal altered. We have put up with so much from SHERE ALI, and have been so exceedingly anxious not to give him needless offence, that he is possibly inclined to fancy that we shall put up with anything he may be pleased to offer. We trust for his own sake, and for ours too, that he may become aware of his mistake before he is overtaken by its consequences. We shall not turn aside now from the frontier policy we have deliberately determined to follow. If there are obstacles in the way, we shall know how to deal with them. We have formed the opinion that it is not safe for us to leave Afghanistan to itself. What we most wish is that the ruler of that country should be an independent and a friendly potentate. If SHERE ALI will take that position, we shall have nothing more to ask of him. We cannot suffer him to be unfriendly and independent too. Our frontier must be secured in any case, and if SHERE ALI will not help us in this matter, we shall know how to obtain what we want without his help. Moreover, the rebuff he has given us has been so openly dealt that we cannot put up with it.

It will not be for long that the English Envoy can be turned back by the AMEER'S orders. Our envoy will come next, not to request admittance, but to demand it; if, indeed, meanwhile the AMEER himself does not see the blunder he has made and sue for the Mission which he has just so contemptuously repelled. We still hope that war may be averted; but if war must come, better a little war now than an open trouble for some years, followed possibly by a great war which we may be less well placed for meeting. Our Mission to Cabul has been no momentary freak, undertaken without deliberation or without careful weighing of contingencies. It has been one step in the course of a policy on which we have resolved. We know what we have been aiming at, and why; and there is nothing in the refusal of the AMEER to receive our Mission which can operate to change our settled views.

We must expect, of course, that our Afghan policy will find unfavourable critics in this country. The difficulty to which we have been brought is obvious. The mischief we have been endeavouring to avert is less obvious, though not less certain for those who have the eyes to see it. Lord CARNARVON, in his speech on Saturday, blamed our meddling in any way with the affairs of Afghanistan. It was not, apparently, by a love of peace that he was led to this view. On the contrary, he seemed to think that there would be no great harm in our picking a quarrel with Russia and fighting it out on ground of our own choosing. What he did dislike was that the scene should be laid in Afghanistan. The absence of Russia as a combatant he really seems to have considered as a mere circumstance of no special account. Mr. BAXTER, in a speech we report this morning, took the same view of our Afghan policy. Not to interfere at all was the only advice which either he or Lord CARNARVON had to offer. They will discover in our telegram of yesterday what will no doubt seem to them abundant confirmation of the justice of their remarks. The result they predicted is now seen not to be unlikely to follow. We will give them credit for their sagacity, though, indeed, it scarcely required any special insight into affairs to find out this much. We may still complain that they do not tell us of any other policy which we could have chosen with more safety. To do nothing is easy for a time; but if others are to be busy while we are inactive, it may prove by and by that it would have been better if we had been busy too. The man who leaves his house-door open, and thus invites intrusion or depredation, is not generally thought to have deserved praise by such a display of masterly inactivity. But our two critics are not in agreement on every point. Lord CARNARVON suggests that we should fight RUSSIA; Mr. BAXTER thinks we should do wisely to come to an understanding with Russia. This, however, is just what we have tried to do; and our present difficulty has arisen in great measure from a breach of agreement on the part of Russia. They come together again on the terrible prospect of a war with Afghanistan. To do Lord CARNARVON justice, he is apprehensive that we shall succeed in the end. What he most fears is the conquest of the country, and its occupation by England. Mr. BAXTER has no such dread as this before his eyes. He is content to remind us of the issue of a former war, and from this he draws the conclusion that we should do well to keep clear of so proved a danger for the future. The lesson appears to be that we are no match for a petty Asiatic chief, and that, once defeated, we are to acknowledge our master for all time to come. There is room for criticism as to the moment chosen for pressing our Mission to Cabul, as to the extreme notice courted to its rejection, and possibly as to the credentials under which the Mission itself was sent. But when we are told only that we ought to leave Afghanistan alone, we can show good reasons for following another policy, and can only wonder that neither Lord CARNARVON nor Mr. BAXTER should seem to be aware that such reasons exist.

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"Times" Sept: 24th

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THE MILITARY GEOGRAPHY OF AFGHANISTAN.

Even the most recent maps of Afghanistan are, from the jealousy of foreigners which is a marked trait in the character of the Afghans, only roughly accurate. It is, however, possible, by collecting the scattered morsels of information given by various authorities to supply an approximately correct idea of the country which, before long, may be entered by a British army. Afghanistan is, on an average, about 430 miles from east to west, and 460 miles long from south to north. On the north it is bounded by the Oxus till a few miles below Kilat, and thence the boundary-line dividing it from Khivan territory runs east and by south to a point a few miles west of Sarrakhs. On the west it is bounded by Persia; on the south by Khelat. From its south-easternmost extremity the frontier runs in a north-easterly direction along British territory as far as Swat. On the east it is bounded by Swat, Caffristan, and Kashgar. A glance at the map shows that there is a long narrow promontory, as it were, of Afghan territory, which is bounded on the south by Caffristan, on the east by Kashgar, and on the north by some minor khanates, more or less subject to Kokand and Bokhara. At one point this promontory is only 200 miles distant from Cashmere. As, however, we do not anticipate invasion from Afghanistan we may leave out of consideration the above-mentioned tongue of territory. The main features of Afghanistan are the mountain chains, the general direction of which is east and west, but which throw out buttresses to the north and south. Afghanistan is traversed across the centre from east to west by a chain of mountains, which may be viewed as an offshoot of the Himalayan system. This chain, called the Hindoo-Koosh, or more properly the Hindoo-Koh, ends in the Koh-i-Baba, a huge mass north-west of and at no great distance from the city of Cabul. It is covered with perpetual snow, and its loftiest peak is nearly 18,000ft. high. Thence run two parallel chains, one called the Safed Koh; the other—the southernmost one—the Siah Koh. The northern range terminates just north of Herat, and the southern range, when it reaches a point just south of that city, trends off to the south-west and by south. These mountains are of no great height. North of the Koh-i-Baba and the Safed Koh is a high plateau, intersected by minor ranges, and called the Huzareh district. Running in a south-west direction from Cabul past Kandahar to Girishk is another chain of mountains. Practically, almost the whole of Afghanistan is a mass of mountains interspersed with valleys, of which some are of considerable size. The main watersheds of the country are, however, the crests of the two chains which run, one from east to west, and the other diagonally from north-east to south-west.

The chief rivers of Afghanistan are the Murghab, the Hari Rood, the Balkh, the Cabul, and the Helmund. The Murghab, rising near the north-eastern extremity of the Safed Koh, flows to Merv, a little beyond which the stream, whose waters in its course have been greatly drawn off for purposes of irrigation, loses itself in the sandy desert of Khiva. The Balkh, rising in the northern slopes of the Koh-i-Baba, is exhausted in a similar manner soon after it reaches the town of Balkh, and before it can effect a junction with the Oxus. The Cabul river rises in the mountains near the city of that name, and, passing by Jellalabad, makes its way through the Khyber Pass into British territory, falling into the Indus, close to Attock. The Hari Rood, taking its rise in the north-easterly slopes of the Siah Koh, traverses the long narrow valley formed by the Safed Koh, and the Siah Koh runs close to and south of Herat, a few miles past which it turns to the north, following for some distance the boundary of Afghanistan, then, quitting that country, turns north-west and falls into the Tejend. The Helmund rises in the south-eastern slopes of the Koh-i-Baba, near Cabul, and, running in a south-westerly direction to Girishk, about 100 miles south of that city, makes a sudden turn to the west, and, after flowing in that direction another 100 miles, emerges from Afghan territory. There are other rivers besides those we have named, but they are of no great importance. As a whole, it may be said that Afghanistan is well watered, and that in consequence the valleys are fertile. Unfortunately we are able to give but scant details of even the principal rivers. The Murghab is described as a clear and rapid mountain stream. Of the Balkh river we can say little. Of the Cabul River we know that from Tezeen the body of General Elphinstone was, at the end of April, sent down on a raft to Jellalabad. We also know that in the same month the Cabul river was forded by cavalry with great difficulty opposite Lalpoora, at the Afghan end of the Khyber Pass. It is probable, therefore, that the river throughout the greater part of the course from Cabul to the Indus is navigable for small boats even in the spring. According to Captain Marsh, who travelled from Meshed to Herat about five years ago in the month of April, the Hari Rood, where he crossed it at the Afghan frontier, had very little water in it, being exhausted by the irrigating canals higher up. The stream itself was only two yards wide and 1ft. deep, but the bed was more than 1,000 yards broad. The plain of Herat is watered by canals from the river, and one of these enters the city. The same author says that during the winter, which sets in early and lasts four months, all the streams near Herat are frozen. Concerning the Helmund, which would have to be crossed by an army marching from the Bolan to Herat, Captain Marsh, who passed it at Girishk in the beginning of the month of May, says that at that season it is 100 yards broad and 3½ft. deep. It is then at its lowest, and split up into many small streams. At the end of May or beginning of June, when the river is swollen by the melting of the snow, its breadth is computed at about a mile. The left, or south bank, is higher than the right, or northern bank.

The climate and soil of Afghanistan are very variable. In the valleys the climate is very hot in the summer, and fruit and grain are abundant. There is also a good deal of cultivation on terraces on the lower slopes of the mountains. Throughout the country, however, and especially in the north, there are frequent tracts of desert or rough rock-strewn plateaus, where nothing is cultivated. The valley of Cabul is remarkably fertile and highly cultivated, at all events near the city of that name. The climate is, however, colder than that of Afghanistan generally, but is very regular. There are three months of the winter, three of spring, three of summer, and three of autumn. During the winter, which sets in about the beginning of December, the town is regularly blockaded by the snow, which completely blocks up the streets, so that business is at a standstill.

An army advancing from Quettah, at present our advanced post in Afghanistan, would have to accomplish a distance of about 600 miles. It would have to cross the Kotul Mountains, between which and Candahar water is sometimes scarce; but the road crosses three streams. Candahar is an important town in every sense, especially from a strategical point of view, for through it passes the best line of communication between Cabul and Herat. It is also the capital of Southern Afghanistan, and whoever holds the city in force is master of the whole of that part of the country. The road for the first 16 miles from Candahar is bad, owing to the numerous unbridged streams and watercourses which it crosses. The next two days' marches to Gerishk, the road passes over a stony desert, in which water is scarcely to be procured. Gerishk is an important point on the road for the Helmund, which in the beginning of May is 100 yards broad and 3½ft. deep and can only be forded at that town. It was, when Captain Marsh crossed it, split up into many small streams. When the river floods at the beginning of June it is computed to be about a mile broad. The left or southern is higher than the right or northern bank. The country in the neighbourhood is fertile. The road then crosses a sterile plain, or rather plateau. The next day's march water is to be obtained. At Delaram water, forage, and food are scarce. The road then passes through a stony valley, but is level and good, with the drawback, however, that little water is to be obtained. Furrah on the Furrah road or river, is but a heap of ruins, with little cultivation in the neighbourhood. The river is dry three-quarters of the year; but at the beginning of summer it is about 200 yards wide. Between Furrah and Subzemar there are no villages, the country passed through being a jumble of valleys and hills, with small plains inhabited by nomads. It is almost needless to say that provisions are scarce. On leaving Subzemar the road traverses a valley well cultivated and covered by large flocks and herds. The road itself is good. Through the chain of mountains intervening between Subzemar and Herat the road is very rough, and between the mouth of the pass and Herat the country is a perfect desert of hills and ruins, and water is scarcely to be obtained. Of Herat we need only say that it is situated in a valley which is fertile and abounding in water and in food for man and beast. Let us now go back and speak of the road from Candahar *vid* Ghuznee to Cabul. It is sufficient to state that it is about 300 miles long and passes over some mountainous districts, in which it is extremely difficult to obtain provisions. The road is quite practicable, however, and was traversed both by Sir John Keane and General Nott with very little opposition.

It may be considered as certain that a column would enter Afghanistan by the Khyber Pass. The road is quite practicable for all arms, and provisions are to be obtained almost everywhere along the route. Water also is abundant. The mouth of the pass is about 20 miles from Peshawur. There are two entrances within a short distance of each other; one, the main entrance, is called the Shadee Bhagiaree, the other the Jubogee. The former is the shorter, being only five miles from the fort of Ali Musjid; the latter, which joins the main pass near that fort, is twice as long. From the mouth of the pass by the main road to its end at Dhaka is about 26 miles. From Dhaka to Jellalabad is about four marches, or about 40 miles. The Khoord Cabul Pass, where General Elphinstone's army was destroyed in 1841, is only about ten miles from Cabul, and is the most formidable physical obstacle to a force marching from Jellalabad on the capital. There is, however, another pass a short distance to the south, so the defenders' attention might easily be distracted.

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"Daily Telegraph" Sept. 24th

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

REJECTION OF THE ENGLISH MISSION.

RETURN TO PESHAWUR.

The following Reuter's telegram relating to the refusal of the Ameer of Afghanistan to receive the English Mission, of which General Sir Neville Chamberlain is the chief, was received too late to appear in more than a portion of our impression of yesterday:

"An officer of the Ameer of Afghanistan at Ali Musjid has refused to allow the English Mission to advance, and has crowned the heights commanding the pass with his levies. After an interview of three hours' duration with the officer, and having warned him that his act would be regarded as the act of Shere Ali himself, Major Cavagnari and his escort returned to Jumrood, and the Mission was withdrawn to Peshawur."

Other despatches confirm this intelligence, and go on to relate that, in threatening resistance to the advance of the Mission, the Ameer's representative crowned the heights adjacent with armed men, with a view to show to the British officers the difficulties which would stand in the way of an advance; that the rebuff was given in the presence of the two Indian Princes attached to the Mission, and that the Russian Envoy remains at Cabul. It is further stated that the Afghan outposts have been advanced to the centre of the Khyber Pass, and that the Ameer's officer has lately visited these posts; but that no sign of ill-feeling is manifested by the Afghan population towards the British, who in return will do all they can to conciliate Shere Ali's subjects as much as possible.

Admirable in composition and powerful, as representing all the strength of Great Britain, the Embassy has been stopped on the threshold of the Khyber Pass, the vestibule of Afghanistan. The political sagacity on which that ruler plumes himself has often before been found at fault, but even those who knew him best—who knew him, that is, at his worst—were unprepared for so suicidal an error as this challenge to our interference in the affairs of the "key of India." Sir Neville Chamberlain, an old personal friend, had been appointed to lead to Cabul a Mission stately enough in its appointments to satisfy even Oriental taste; but Shere Ali forbids the legate of England even to enter the neutral territory of the Khyber tribes. A rapid retrospect of our most recent relations with the Ameer will suffice to illustrate the position, and to show why and where umbrage has been taken by the Afghan chieftain. When Dost Mahomed, the father of the present Ameer, died in 1863, Lord Lawrence recognised Shere Ali as his successor. The throne, however, was soon shaken under him, and two usurpers in succession ruled in Cabul, Shere Ali being meanwhile an exile in Turkestan, and Lord Lawrence recognised first one and then the other as Ameer. Shere Ali, thanks to his son, Yakub Khan, regained the throne, and though he in his turn was again hailed as Ameer by the Indian Government, he had not forgotten that an equally ready recognition had strengthened his two predecessors against him. Indeed, the remembrance of that pitiful policy was so vivid in the Ameer's mind in 1869, when he visited Lord Mayo at Umballa, that he did not hesitate to speak bitterly of it to the Viceroy. This was his first grievance against us. But Lord Mayo won the Afghan's heart by the royal welcome and entertainment that was extended to him, and Shere Ali returned home pleased for the time, if not contented. But the first question asked of him on his arrival at Cabul was, "Did the Indian Government recognise Abdulla Jan as your heir?" and Shere Ali had to confess that the chief object of his visit to Umballa had not been obtained—that, indeed, he had not even seriously broached the subject of the heirship at the Durbar. The diplomacy that had thus baffled him Shere Ali in time grew to look upon as a personal wrong, and in his formal catalogue of grievances against the Indian Government it stands second on the list. Five others find a prominent place, namely, the despatch of an embassy direct to the Mir of Wakhan instead of through himself as that chief's suzerain; the mediation of Lord Northbrook for Yakub Khan when he was imprisoned by his father; the Seistan arbitration, when that province, in dispute between Cabul and Persia, was adjudged to the latter; the hearing refused to his complaints at the Peshawur Conference in 1876; the occupation of Quetta. A few words will illustrate the validity or the reverse of each of these "grievances." The mission to Wakhan was undoubtedly a breach of international etiquette, a Political Office blunder, and Shere Ali was justified in his complaint. The mediation in favour of Yakub Khan was without the province of the Indian Government, and, therefore, as all unnecessary interference in the private affairs of foreign potentates must be considered, ill-advised. Lord Northbrook, by implication, reproached the Ameer for imprisoning the son to whom he owed his throne, but the Russian General then on the Cabul frontier congratulated him upon having got under lock and key so dangerous a rebel. "You are not a kind and grateful father," said the one. "You are a wise ruler," said the other. And Shere Ali, comparing the two together—for both letters arrived in Cabul within a few hours of each other—found the Russian congratulation more to his taste than the English admonition. On the next point, the Seistan arbitration, it can only be said that the matter before the Commission was a very delicate one, and that they decided as they thought right. That many were found at the time, and many since, to quarrel with the award, does not strengthen Shere Ali in his attitude of discontent at the results of an arbitration to which he had voluntarily referred his claims. The next "grievance" of the Peshawur Conference has been fairly stated by Sir Lewis Pelly himself. The negotiations, he tells us, came at once to a dead-lock because, on the British side, a preliminary discussion of the Ameer's complaints against us could not be agreed to, and, on the Afghan, because Shere Ali's representative would not listen to our preliminary condition for future friendship—the presence of a British official at the Cabul Court. His last grievance on the list, the occupation of Quetta, cannot, even with the most indulgent advocacy of the Ameer's privilege to see faults where he chooses, be entertained as a cause of complaint. Shere Ali himself agreed to that occupation when in prospect, and described himself as pleased at it. Now that it is an accomplished fact, and he finds it to be a strong bit in the mouth of Cabul, the Ameer protests. But the time for protest has passed. When the two countries were on friendly terms any opposition from him would no doubt have been received with deference; but now that the immense strategic value of the position has been made prominent by the rupture of those friendly relations, objection to our presence at Quetta must be futile.

Such, then, are the seven immediate causes of the present situation. On sentimental grounds the Ameer may have much to reproach us with, but, since 1869, there has been nothing in our relations with Cabul to justify Shere Ali in the charge he brings against us of political or international immorality. On our side, however, we have distinct breaches of faith to complain of. Both the Ameer and Russia have long known that the Indian Government, representing England, will not tolerate Russian influence at the Court of Cabul, and each has formally promised, not once but often, that such influence should neither be extended to nor admitted into Afghan councils. In 1869, 1874, 1875, and again in 1876, Russia explicitly declared that Cabul should never come within the limits of her Asiatic enterprise; and, over and over again, Cabul has promised that if Russia ever attempted negotiation she would not listen. Yet a month ago a Russian embassy visited Cabul, and was honoured with an ostentatious display of welcome. The guns that saluted General Abramov and his escort proclaimed the overthrow of British influence beyond the Suleiman range, and their voice resounded throughout the length and breadth of India. In the East rumour is often as fatal as disaster, but Lord Lytton, with an

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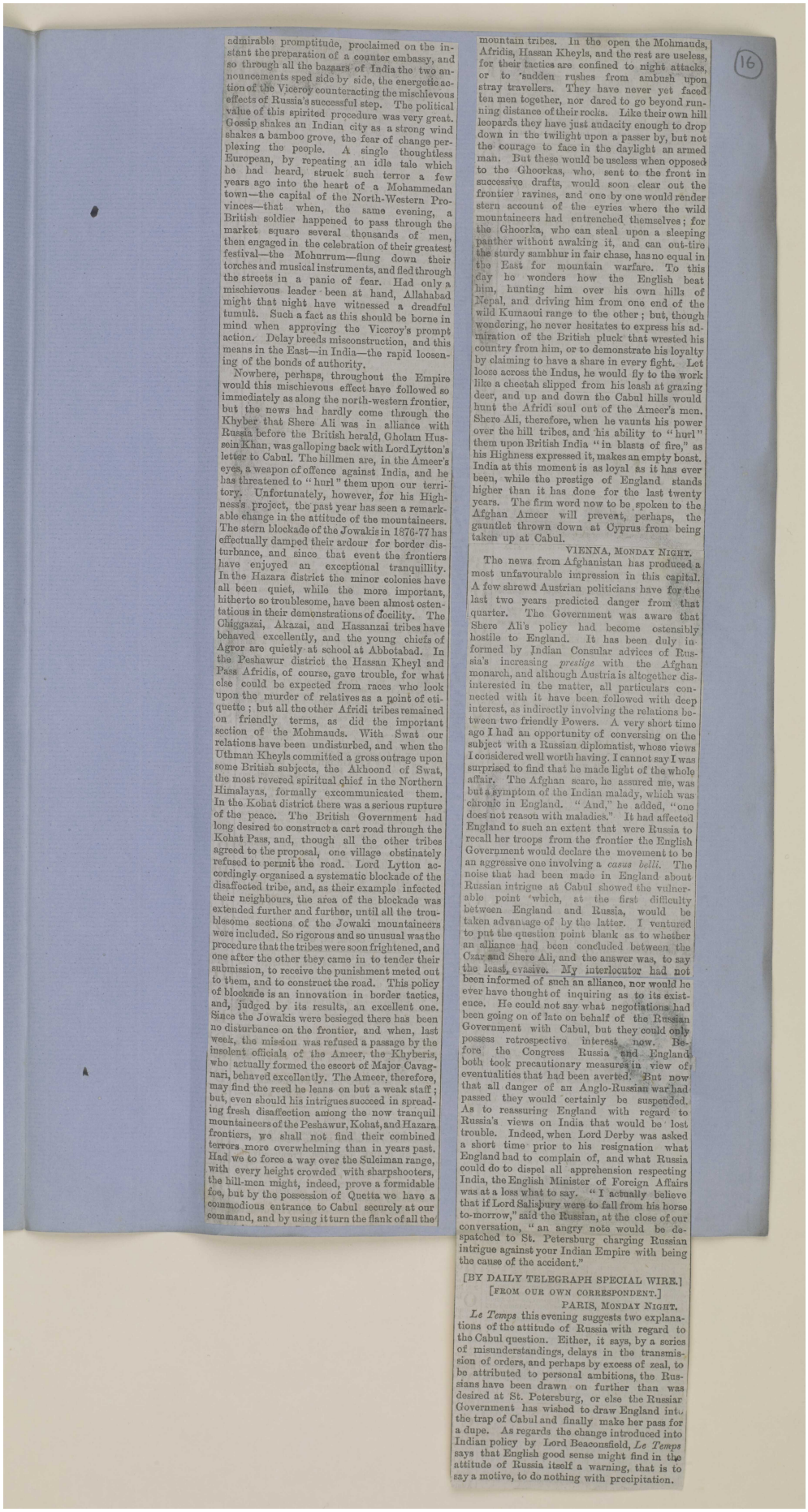

admirable promptitude, proclaimed on the instant the preparation of a counter embassy, and so through all the bazaars of India the two announcements sped side by side, the energetic action of the Viceroy counteracting the mischievous effects of Russia's successful step. The political value of this spirited procedure was very great. Gossip shakes an Indian city as a strong wind shakes a bamboo grove, the fear of change perplexing the people. A single thoughtless European, by repeating an idle tale which he had heard, struck such terror a few years ago into the heart of a Mohammedan town—the capital of the North-Western Provinces—that when, the same evening, a British soldier happened to pass through the market square several thousands of men, then engaged in the celebration of their greatest festival—the Mohurrum—flung down their torches and musical instruments, and fled through the streets in a panic of fear. Had only a mischievous leader been at hand, Allahabad might that night have witnessed a dreadful tumult. Such a fact as this should be borne in mind when approving the Viceroy's prompt action. Delay breeds misconstruction, and this means in the East—in India—the rapid loosening of the bonds of authority.

Nowhere, perhaps, throughout the Empire would this mischievous effect have followed so immediately as along the north-western frontier, but the news had hardly come through the Khyber that Shere Ali was in alliance with Russia before the British herald, Gholam Hussein Khan, was galloping back with Lord Lytton's letter to Cabul. The hillmen are, in the Ameer's eyes, a weapon of offence against India, and he has threatened to "hurl" them upon our territory. Unfortunately, however, for his Highness's project, the past year has seen a remarkable change in the attitude of the mountaineers. The stern blockade of the Jowakis in 1876-77 has effectually damped their ardour for border disturbance, and since that event the frontiers have enjoyed an exceptional tranquillity. In the Hazara district the minor colonies have all been quiet, while the more important, hitherto so troublesome, have been almost ostentatious in their demonstrations of docility. The Chiggazai, Akazai, and Hassanzai tribes have behaved excellently, and the young chiefs of Agror are quietly at school at Abbotabad. In the Peshawur district the Hassan Kheyl and Pass Afridis, of course, gave trouble, for what else could be expected from races who look upon the murder of relatives as a point of etiquette; but all the other Afridi tribes remained on friendly terms, as did the important section of the Mohmauds. With Swat our relations have been undisturbed, and when the Uthman Kheyls committed a gross outrage upon some British subjects, the Akhoond of Swat, the most revered spiritual chief in the Northern Himalayas, formally excommunicated them. In the Kohat district there was a serious rupture of the peace. The British Government had long desired to construct a cart road through the Kohat Pass, and, though all the other tribes agreed to the proposal, one village obstinately refused to permit the road. Lord Lytton accordingly organised a systematic blockade of the disaffected tribe, and, as their example infected their neighbours, the area of the blockade was extended further and further, until all the troublesome sections of the Jowaki mountaineers were included. So rigorous and so unusual was the procedure that the tribes were soon frightened, and one after the other they came in to tender their submission, to receive the punishment meted out to them, and to construct the road. This policy of blockade is an innovation in border tactics, and, judged by its results, an excellent one. Since the Jowakis were besieged there has been no disturbance on the frontier, and when, last week, the mission was refused a passage by the insolent officials of the Ameer, the Khyberis, who actually formed the escort of Major Cavagnari, behaved excellently. The Ameer, therefore, may find the reed he leans on but a weak staff; but, even should his intrigues succeed in spreading fresh disaffection among the now tranquil mountaineers of the Peshawur, Kohat, and Hazara frontiers, we shall not find their combined terrors more overwhelming than in years past. Had we to force a way over the Suleiman range, with every height crowded with sharpshooters, the hill-men might, indeed, prove a formidable foe, but by the possession of Quetta we have a commodious entrance to Cabul securely at our command, and by using it turn the flank of all the mountain tribes. In the open the Mohmauds, Afridis, Hassan Kheyls, and the rest are useless, for their tactics are confined to night attacks, or to sudden rushes from ambush upon stray travellers. They have never yet faced ten men together, nor dared to go beyond running distance of their rocks. Like their own hill leopards they have just audacity enough to drop down in the twilight upon a passer by, but not the courage to face in the daylight an armed man. But these would be useless when opposed to the Ghoorkas, who, sent to the front in successive drafts, would soon clear out the frontier ravines, and one by one would render stern account of the eyries where the wild mountaineers had entrenched themselves; for the Ghoorka, who can steal upon a sleeping panther without awaking it, and can out-tire the sturdy sambhur in fair chase, has no equal in the East for mountain warfare. To this day he wonders how the English beat him, hunting him over his own hills of Nepal, and driving him from one end of the wild Kumaoni range to the other; but, though wondering, he never hesitates to express his admiration of the British pluck that wrested his country from him, or to demonstrate his loyalty by claiming to have a share in every fight. Let loose across the Indus, he would fly to the work like a cheetah slipped from his leash at grazing deer, and up and down the Cabul hills would hunt the Afridi soul out of the Ameer's men. Shere Ali, therefore, when he vaunts his power over the hill tribes, and his ability to "hurl" them upon British India "in blasts of fire," as his Highness expressed it, makes an empty boast. India at this moment is as loyal as it has ever been, while the prestige of England stands higher than it has done for the last twenty years. The firm word now to be spoken to the Afghan Ameer will prevent, perhaps, the gauntlet thrown down at Cyprus from being taken up at Cabul.

VIENNA, MONDAY NIGHT.

The news from Afghanistan has produced a most unfavourable impression in this capital. A few shrewd Austrian politicians have for the last two years predicted danger from that quarter. The Government was aware that Shere Ali's policy had become ostensibly hostile to England. It has been duly informed by Indian Consular advices of Russia's increasing *prestige* with the Afghan monarch, and although Austria is altogether disinterested in the matter, all particulars connected with it have been followed with deep interest, as indirectly involving the relations between two friendly Powers. A very short time ago I had an opportunity of conversing on the subject with a Russian diplomatist, whose views I considered well worth having. I cannot say I was surprised to find that he made light of the whole affair. The Afghan scare, he assured me, was but a symptom of the Indian malady, which was chronic in England. "And," he added, "one does not reason with maladies." It had affected England to such an extent that were Russia to recall her troops from the frontier the English Government would declare the movement to be an aggressive one involving a *casus belli*. The noise that had been made in England about Russian intrigue at Cabul showed the vulnerable point which, at the first difficulty between England and Russia, would be taken advantage of by the latter. I ventured to put the question point blank as to whether an alliance had been concluded between the Czar and Shere Ali, and the answer was, to say the least, evasive. My interlocutor had not been informed of such an alliance, nor would he ever have thought of inquiring as to its existence. He could not say what negotiations had been going on of late on behalf of the Russian Government with Cabul, but they could only possess retrospective interest now. Before the Congress Russia and England both took precautionary measures in view of eventualities that had been averted. But now that all danger of an Anglo-Russian war had passed they would certainly be suspended. As to reassuring England with regard to Russia's views on India that would be lost trouble. Indeed, when Lord Derby was asked a short time prior to his resignation what England had to complain of, and what Russia could do to dispel all apprehension respecting India, the English Minister of Foreign Affairs was at a loss what to say. "I actually believe that if Lord Salisbury were to fall from his horse to-morrow," said the Russian, at the close of our conversation, "an angry note would be despatched to St. Petersburg charging Russian intrigue against your Indian Empire with being the cause of the accident."

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

PARIS, MONDAY NIGHT.

Le Temps this evening suggests two explanations of the attitude of Russia with regard to the Cabul question. Either, it says, by a series of misunderstandings, delays in the transmission of orders, and perhaps by excess of zeal, to be attributed to personal ambitions, the Russians have been drawn on further than was desired at St. Petersburg, or else the Russian Government has wished to draw England into the trap of Cabul and finally make her pass for a dupe. As regards the change introduced into Indian policy by Lord Beaconsfield, *Le Temps* says that English good sense might find in the attitude of Russia itself a warning, that is to say a motive, to do nothing with precipitation.

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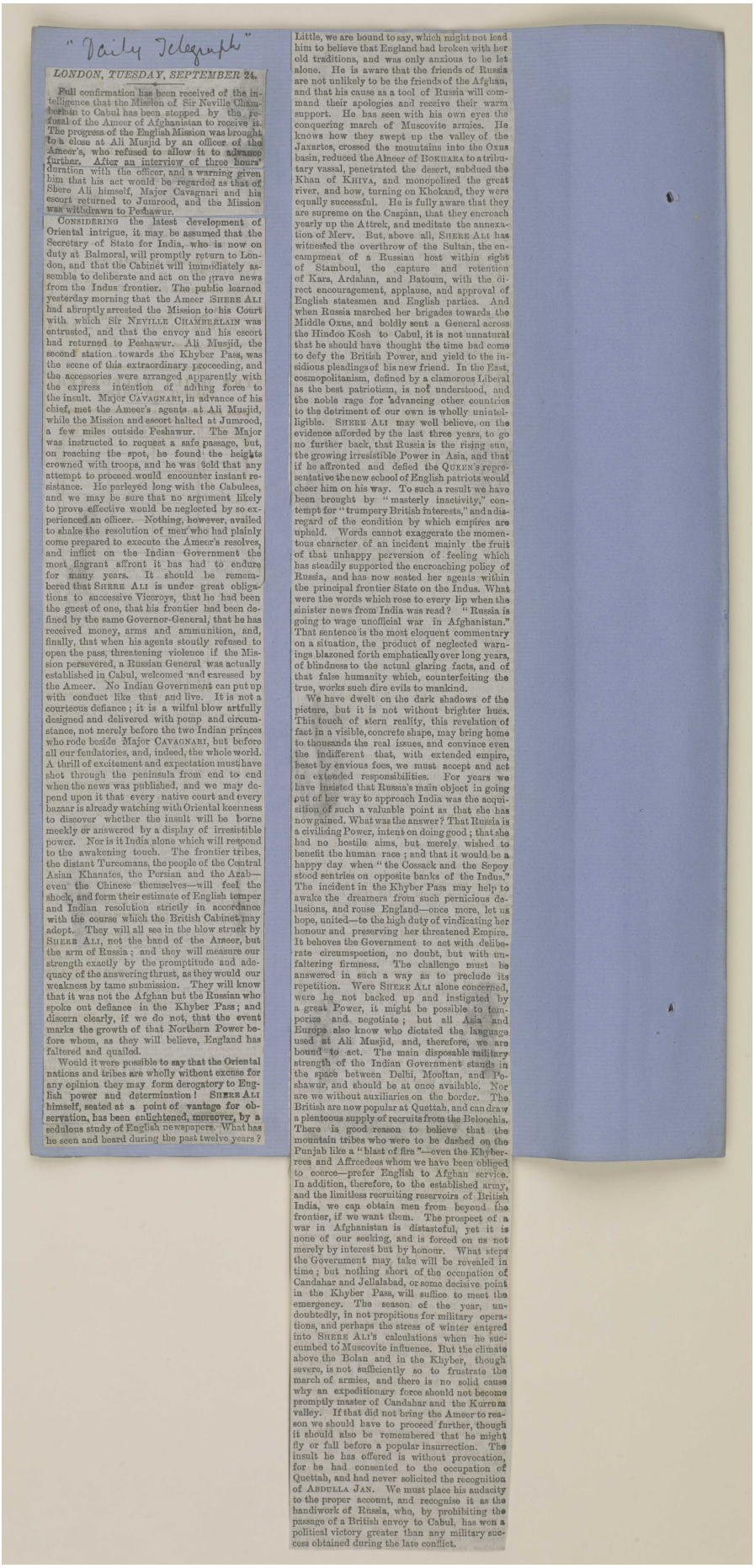

"Daily Telegraph"

LONDON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

Full confirmation has been received of the intelligence that the Mission of Sir Neville Chamberlain to Cabul has been stopped by the refusal of the Ameer of Afghanistan to receive it. The progress of the English Mission was brought to a close at Ali Musjid by an officer of the Ameer's, who refused to allow it to advance further. After an interview of three hours' duration with the officer, and a warning given him that his act would be regarded as that of Shere Ali himself, Major Cavagnari and his escort returned to Jumrood, and the Mission was withdrawn to Peshawur.

CONSIDERING the latest development of Oriental intrigue, it may be assumed that the Secretary of State for India, who is now on duty at Balmoral, will promptly return to London, and that the Cabinet will immediately assemble to deliberate and act on the grave news from the Indus frontier. The public learned yesterday morning that the Ameer SHERE ALI had abruptly arrested the Mission to his Court with which Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was entrusted, and that the envoy and his escort had returned to Peshawur. Ali Musjid, the second station towards the Khyber Pass, was the scene of this extraordinary proceeding, and the accessories were arranged apparently with the express intention of adding force to the insult. Major CAVAGNARI, in advance of his chief, met the Ameer's agents at Ali Musjid, while the Mission and escort halted at Jumrood, a few miles outside Peshawur. The Major was instructed to request a safe passage, but, on reaching the spot, he found the heights crowned with troops, and he was told that any attempt to proceed would encounter instant resistance. He parleyed long with the Cabulees, and we may be sure that no argument likely to prove effective would be neglected by so experienced an officer. Nothing, however, availed to shake the resolution of men who had plainly come prepared to execute the Ameer's resolves, and inflict on the Indian Government the most flagrant affront it has had to endure for many years. It should be remembered that SHERE ALI is under great obligations to successive Viceroys, that he had been the guest of one, that his frontier had been defined by the same Governor-General, that he has received money, arms and ammunition, and, finally, that when his agents stoutly refused to open the pass, threatening violence if the Mission persevered, a Russian General was actually established in Cabul, welcomed and caressed by the Ameer. No Indian Government can put up with conduct like that and live. It is not a courteous defiance; it is a wilful blow artfully designed and delivered with pomp and circumstance, not merely before the two Indian princes who rode beside Major CAVAGNARI, but before all our feudatories, and, indeed, the whole world. A thrill of excitement and expectation must have shot through the peninsula from end to end when the news was published, and we may depend upon it that every native court and every bazaar is already watching with Oriental keenness to discover whether the insult will be borne meekly or answered by a display of irresistible power. Nor is it India alone which will respond to the awakening touch. The frontier tribes, the distant Turcomans, the people of the Central Asian Khanates, the Persian and the Arab—even the Chinese themselves—will feel the shock, and form their estimate of English temper and Indian resolution strictly in accordance with the course which the British Cabinet may adopt. They will all see in the blow struck by SHERE ALI, not the hand of the Ameer, but the arm of Russia; and they will measure our strength exactly by the promptitude and adequacy of the answering thrust, as they would our weakness by tame submission. They will know that it was not the Afghan but the Russian who spoke out defiance in the Khyber Pass; and discern clearly, if we do not, that the event marks the growth of that Northern Power before whom, as they will believe, England has faltered and quailed.

Would it were possible to say that the Oriental nations and tribes are wholly without excuse for any opinion they may form derogatory to English power and determination! SHERE ALI himself, seated at a point of vantage for observation, has been enlightened, moreover, by a sedulous study of English newspapers. What has he seen and heard during the past twelve years? Little, we are bound to say, which might not lead him to believe that England had broken with her old traditions, and was only anxious to be let alone. He is aware that the friends of Russia are not unlikely to be the friends of the Afghan, and that his cause as a tool of Russia will command their apologies and receive their warm support. He has seen with his own eyes the conquering march of Muscovite armies. He knows how they swept up the valley of the Jaxartes, crossed the mountains into the Oxus basin, reduced the Ameer of BOKHARA to a tributary vassal, penetrated the desert, subdued the Khan of KHIVA, and monopolised the great river, and how, turning on Khokand, they were equally successful. He is fully aware that they are supreme on the Caspian, that they encroach yearly up the Attrek, and meditate the annexation of Merv. But, above all, SHERE ALI has witnessed the overthrow of the Sultan, the encampment of a Russian host within sight of Stamboul, the capture and retention of Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum, with the direct encouragement, applause, and approval of English statesmen and English parties. And when Russia marched her brigades towards the Middle Oxus, and boldly sent a General across the Hindoo Kosh to Cabul, it is not unnatural that he should have thought the time had come to defy the British Power, and yield to the insidious pleadings of his new friend. In the East, cosmopolitanism, defined by a clamorous Liberal as the best patriotism, is not understood, and the noble rage for advancing other countries to the detriment of our own is wholly unintelligible. SHERE ALI may well believe, on the evidence afforded by the last three years, to go no further back, that Russia is the rising sun, the growing irresistible Power in Asia, and that if he affronted and defied the QUEEN'S representative the new school of English patriots would cheer him on his way. To such a result we have been brought by "masterly inactivity," contempt for "trumpery British interests," and a disregard of the condition by which empires are upheld. Words cannot exaggerate the momentous character of an incident mainly the fruit of that unhappy perversion of feeling which has steadily supported the encroaching policy of Russia, and has now seated her agents within the principal frontier State on the Indus. What were the words which rose to every lip when the sinister news from India was read? "Russia is going to wage unofficial war in Afghanistan." That sentence is the most eloquent commentary on a situation, the product of neglected warnings blazoned forth emphatically over long years, of blindness to the actual glaring facts, and of that false humanity which, counterfeiting the true, works such dire evils to mankind.

We have dwelt on the dark shadows of the picture, but it is not without brighter hues. This touch of stern reality, this revelation of fact in a visible, concrete shape, may bring home to thousands the real issues, and convince even the indifferent that, with extended empire, beset by envious foes, we must accept and act on extended responsibilities. For years we have insisted that Russia's main object in going out of her way to approach India was the acquisition of such a valuable point as that she has now gained. What was the answer? That Russia is a civilising Power, intent on doing good; that she had no hostile aims, but merely wished to benefit the human race; and that it would be a happy day when "the Cossack and the Sepoy stood sentries on opposite banks of the Indus." The incident in the Khyber Pass may help to awake the dreamers from such pernicious delusions, and rouse England—once more, let us hope, united—to the high duty of vindicating her honour and preserving her threatened Empire. It behoves the Government to act with deliberate circumspection, no doubt, but with unfaltering firmness. The challenge must be answered in such a way as to preclude its repetition. Were SHERE ALI alone concerned, were he not backed up and instigated by a great Power, it might be possible to temporize and negotiate; but all Asia and Europe also know who dictated the language used at Ali Musjid, and, therefore, we are bound to act. The main disposable military strength of the Indian Government stands in the space between Delhi, Mooltan, and Peshawur, and should be at once available. Nor are we without auxiliaries on the border. The British are now popular at Quettah, and can draw a plenteous supply of recruits from the Beloochis. There is good reason to believe that the mountain tribes who were to be dashed on the Punjab like a "blast of fire"—even the Khyberees and Affredees whom we have been obliged to coerce—prefer English to Afghan service. In addition, therefore, to the established army, and the limitless recruiting reservoirs of British India, we can obtain men from beyond the frontier, if we want them. The prospect of a war in Afghanistan is distasteful, yet it is none of our seeking, and is forced on us not merely by interest but by honour. What steps the Government may take will be revealed in time; but nothing short of the occupation of Candahar and Jellalabad, or some decisive point in the Khyber Pass, will suffice to meet the emergency. The season of the year, undoubtedly, in not propitious for military operations, and perhaps the stress of winter entered into SHERE ALI'S calculations when he succumbed to Muscovite influence. But the climate above the Bolan and in the Khyber, though severe, is not sufficiently so to frustrate the march of armies, and there is no solid cause why an expeditionary force should not become promptly master of Candahar and the Kurrum valley. If that did not bring the Ameer to reason we should have to proceed further, though it should also be remembered that he might fly or fall before a popular insurrection. The insult he has offered is without provocation, for he had consented to the occupation of Quettah, and had never solicited the recognition of ABDULLA JAN. We must place his audacity to the proper account, and recognise it as the handiwork of Russia, who, by prohibiting the passage of a British envoy to Cabul, has won a political victory greater than any military success obtained during the late conflict.

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"Daily News" Sept: 24th

(17)

THE KHYBER PASS.



The map of the British and Russian frontiers in Asia published in our impression of Friday last will have served to make our readers familiar with the general outlines of the country which the startling intelligence from our Special Correspondent in Simla, published in our columns of yesterday, must necessarily invest with an absorbing interest. In the observations which accompanied that map we explained the conditions and discussed the possibilities of an invasion of India from the assumed starting point of Herat, either by way of the famous Khyber Pass or by the Bolan Pass—the route by which the army under the command of Sir John afterwards Lord Keane advanced into Afghanistan in the spring of 1839. Now, however, the Afghan question has assumed a new aspect. The topic of interest is for the moment no longer that of the feasibility of a Russian advance upon Cabul or Kandahar, but of the practical difficulties in the way of that forcibly entry into the dominions of Shere Ali which those who have the control of our Indian policy may at any moment deem incumbent upon us in the interests of British reputation and influence upon the north-western borders of Hindostan. Some more complete account therefore of the nature of the Passes of the Suliman mountain-range may be acceptable to our readers, and this will perhaps be best afforded by a glance at the experiences of British commanders who have attempted, with or without success, to conduct an army through these passes in the face of hostile forces.

As we have already observed, the advance of Sir John Keane into Afghanistan in 1839 was effected by the less direct route of the Bolan Pass—or rather by the succession of ravines and gorges, gradually ascending from east to west, which is known by that name. It was the refusal of Runjeet Singh to fulfil his promise of preparing the way for an easy advance of the British army through the Sikh country to Cabul which finally led to the selection of Shikarpoor, in Scinde, as the principal rendezvous of our forces, and the determination to approach the Afghan capital by the more circuitous way of the Bolan, Quettah, and Kandahar—the Ameers of Scinde, more complaisant than the ruler of the Punjab, having promised to provide supplies and means of conveyance. The difficulties encountered by the Bengal column under Sir Willoughby Cotton, consisting of 9,500 men and the enormous number of 80,000 camp followers, were rather of a physical than a military kind. The Bolan Pass is 66 miles in length, winding, rugged, and flanked by high rocks, its width gradually narrowing from three miles to about 150 feet, and forage and water being entirely wanting. When the column reached Dadur, at the foot of the mountains, on the 6th of March, provisions were already so short that the camp followers were put on half rations. Nevertheless, the troops reached Quettah, after enduring great privations. In the graphic words of Sir John Kaye, "when Cotton appeared with his troops on a clear, still morning, at the mouth of the defile, there was little likelihood of any obstacle being opposed to his free progress. But the baggage-cattle were falling dead by the wayside; the artillery horses were showing painful symptoms of distress. The stream of the Bolan river was tainted by the bodies of the camels that had sunk beneath their loads. The Beloochee freebooters were hovering about, cutting off our couriers, murdering stragglers, carrying off our baggage and our cattle. Among the rocks of this stupendous defile our men pitched their tents; and toiled on again, day by day, over a wretched road covered with loose flint stones, surmounting, at first, by a scarcely perceptible ascent, and afterwards by a difficult acclivity, the great Brahoo chain of hills. The Bolan Pass is nearly sixty miles in length. The passage was accomplished in six days. They were days of drear discomfit, but not of danger. A resolute enemy might have wrought mighty havoc among Cotton's regiments; but the enemies with which now they had to contend were the sharp flint stones which lamed our cattle, the scanty pasturage which destroyed them, and the marauding tribes who carried them off. The way was strewn with baggage—with abandoned tents and stores and luxuries which, a few weeks afterwards, would have fetched their weight twice counted in rupees, were left to be trampled down by the cattle in the rear, or carried off by the plunderers about them. Happy was every man in the force when the army again emerged into the open country." At Quettah the troops failing to find the supplies they expected, were compelled to push forward in a famished condition to Kandahar, distant 150 miles, which place they reached on the 26th of April, having marched 1,000 miles since leaving Ferozepoor. The Bombay column, with Shah Shoojah's contingent, which entered the pass on the 12th of April, encountered still greater fatigues and privations, and suffered moreover some harassment from the predatory tribes which infest the ranges of hills in that district. No serious opposition, however,

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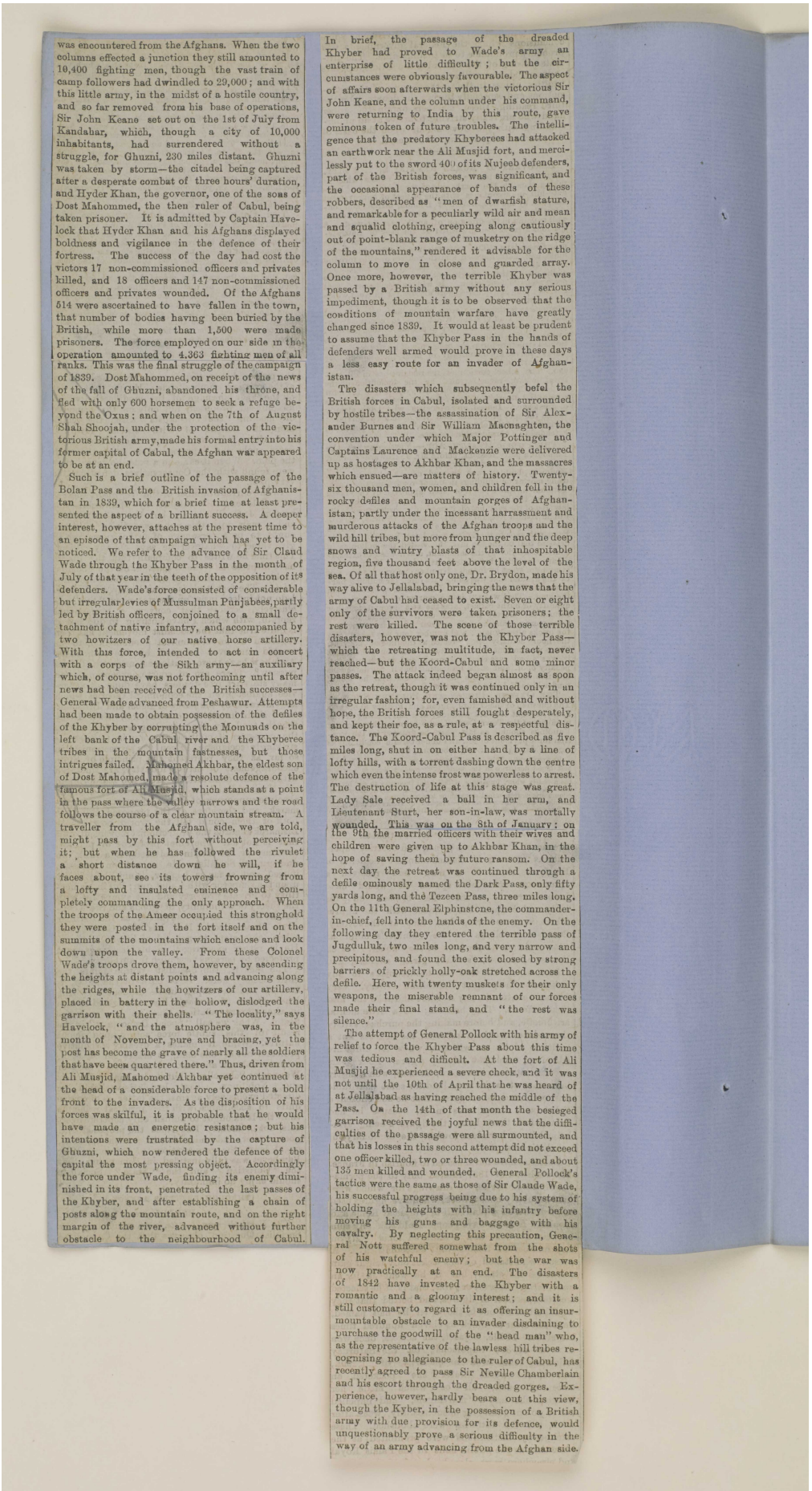

was encountered from the Afghans. When the two columns effected a junction they still amounted to 10,400 fighting men, though the vast train of camp followers had dwindled to 29,000; and with this little army, in the midst of a hostile country, and so far removed from his base of operations, Sir John Keane set out on the 1st of July from Kandahar, which, though a city of 10,000 inhabitants, had surrendered without a struggle, for Ghuzni, 230 miles distant. Ghuzni was taken by storm—the citadel being captured after a desperate combat of three hours' duration, and Hyder Khan, the governor, one of the sons of Dost Mahommed, the then ruler of Cabul, being taken prisoner. It is admitted by Captain Havelock that Hyder Khan and his Afghans displayed boldness and vigilance in the defence of their fortress. The success of the day had cost the victors 17 non-commissioned officers and privates killed, and 18 officers and 147 non-commissioned officers and privates wounded. Of the Afghans 514 were ascertained to have fallen in the town, that number of bodies having been buried by the British, while more than 1,500 were made prisoners. The force employed on our side in the operation amounted to 4,363 fighting men of all ranks. This was the final struggle of the campaign of 1839. Dost Mahommed, on receipt of the news of the fall of Ghuzni, abandoned his throne, and fled with only 600 horsemen to seek a refuge beyond the Oxus: and when on the 7th of August Shah Shoojah, under the protection of the victorious British army, made his formal entry into his former capital of Cabul, the Afghan war appeared to be at an end.

Such is a brief outline of the passage of the Bolan Pass and the British invasion of Afghanistan in 1839, which for a brief time at least presented the aspect of a brilliant success. A deeper interest, however, attaches at the present time to an episode of that campaign which has yet to be noticed. We refer to the advance of Sir Claud Wade through the Khyber Pass in the month of July of that year in the teeth of the opposition of its defenders. Wade's force consisted of considerable but irregular levies of Mussulman Punjabees, partly led by British officers, conjoined to a small detachment of native infantry, and accompanied by two howitzers of our native horse artillery. With this force, intended to act in concert with a corps of the Sikh army—an auxiliary which, of course, was not forthcoming until after news had been received of the British successes—General Wade advanced from Peshawur. Attempts had been made to obtain possession of the defiles of the Khyber by corrupting the Momunds on the left bank of the Cabul river and the Khyberee tribes in the mountain fastnesses, but those intrigues failed. Mahomed Akhbar, the eldest son of Dost Mahomed, made a resolute defence of the famous fort of Ali Musjid, which stands at a point in the pass where the valley narrows and the road follows the course of a clear mountain stream. A traveller from the Afghan side, we are told, might pass by this fort without perceiving it; but when he has followed the rivulet a short distance down he will, if he faces about, see its towers frowning from a lofty and insulated eminence and completely commanding the only approach. When the troops of the Ameer occupied this stronghold they were posted in the fort itself and on the summits of the mountains which enclose and look down upon the valley. From these Colonel Wade's troops drove them, however, by ascending the heights at distant points and advancing along the ridges, while the howitzers of our artillery, placed in battery in the hollow, dislodged the garrison with their shells. "The locality," says Havelock, "and the atmosphere was, in the month of November, pure and bracing, yet the post has become the grave of nearly all the soldiers that have been quartered there." Thus, driven from Ali Musjid, Mahomed Akhbar yet continued at the head of a considerable force to present a bold front to the invaders. As the disposition of his forces was skilful, it is probable that he would have made an energetic resistance; but his intentions were frustrated by the capture of Ghuzni, which now rendered the defence of the capital the most pressing object. Accordingly the force under Wade, finding its enemy diminished in its front, penetrated the last passes of the Khyber, and after establishing a chain of posts along the mountain route, and on the right margin of the river, advanced without further obstacle to the neighbourhood of Cabul.

In brief, the passage of the dreaded Khyber had proved to Wade's army an enterprise of little difficulty; but the circumstances were obviously favourable. The aspect of affairs soon afterwards when the victorious Sir John Keane, and the column under his command, were returning to India by this route, gave ominous token of future troubles. The intelligence that the predatory Khyberees had attacked an earthwork near the Ali Musjid fort, and mercilessly put to the sword 400 of its Nujeeb defenders, part of the British forces, was significant, and the occasional appearance of bands of these robbers, described as "men of dwarfish stature, and remarkable for a peculiarly wild air and mean and squalid clothing, creeping along cautiously out of point-blank range of musketry on the ridge of the mountains," rendered it advisable for the column to move in close and guarded array. Once more, however, the terrible Khyber was passed by a British army without any serious impediment, though it is to be observed that the conditions of mountain warfare have greatly changed since 1839. It would at least be prudent to assume that the Khyber Pass in the hands of defenders well armed would prove in these days a less easy route for an invader of Afghanistan.

The disasters which subsequently befel the British forces in Cabul, isolated and surrounded by hostile tribes—the assassination of Sir Alexander Burnes and Sir William Macnaghten, the convention under which Major Pottinger and Captains Laurence and Mackenzie were delivered up as hostages to Akhbar Khan, and the massacres which ensued—are matters of history. Twenty-six thousand men, women, and children fell in the rocky defiles and mountain gorges of Afghanistan, partly under the incessant harrassment and murderous attacks of the Afghan troops and the wild hill tribes, but more from hunger and the deep snows and wintry blasts of that inhospitable region, five thousand feet above the level of the sea. Of all that host only one, Dr. Brydon, made his way alive to Jellalabad, bringing the news that the army of Cabul had ceased to exist. Seven or eight only of the survivors were taken prisoners; the rest were killed. The scene of those terrible disasters, however, was not the Khyber Pass—which the retreating multitude, in fact, never reached—but the Koord-Cabul and some minor passes. The attack indeed began almost as soon as the retreat, though it was continued only in an irregular fashion; for, even famished and without hope, the British forces still fought desperately, and kept their foe, as a rule, at a respectful distance. The Koord-Cabul Pass is described as five miles long, shut in on either hand by a line of lofty hills, with a torrent dashing down the centre which even the intense frost was powerless to arrest. The destruction of life at this stage was great. Lady Sale received a ball in her arm, and Lieutenant Sturt, her son-in-law, was mortally wounded. This was on the 8th of January; on the 9th the married officers with their wives and children were given up to Akhbar Khan, in the hope of saving them by future ransom. On the next day the retreat was continued through a defile ominously named the Dark Pass, only fifty yards long, and the Tezeen Pass, three miles long. On the 11th General Elphinstone, the commander-in-chief, fell into the hands of the enemy. On the following day they entered the terrible pass of Jugdulluk, two miles long, and very narrow and precipitous, and found the exit closed by strong barriers of prickly holly-oak stretched across the defile. Here, with twenty muskets for their only weapons, the miserable remnant of our forces made their final stand, and "the rest was silence."

The attempt of General Pollock with his army of relief to force the Khyber Pass about this time was tedious and difficult. At the fort of Ali Musjid he experienced a severe check, and it was not until the 10th of April that he was heard of at Jellalabad as having reached the middle of the Pass. On the 14th of that month the besieged garrison received the joyful news that the difficulties of the passage were all surmounted, and that his losses in this second attempt did not exceed one officer killed, two or three wounded, and about 135 men killed and wounded. General Pollock's tactics were the same as those of Sir Claude Wade, his successful progress being due to his system of holding the heights with his infantry before moving his guns and baggage with his cavalry. By neglecting this precaution, General Nott suffered somewhat from the shots of his watchful enemy; but the war was now practically at an end. The disasters of 1842 have invested the Khyber with a romantic and a gloomy interest; and it is still customary to regard it as offering an insurmountable obstacle to an invader disdaining to purchase the goodwill of the "head man" who, as the representative of the lawless hill tribes recognising no allegiance to the ruler of Cabul, has recently agreed to pass Sir Neville Chamberlain and his escort through the dreaded gorges. Experience, however, hardly bears out this view, though the Kyber, in the possession of a British army with due provision for its defence, would unquestionably prove a serious difficulty in the way of an army advancing from the Afghan side.

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"Daily News"

18

LONDON, TUESDAY, SEPT. 24.

We publish to-day a map of the Suliman range of mountains which intervenes between India and Afghanistan. The map shows the Khyber Pass, at the entrance of which Sir Neville Chamberlain has been refused admission into Afghanistan.

THE news of the return to Peshawur of our Cabul mission, which our Simla Correspondent enabled us to publish so fully and clearly yesterday morning, does not seem to diminish in importance as it is more deliberately considered. A carefully-matured plan, undertaken by the Viceroy of INDIA, acting with the entire approval of the Government here, has been foiled at its first movement. We have formally applied to the Ameer of CABUL for permission to enter into communication with him; and his answer has been to bar the door against us, and threaten to fire upon us if we come any nearer. If this were the action of some uncivil or capricious European prince it might very well be passed over with contempt or indifference. We had offered to enter into friendly communication, and our offer had been declined, and there would be nothing more to be done or said on our part. The discredit of the incivility would fall upon the uncivil personage, and it would not be regarded as any business of ours to teach him better manners. But the English Government cannot afford to deal thus with an Asiatic prince, and more especially with the Ameer of CABUL. Our statesmen in office have drawn the attention of Asia and the whole world to the mission they were setting on foot, and it is only too certain that if they now put up with the rebuff they have received it will become an article of faith all over Asia, and especially throughout India, that we can no longer make our will a power in the East. There is more than this. When AMPHITRYON in the great comedy finds the door closed against him which he had counted on finding invitingly open, the bitterness of the repulse does not lie only or chiefly in the fact that he is shut out. The pain is that while he is excluded another is welcomed; the gate which has been closed in his face shelters the other, who has found a cordial reception within. It would be impossible to doubt that already rumour is announcing all over India that SHERE ALI has turned back our representatives while he was entertaining the officers of the Emperor of RUSSIA. Unless, then, events should take a very unexpected turn, unless SHERE ALI should disavow the act of his servant, and explain and apologise in some satisfactory way, we presume that the Viceroy of INDIA will have to prove that when England invites herself to a conference with an Asiatic prince it is not in the power of such a prince peremptorily to decline the interview. What does this mean? War with SHERE ALI, we must suppose; a war which will cost us many lives and much money; which cannot possibly bring us glory or safety, which cannot, however it end in the present, bear any "finality" with it, and which may set half Asia aflame. The first movement in such a policy is, to use a celebrated comparison, like a cannon ball fired at random and in the darkness.

As yet we have no means of knowing whether SHERE ALI is acting on his own counsel merely and in reliance upon his own strength, or whether he counts upon a force behind him greater than his own. He was, as we all know, well inclined at one time to be our friend—he was even eager for our friendship. His alliance seems then to have been renounced by Russia as hopeless, so certain did it appear that he had entered into a close relationship with England. There may have been sound and substantial reasons for England not pledging herself to any positive alliance with a prince like SHERE ALI, but for every such reason there could certainly be found many far more valid and clear against converting him into an enemy first, and endeavouring to force our friendship on him afterwards. All this is, no doubt, part of a plan concocted in the enterprising minds of some of our statesmen. It cannot be merely a chance incident, an isolated and inconsequential controversy. It is evidence of the stirring of Imperial instincts along every frontier line of ours. We confess that we look with profound distrust and even dismay to the development of Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Asiatic policy. This first overt act is peculiarly ominous. We are stirring the slumbering fires of Asiatic jealousy and fear everywhere by our recent doings. The fatal mistake which our Government made in Europe seems likely to be repeated and greatly exaggerated in Asia. Here we taught provinces and peoples who were doubtful which way to turn for support that they must not look to us for friendship; there we seem bent on teaching hesitating princes that they must consider us as their enemies. In each case it is only too obvious that we play the game of Russia; we play it for her better than she could have done for herself. In the particular case of Cabul and SHERE ALI, Russia is free to take any course that seems convenient to her. We are pledged, or all but pledged, to one particular course. If she has really set on SHERE ALI to the action he seems determined on taking, she can afford him support and comfort enough to vex and obstruct us without seeming to assume any actual part in the dispute. No support whatever, so far as any historical evidence exists, was given by Russia to DOST MOHAMMED forty years ago when once the struggle between us and him had fairly begun. If Russia set the quarrel going, she was probably well content to see it go on as it did. If she has any sinister share in the business this time, she might perhaps be quite satisfied when she had seen us perplexed with the harassing problem of how to deal with SHERE ALI, and what to do with Cabul. Should she have any deeper and darker game to play, we shall have thrown all the advantages into her hands. We shall have allowed her to choose the ground for us, and left her free to act how and when she pleases for herself.

The public of this country would do well to look the uncomfortable prospect fairly in the face. It may be that we are in for a war with SHERE ALI, and such a war could only close its earlier chapters in the occupation of Cabul. We should get to Cabul no doubt; it would be only a question of so many Englishmen killed. When we had occupied Cabul, the question would arise, what we were to do with it. No one believes that we could turn the fierce Afghans into docile subjects of the British Crown. No one could have much hope of any abiding advantage to come to us of a new attempt to settle for our own convenience the sovereignty of Cabul. We should find the business of defending our Asiatic frontiers made more difficult and complicated with every day that we held the Afghan State; and we should be in much perplexity as to the possibility of safely renouncing it. We should have the wolf by the ears; and the man who has the wolf by the ears is not in good condition to speak with his enemy, if he have one, at the gate. It seems to us that on the very principles which we may assume Lord BEACONSFIELD and Lord LYTTON to have adopted, this new intervention in the affairs of Cabul is especially indefensible. It is supposed that we have a powerful enemy in Asia who is watching for an opportunity to assail us, and we forthwith thrust ourselves into a quarrel with a smaller enemy, in order, it might seem, to give the greater one the chance of deciding for himself whether we are in a difficulty sufficient to tempt him to make the attack. No matter how the military operations required by such a policy may end—and, indeed, we are confident that they could end but one way—the effect upon our imperial system could not possibly be satisfactory. Even Lord BEACONSFIELD himself cannot seriously believe that he could beguile the people of England into a vast scheme of Asiatic annexations and conquests after the fashion of ALEXANDER, or some of the fierce Persian sovereigns who once had the arms of the Afghan tribes at their disposal. The present temper of theatrical enterprise will die away. Rhodomontade will not always pass in England as the language of statesmanship. Whatever we may borrow from America, we shall not borrow the theory of the "manifest destiny." It would be well if English statesmen now in office, and who have still the prospect of a tolerably long career, were to consider whether they are doing wisely in making themselves responsible for a policy which can have only a brief existence, and yet may do incalculable mischief in its few and feverish spasms of life. Some day England will come to count coldly the cost of such a policy, to question its results, to ask whether the glory it professed to bring is anything better than shame. In that day it will not be altogether well with the statesmen who are answerable for what was done; that is, who took part in it, and are living to bear their share of the consequences.

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"Standard" Sept. 24th

THE STOPPAGE OF THE CABUL MISSION.

MEETING OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL.

TROOPS MASSED ON THE FRONTIER.

PUBLIC FEELING IN INDIA.

(REUTER'S TELEGRAM.)

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 22.

An officer of the Ameer of Afghanistan, at Ali Musjid, has refused to allow the English Mission to advance, and has crowned the heights commanding the pass with his levies.

After an interview of three hours' duration with the officer, and having warned him that his act would be regarded as the act of Shere Ali himself, Major Cavagnari and his escort returned to Jumrood, and the Mission was withdrawn to Peshawur.

(BY EASTERN COMPANY'S CABLE.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BOMBAY, MONDAY.

A special meeting of the Viceroy's Council was held this afternoon at Simla. General Roberts, the commandant of the frontier forces, thereupon started for Peshawur with secret orders.

A large force is ordered to be in readiness on the frontier, where twelve thousand men are already massed.

The Indian newspapers universally consider that the affront to the Mission demands an apology or the occupation of Afghanistan.

A war feeling is prevalent among the Europeans. Trade is disturbed, and Government Securities have fallen.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, MONDAY.

Great sensation has been caused here by the serious news from India.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, MONDAY.

The prospect of a conflict between Great Britain and Afghanistan has caused the greatest consternation in this city.

The semi-official *Nord*, of Brussels, in an article on the subject of England and Afghanistan, says:—"The question of Afghanistan is treated by the London press with the absence of *sang froid* and with the febrile agitation which characterise the English policy under the present Government. One journal recommends the forcible annexation of Cabul, if Shere Ali will not give in his complete submission to the English views. We must admit that we cannot understand this precipitate and dangerous means of solving the question. It may be said that the particulars published after the event of the Russian expedition beyond the Oxus have terrified the English and produced upon them the effect of an overwhelming revelation, as if the matter in question, in presence of an imminent war, presented anything abnormal or unforeseen. It was very natural that Russia, threatened with a maritime blockade, should endeavour to seek her enemy at that point where it was believed they were vulnerable, and should make a diver ion in the direction of India to the expected attack of the Indian contingents transported to Europe. It is true that the effective of these contingents was just sufficient to peaceably conquer Cyprus from Turkey, and that the fire which Indian troops were destined to light on the shores of the Black Sea reduced itself to a harmless squib. But the most elementary prudence recommended to the Russian Government to take this demonstration as a serious one. When peace was made the expedition of the Oxus became a dead letter, and will only be revived as a measure of defence. England is doubtless aware of this; but the mere eventuality of a Russian advance in the direction of the Indian Empire is sufficient to terrify her. The idea of having a frontier contiguous to a great Power is insupportable to the English nation, which has up to the present been rejoicing in the idea that they can carry war into the country of another Power, and at the same time themselves remain unassailable. No doubt it is convenient not to have neighbours, but it is only possible to escape from this by remaining at home and becoming a hermit. Besides, a people cannot expect to unite the advantage of an insular position with those continental possessions. Moreover, is not the British Empire in America contiguous to the United States? It is true that they can rely better upon the loyalty of the citizens of the Dominion than on the Hindoos. This contact which is so much feared should not be sought by England, but this is what the British Government is doing in desiring to annex Afghanistan to their possessions. In case of war Russia would have a much better chance in meeting the English encamped beyond the Himalayas amidst a population ready to revolt than entrenched in the great mountain wall close to their resources and surrounded by subjects already accustomed to their yoke. Would it not be relatively easy for Russia to upset that precarious fabric, the fall of which would have a dangerous effect in India? In fine, England would find her safety, and perhaps the best for her Indian interests, in a correct and loyal policy towards Russia, who has no desire to be aggressive in Asia, and which she never will be unless she be forced thereto."

LONDON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

The serious news from Afghanistan has caused great excitement, not only in England and India, but throughout the Continent. It is felt that the refusal of the AMEER to allow Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission to proceed through the Khyber Pass is a step which can only be met by an apology on the part of the AMEER, or by the occupation of his territory. A special meeting of the VICEROY'S Council was held yesterday afternoon, the result of which was the immediate despatch of General ROBERTS to Peshawur with secret orders. That distinguished officer commands the forces on the frontier, where twelve thousand men are now massed.

The news from India which we publish this morning will hardly surprise those of our readers who have followed the correspondence and articles which have recently, from time to time, appeared in these columns. The rebuff of the English Mission to Cabul had been anticipated. What is gratifying is to see that our Indian Government was prepared for it, and has acted with promptitude. The CHAMBERLAIN Mission to Cabul is nipped in the bud before an opportunity offered for testing its capacity; and all the hopes that were founded on the better reason of the Afghan Ameer, and on the tact and skill of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN have now to be abandoned. The main body of the Mission, with Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, left Peshawur early in the morning of Saturday last, and proceeded as far as the border village Jumrood, the scene of many a fray between Sikh and Afghan in the past. Major CAVAGNARI had ridden forward through the Khyber Pass attended by a considerable escort of the hill-men, and had traversed the main portion of that pass in safety under the care of these Afreedee mountaineers. So far as Ali Musjid, all went well; but on reaching that Afghan outpost Major CAVAGNARI'S further progress was stayed by the Afghan commandant declaring that he would not permit the Mission to advance. For three hours did this officer endeavour to overcome the objections of the commandant, until it became clear that the Afghan was acting in accordance with superior instructions. His threatened resistance even took so menacing a shape as to line the surrounding heights with armed men, thereby hoping, no doubt, to make some impression not only on our officer but also on those hill-men who appear to have acted honourably up to their engagements and in perfect friendship towards us. There can be no doubt that the Commandant acted by order of those two officials MUFTI SHAH and AKHOR, who were reported some days ago to have been despatched to Ali Musjid with instructions from SHERE ALI himself. And if we admit, as no one can deny, that the action of the Afghan Governor of Ali Musjid reflects the mind of SHERE ALI towards us, to what other conclusion can we come than that his hostility is of the most pronounced type? All the sayings, all the letters, all the threats, that have been so freely attributed to him in the bazaars of Asia—all of which breathed a steady spirit of defiance to England receive fresh significance and confirmation from the hostile attitude of the commandant of Ali Musjid. Nor is there, unfortunately, any ground for supposing that SHERE ALI'S instructions have been misread by his officer, for there were present to see his wish carried out the two court officials who had just arrived with SHERE ALI'S words and sentiments fresh in their minds. They may have left the Council Chamber with that haughty boast ringing in their ears when the Afghan Monarch referred to his vaunted treasure, and his influence among the tribes of the mountains.

It would be puerile to hope any longer that SHERE ALI'S irresolution may bring him to a perception of the precipice on which he has placed himself. It would be equally useless to resume the language of remonstrance and of menace. SHERE ALI has shown himself as indifferent to the latter as he had for years to the former. He has received a Russian officer at Cabul in an official capacity, and he has shown his friendly sentiments to the CZAR by the hospitable manner in which he has entertained that officer and his suite. But while to Russia he has given nothing but smiles, he has given to England all his frowns. That the Indian Government and the India Office were prepared for this display of Oriental caprice, and are quite ready to deal with it, our telegrams to-day show. The AMEER has now completed the bill of indictment against himself.

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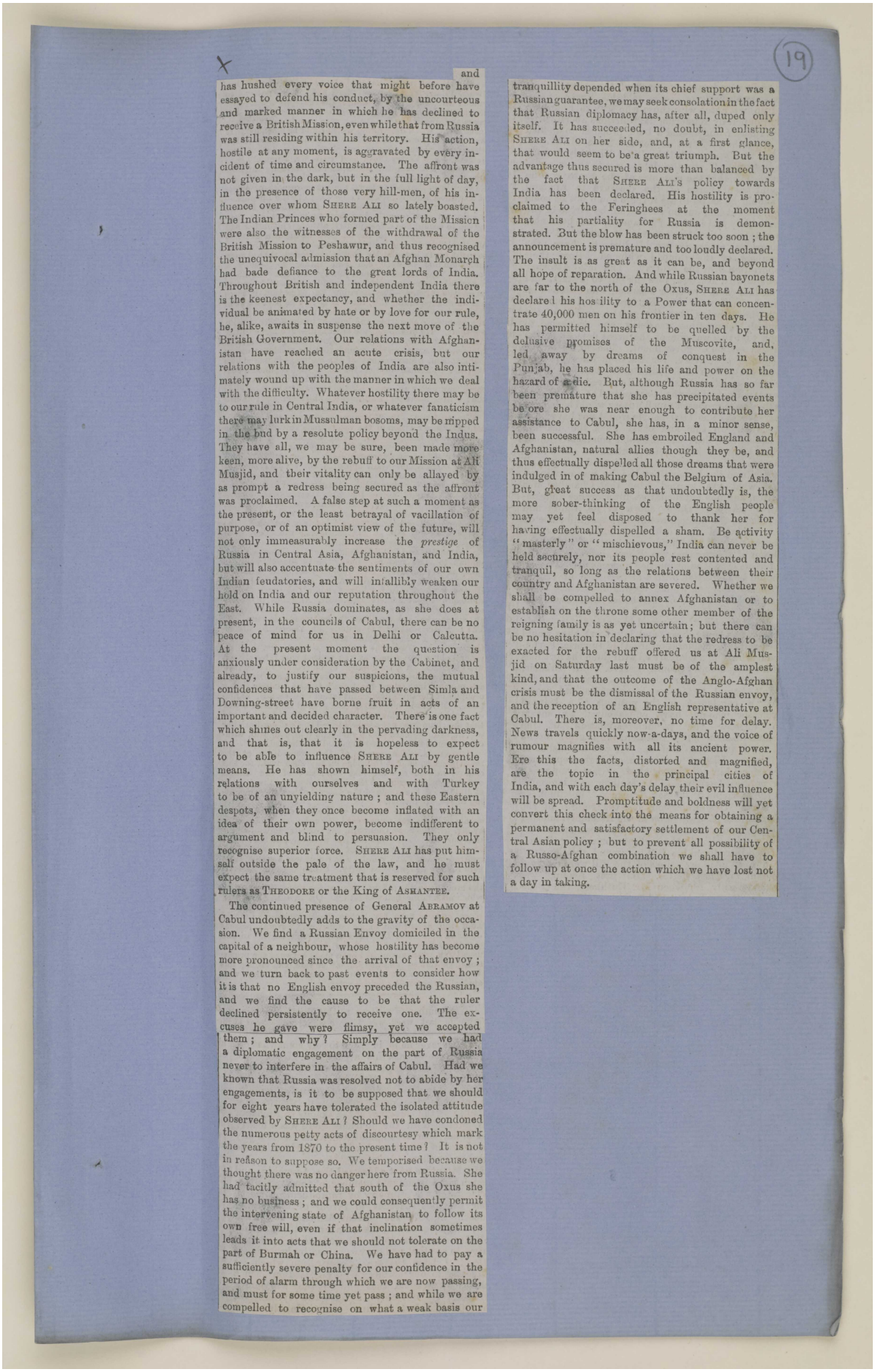

and has hushed every voice that might before have essayed to defend his conduct, by the uncourteous and marked manner in which he has declined to receive a British Mission, even while that from Russia was still residing within his territory. His action, hostile at any moment, is aggravated by every incident of time and circumstance. The affront was not given in the dark, but in the full light of day, in the presence of those very hill-men, of his influence over whom SHERE ALI so lately boasted. The Indian Princes who formed part of the Mission were also the witnesses of the withdrawal of the British Mission to Peshawur, and thus recognised the unequivocal admission that an Afghan Monarch had bade defiance to the great lords of India. Throughout British and independent India there is the keenest expectancy, and whether the individual be animated by hate or by love for our rule, he, alike, awaits in suspense the next move of the British Government. Our relations with Afghanistan have reached an acute crisis, but our relations with the peoples of India are also intimately wound up with the manner in which we deal with the difficulty. Whatever hostility there may be to our rule in Central India, or whatever fanaticism there may lurk in Mussulman bosoms, may be nipped in the bud by a resolute policy beyond the Indus. They have all, we may be sure, been made more keen, more alive, by the rebuff to our Mission at Ali Musjid, and their vitality can only be allayed by as prompt a redress being secured as the affront was proclaimed. A false step at such a moment as the present, or the least betrayal of vacillation of purpose, or of an optimist view of the future, will not only immeasurably increase the *prestige* of Russia in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and India, but will also accentuate the sentiments of our own Indian feudatories, and will infallibly weaken our hold on India and our reputation throughout the East. While Russia dominates, as she does at present, in the councils of Cabul, there can be no peace of mind for us in Delhi or Calcutta. At the present moment the question is anxiously under consideration by the Cabinet, and already, to justify our suspicions, the mutual confidences that have passed between Simla and Downing-street have borne fruit in acts of an important and decided character. There is one fact which shines out clearly in the pervading darkness, and that is, that it is hopeless to expect to be able to influence SHERE ALI by gentle means. He has shown himself, both in his relations with ourselves and with Turkey to be of an unyielding nature; and these Eastern despots, when they once become inflated with an idea of their own power, become indifferent to argument and blind to persuasion. They only recognise superior force. SHERE ALI has put himself outside the pale of the law, and he must expect the same treatment that is reserved for such rulers as THEODORE or the King of ASHANTEE.

The continued presence of General ABRAMOV at Cabul undoubtedly adds to the gravity of the occasion. We find a Russian Envoy domiciled in the capital of a neighbour, whose hostility has become more pronounced since the arrival of that envoy; and we turn back to past events to consider how it is that no English envoy preceded the Russian, and we find the cause to be that the ruler declined persistently to receive one. The excuses he gave were flimsy, yet we accepted them; and why? Simply because we had a diplomatic engagement on the part of Russia never to interfere in the affairs of Cabul. Had we known that Russia was resolved not to abide by her engagements, is it to be supposed that we should for eight years have tolerated the isolated attitude observed by SHERE ALI? Should we have condoned the numerous petty acts of discourtesy which mark the years from 1870 to the present time? It is not in reason to suppose so. We temporised because we thought there was no danger here from Russia. She had tacitly admitted that south of the Oxus she has no business; and we could consequently permit the intervening state of Afghanistan to follow its own free will, even if that inclination sometimes leads it into acts that we should not tolerate on the part of Burmah or China. We have had to pay a sufficiently severe penalty for our confidence in the period of alarm through which we are now passing, and must for some time yet pass; and while we are compelled to recognise on what a weak basis our tranquillity depended when its chief support was a Russian guarantee, we may seek consolation in the fact that Russian diplomacy has, after all, duped only itself. It has succeeded, no doubt, in enlisting SHERE ALI on her side, and, at a first glance, that would seem to be a great triumph. But the advantage thus secured is more than balanced by the fact that SHERE ALI'S policy towards India has been declared. His hostility is proclaimed to the Feringhees at the moment that his partiality for Russia is demonstrated. But the blow has been struck too soon; the announcement is premature and too loudly declared. The insult is as great as it can be, and beyond all hope of reparation. And while Russian bayonets are far to the north of the Oxus, SHERE ALI has declared his hostility to a Power that can concentrate 40,000 men on his frontier in ten days. He has permitted himself to be quelled by the delusive promises of the Muscovite, and, led away by dreams of conquest in the Punjab, he has placed his life and power on the hazard of a die. But, although Russia has so far been premature that she has precipitated events before she was near enough to contribute her assistance to Cabul, she has, in a minor sense, been successful. She has embroiled England and Afghanistan, natural allies though they be, and thus effectually dispelled all those dreams that were indulged in of making Cabul the Belgium of Asia. But, great success as that undoubtedly is, the more sober-thinking of the English people may yet feel disposed to thank her for having effectually dispelled a sham. Be activity "masterly" or "mischievous," India can never be held securely, nor its people rest contented and tranquil, so long as the relations between their country and Afghanistan are severed. Whether we shall be compelled to annex Afghanistan or to establish on the throne some other member of the reigning family is as yet uncertain; but there can be no hesitation in declaring that the redress to be exacted for the rebuff offered us at Ali Musjid on Saturday last must be of the amplest kind, and that the outcome of the Anglo-Afghan crisis must be the dismissal of the Russian envoy, and the reception of an English representative at Cabul. There is, moreover, no time for delay. News travels quickly now-a-days, and the voice of rumour magnifies with all its ancient power. Ere this the facts, distorted and magnified, are the topic in the principal cities of India, and with each day's delay their evil influence will be spread. Promptitude and boldness will yet convert this check into the means for obtaining a permanent and satisfactory settlement of our Central Asian policy; but to prevent all possibility of a Russo-Afghan combination we shall have to follow up at once the action which we have lost not a day in taking.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 24th

AFGHANISTAN.

THE dulness which for so many years, and with plain facts standing in open contradiction to it, insisted that all fears of trouble in India were ridiculous, and that Russian action upon India in particular was the merest bugbear, has now the impudence to step forward and say of current events, "We always told you so." Thus the *Times* solemnly announces to-day that "nothing has happened which must not have been foreseen as at least possible, nothing for which it was not incumbent on us to be prepared beforehand. The crisis is scarcely a surprise. Events for some time past have made it almost certain that it would come at some time or other, and by our own choice it has come now." True: if this means that the no-policy which the Ministers chose to adopt in the conflict between Russia and Turkey was adopted with a view of precipitating this same crisis. But even the precipitation of the crisis is no awakening for the pompous stupidity from which we are now beginning to suffer. It is of opinion that the Afghan difficulty is of no consequence—is merely a "row" with a small and feeble potentate, who will be punished in due course; whereupon we shall continue the enjoyment of peace with honour. The great ministerial apologist of the day assures the country that "there is nothing just now that can make the Ameer formidable as a foe." "If he persists in refusing the demands we may see fit to make upon him, he can calculate upon no effectual support outside his own territory"—upon no support of any kind, apparently. "Our reckoning will be with him, and with him alone, and such a prospect can hardly be thought alarming. There is nothing worse before us than one of those troublesome little wars to which we have so often found ourselves committed in every quarter of the globe. A comparison of resources in such a case is well nigh ridiculous. We are of course by far the stronger, and can choose our own way with the certainty of following it at our will." But that is precisely what we cannot do. Moreover, it seems that this is a case in which an apology will amply suffice. "There is room still left for an explanation of what has happened. The Ameer of Cabul has not yet stated his own case. The resistance offered to our mission was the act of a subordinate. and it may possibly be disclaimed by the Ameer himself." Possibly: in which case the insult will pass for nothing, either in India or elsewhere. Nor is this our only comfort. "In any case we shall be compelled to wait for some months before we can begin operations. Time will be required before our preparations can be complete. Nothing, probably, can be done until next spring. During winter the mountain passes would he found blocked with snow, and winter begins early in the passes." This, we are afraid, is true. The blow has been so timed that it may be difficult to resent it immediately, except in writing. We may not be able to fight till the spring, and till the spring, therefore, the Ameer need not enter upon any apologies. It will be enough to apologize next year, if apology and not persistence is thought to be the most convenient course.

Meantime, we should like to know two things: First, What are the present relations of the Czar and the Sultan? The relations of England and Turkey are certainly not in a very cordial or promising condition just now—quite naturally, if not inevitably. Next, how stands opinion in the British Cabinet? Is it unanimous at last? And what sort of policy does it agree upon, if any?

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The *Standard* publishes a telegram from Bombay of yesterday's date which says that a special meeting of the Viceroy's Council was held yesterday afternoon at Simla, and General Roberts, the commandant of the frontier forces, has started for Peshawur with secret orders. A large force is ordered to be in readiness on the frontier, where 12,000 men are already massed. The Indian newspapers (the telegram says) universally consider that the affront to the mission demands an apology or the occupation of Afghanistan. A war feeling is prevalent among the Europeans, trade is disturbed, and Government securities have fallen.

The *Morning Post* says the effect of the recall of the mission on our position in India cannot be exaggerated. We appear in the position of being openly defied by a neighbouring ruler of third-rate power, and this defiance gathers additional effect from its having been evidently given at the instigation of Russia. Of the moral evidence of Russia's guilt there can be no doubt. Her action at the present moment is but the consistent realization of the policy of some of her ablest statesmen. Alliances with Persia and Afghanistan have long been laid down by well-known Russian diplomatists and officers as the goal of Russian effort. The alliance with Persia is a *fait accompli;* that with Afghanistan is not yet declared, but the events of last Saturday are very strong evidence that the project has borne fruit, though it may not be officially realised. Having established friendly relations with the Ameer, Russia can easily find means of supplying him with arms and officers, and thus play off Afghanistan against us as she played off Servia against Turkey. Whether we are to hold Afghanistan as responsible for the rebuff to our mission, solely or conjointly with Russia, we cannot overlook this last illustration of Shere Ali's defiant attitude. It will be for the Government to declare in what manner we shall seek satisfaction for our outraged dignity.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

POPULAR DELUSIONS ABOUT THE AFGHAN WAR.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Lord Carnarvon is reported to have said, in his recent speech at Teversall, that a British "army" had been destroyed in Afghanistan. It may be useful, therefore, to say that the "army" in question contained exactly one European battalion and a couple of batteries of European artillery, and amounted altogether, Europeans and natives, to what would, according to Continental ideas, make up an ordinary sized brigade.

The troops which occupied Afghanistan, taken altogether, did not make up an "army," but only a single division of three brigades; and Elphinstone was not, as the *Daily News* styles him to-day, its commander-in-chief, but simply a major-general commanding a division. One of these brigades was destroyed, not in open fight, but under circumstances brought about by a combination of cowardice, indecision, and stupidity on the part of its leaders such as happily has never been exhibited by British officers either before or since. The other two brigades at Candahar and Jellalabad held their ground with perfect ease and small loss. And why does Lord Carnarvon stop at this point of his story, and why does Mr. Baxter, in his speech at Bervie, propose that a curtain should be drawn across the scene, as if the rest of the story would not bear telling? The Afghan war did not end with the destruction of the Cabul brigade, or even with the subsequent defence of Jellalabad and Candahar. The country was reoccupied by our troops in the following summer, and all resistance put down. Never was there a more completely successful operation than Pollock's advance on Cabul—the "battles" on the road being in reality little more than insignificant skirmishes. The work was hard, but the fighting was slight, the whole loss sustained by Pollock's division from first to last hardly amounting to what might be looked for from an ordinary skirmish. We may all of us have our opinions as to the propriety of this or that policy; but at least let us stick to facts. When Mr. Baxter says that "there was nothing more terrible in the history of our Indian possessions than the results of the last campaign in that quarter of the world," he is talking sheer nonsense. Our last campaign in that quarter was an almost bloodless one, in which the enemy were driven from one position after another and the country reoccupied with almost ridiculous ease.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

September 24. C.

"Times" Sept: 25th

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1878.

The assertion has been made in several quarters that our conduct in relation to Afghanistan has undergone essential change during the course of the last few months. We are, it has been said, no longer satisfied, as we once were, to leave the AMEER alone. We have entered with more or less of disguise upon a policy of aggression, undefined in its aim, and certain to bring trouble with it in whatever way it may end. We are now only at the commencement of the difficulties we have thus brought upon ourselves. We are threatened with an Afghan war, but there are greater evils than this to come afterwards. We shall hear by and by that Afghanistan is to be occupied and annexed to our Indian Empire. This will be the result of our Cabul Mission; and if we did not intend this result, it is hard to see why we should have sent the Cabul Mission at all. It may be worth while to inquire into the correctness of these assertions. That they are not wholly baseless we may admit without hesitation. We have just done what a year ago we had no intention of doing, and we have elicited proof of an unfriendly feeling on the part of the Ameer of CABUL which a year ago we were willing to persuade ourselves did not really exist. Our Afghan policy is, nevertheless, the same now that it was then. Its aim has never varied, and the changes it has undergone have been brought about under the pressure of changed circumstances. That Russia, with the possibility before her of a war with this country, should have done her utmost to obtain a preponderating influence at the Court of Cabul was natural enough. That she should persist in her endeavour now that the danger has gone by is another matter. She has engaged herself not to meddle with the affairs of Afghanistan, and it is by her breach of this engagement that she has forced us to a course which we should not otherwise have followed. Our desire is and will be to respect the Afghan ruler, and to maintain as far as we can the integrity of his dominions. This was our Afghan policy as it was stated last year by Lord SALISBURY, then Secretary for India, and this it is still. But it is one thing to leave the Afghan ruler to himself, and another thing to leave him to Russia. If there is interference from the one side, there must be interference from the other too. We cannot allow a Russian Envoy to be received at the Court of Cabul while we ourselves are not represented there, and while the determination that we shall not be represented not only exists, but has been displayed with open discourtesy. That it has been at the instigation of Russia, indeed, that our Cabul Mission was turned back we cannot believe. Whatever may be the ultimate views of Russia, we may at least credit her with a better choice of means than this, and with a better sense of what is and what is not opportune. If our hand was to be forced, the present moment is as convenient to us as any could be. It would be a blundering diplomacy which would seek to bring about a rupture in Afghanistan at a time when our whole force, if necessary, can be devoted to Indian affairs.

Our essential policy towards Afghanistan is, it must be remembered, not of our own choosing. It is imposed upon us by circumstances to which we cannot be indifferent. We have no wish to be aggressive neighbours. We should be only too well content to remain inactive if others were inactive too. But the case is altered when our boundary line has been passed already, and when Russian diplomacy has entered on a forbidden field. We are compelled now to assert a counter-influence, and to make sure that it shall prevail. To do nothing would be to surrender Afghanistan to Russia, or, in other words, to allow the gateway of India to pass into the hands of a rival and possibly an unfriendly Power, who could select his own time for turning his position to account. We have every wish to respect the independence of Afghanistan, but we must make sure first that it exists. It is threatened at the present moment by Russian intrigue as certainly as it could be by Russian arms. We will not affect to dread a conquest of India from Afghanistan or from any other quarter. It is a less danger against which we are driven to take precautions, but it is one which may prove exceedingly troublesome if we neglect it in its early growth. We hold at present an insecure frontier line, which we could not defend effectually against an enemy on the other side. We are bound, therefore, to prevent an enemy from establishing himself there. Russia may extend herself as she pleases in another direction. She must leave Afghanistan alone. If the Ameer of CABUL is not sensible of the danger which he is courting by his intimacy with Russia, we must be wise for him and for ourselves. He may be as independent as he pleases; but he must so use his rights as not to invade ours. We should feel it necessary in any

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case to protect him against armed aggression on the part of Russia. He must not be suffered to render our duty in this respect more difficult than it need be. We stand bound by an unspoken guarantee to defend Afghanistan. No engagement on our part could add to the weight of this. We have the right, therefore, to insist that the ruler of Afghanistan shall perform his share of the joint work, or shall at least do nothing to hinder us from performing ours. Our interests, if he will believe us, are the same. We could desire nothing better than that Afghanistan should be interposed between us and Russia as an independent neutral State, jealous of its territorial integrity, and prepared to defend it against all comers. But when Afghanistan ceases to be neutral, and ceases in any real sense to be independent, the conditions of the case are changed. We are driven to be aggressive, whether we wish it or not. The Ameer of CABUL must make his choice between England as his enemy and as his friend. He cannot continue to be independent in name while he is becoming in reality a tool of Russia, which she may use for her own purposes. It is this which we are now minded to prevent, and we shall not shrink from employing whatever means we may find necessary for so doing.

There has, then, we may conclude, been no real change in our policy towards Afghanistan. Change there has been, but it is not from us that it has come. How far we shall be driven to proceed with it must equally be a matter not within our own choice. Whatever we may do will be limited by the requirements of the case, but we shall not suffer it to fall short of them. The Ameer of CABUL can be in no doubt as to the terms on which we insist. It is still possible that he will submit to them, and that he will receive our Mission as a first proof of his compliance. If he does not do this willingly, we shall have no choice left us but to employ the necessary force. It would need no great effort on our part. It would soon be clear that we had the means of making ourselves obeyed, and that our past moderation must have been caused by something very different from a dread of the AMEER'S power. We have been content hitherto to treat the AMEER as an equal. It will be his own fault if our behaviour is now changed. When our friendly advances are repelled, it becomes our business to take care that at least our orders are respected.

We have received the following telegrams through Reuter's Agency :—

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 24.

With reference to the telegram published yesterday by a London morning paper assuming that an understanding existed between Russia and Afghanistan, it is declared in the best informed quarters that this supposition is purely imaginary, and it is further stated on the same authority that no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures.

AFGHANISTAN.

Continuing our notice of the military geography of Afghanistan yesterday, it will be of interest to touch briefly on the means of communication between Cabul and British India, and glance at the mode of operations in our last campaign with that country. The map shows that a lofty chain of mountains, the summits of which rise in some cases to 18,000ft., intervene between our Indian dominions and the Ameer's territory, and the chain is no mere screen behind which an army can secretly collect and through which it can suddenly dash on an unsuspecting foe, but is a broad tract of mountainous land, inhospitable to the last degree, and inhabited by barbarous tribes, owning no master, and constantly at feud with each other. It is pierced by numerous passes, the best known of which are the Khyber and the Bolan, through which our forces in the late Afghan war advanced on Cabul; but there are no fewer than 17 well-defined roads, practicable for the movements of lightly equipped columns, and certainly four up which guns could be taken. These are annually traversed by caravans of Afghan merchants, who bring the produce of Central Asia into Hindostan and take thence English wares in exchange. The great drawback to their being utilized in the event of war being forced upon us is the fact that our own means of communication within our border are of the worst description, so that the difficulties a force would encounter before it could reach the eastern end of the Kuram or the Gumal passes would be almost as great as those to be met with in the mountains themselves. It is therefore only necessary to take into consideration the Khyber and the Bolan. The former is within 170 miles of Jhelum, the present terminus of the Punjab railway system, with which it is connected by the Grand Trunk road, probably one of the very best military highways in the world. Grouped round the railway terminus, or between it and the Khyber, are the military cantonments of Jhelum, Sealkote, Lalliguon, Rawul Pindi, Nowshera, Abbottabad, Hoti-Mardan, Campbellpore, Pheshawur, and Kohat. At these places are stationed four batteries of horse, six batteries of field, and two of mountain Artillery, two regiments of British and eight of Native Cavalry, six battalions of British and 16 of Native Infantry—a force in itself sufficient to form a very admirable nucleus of an expeditionary army, when it is remembered that the Army of the Indus in 1838 consisted of but two regiments of British, with four of native Cavalry, three troops of Horse and four batteries of Field Artillery, four Line and 13 Native Infantry battalions. Then, however, the troops advanced by the Bolan, and encountered no opposition worthy of the name until they were fairly clear of the mountains. There were many reasons for the adoption of the southernmost route in those days which would be of no weight now, and it is most probable that should hostilities be determined on two columns would be organized, the Bengal Army furnishing the one that would march through the Khyber and operate towards Cabul and the northern districts of Afghanistan, the Bombay Army giving that for the Bolan, Candahar, and the southern tracts of the Ameer's dominions.

Unfortunately, in speaking of an Afghan war, and more especially of the Khyber Pass, popular opinion appears to cling to the remembrance of the misfortunes that overtook the ill-fated expedition of 1839, and more especially the disastrous retreat through the Koord Kabul Pass from Cabul to Jelalabad; but it should ever be remembered that a miserable want of agreement between the military and political chiefs of that force was the primary cause of the disaster, while the arms possessed by the Queen's troops in those days (old flint-lock Brown Bess) were far inferior to the long jazails of the Afghans. Now, with rifled canon and breech-loaders we are far more completely equipped, while the experiences of the Abyssinian and Ashantee expeditions certainly prompt the hope that the military and political chieftainship will be vested in one man. That the Khyber Pass presents slight difficulty to a well-handled force is evident from the fact that in 1839 Colonel Wade forced it at the head of an irregular contingent, penetrating from Peshawur to Jelalabad, with a loss of but 180 men. In 1842 General Pollock forced it by shelling the heights from the ravines below, while two columns of 12 companies each on either flank pushed the enemy from ridge to ridge. His casualties were 128. On his return march he lost but 56 men. The Khyber Pass may be said, generally speaking, to commence at Jamrood, 10 miles west of Peshawur, and to extend as far as Dhaka, a distance of about 33 miles. The actual entrance to the defile, however, is at Kadam, a place three miles west of Jamrood, which is a small village, surrounded by a mud wall. There still exist the ruins of an old Sikh fort built in 1837, after the defeat of the Afghan army on the adjacent plains, by the Khalsa Army under Hurree Singh. Within 1,000 yards of Kadam the gorge narrows to 150 yards, with steep precipitous cliffs on either hand. Between this and the Afghan frontier fort of Ali Musjid, distant about ten miles, the mountains on either hand are about 1,500ft. in height, slaty, bare, and to all appearance inaccessible; the width of the pass varies from 290 to 40 feet. For a distance of 2½ miles beyond Ali Musjid the pass retains its difficult character. It then enters the Lálá Beg Valley, about six miles in length, with an average breadth of a mile and a half. The western end of the valley, however, finds the road entering a still narrower defile, there being scarcely room for two camels to pass each other. The Lundi Khana Pass is distant from this point about a mile and a half, the ascent over it is narrow, rugged, steep, and generally the most difficult part of the road; guns could not be drawn here except by men, and then only after the improvement of the track. The descent, however, is along a well-made road, and is not so difficult. On the west side of the pass the mountains gradually open out, and lose much of their inaccessible nature. Dhaka is distant about eight miles, and here the defile ends. Difficult as the Khyber is to force, it is evident that what Wade and Pollock did 40 years ago can, if necessary, be done again. Moreover, our knowledge of these mountain ranges has much improved of late years, and several roads are well known which completely turn Ali Musjid, the most formidable obstacle between Peshawur and Jelalabad. Among these are the Tatara Road, which enters the hills about nine miles north of Jamrood and joins the main route at Dhaka; the Kadapa Road and one through the Bara Valley both avoid Ali Musjid, are practicable for lightly-equipped columns, and doubtless would be made use of were we compelled to force the Khyber.

It must be borne in mind that the tribes residing in the pass and its immediate vicinity, though nominally owing allegiance to the Ameer of Afghanistan, yet are powerful enough to demand and to obtain subsidies from him in return for the privilege they grant in permitting the highway to be made use of. In the time of the Durani Kings

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the Malliks of the Khyber received 130,000 rupees per annum. After the annexation of Peshawur by the Sikhs, Dost Mahomed paid them only 20,000. During our occupation of Cabul, 1839 42, we paid them 125,000 rupees annually, and after our withdrawal Dost Mahomed continued a payment of 27,000. At his death these allowances were stopped, nor has Shere Ali renewed them. Consequently his hold on the Afridi and Shinwarri tribes, who virtually hold the pass from Jamrood to Dhaka, has been much weakened. To work on this will now be Lord Lytton's great object. If we can buy the Khyber Malliks over to the side of the British, the forcing of the pass will be much simplified; and, avaricious to a degree, faithless to his salt, utterly regardless of tribal honour or family affection, the Afghan is ready to sell his sword to the highest bidder. Once through the pass, there appears small reason to believe we should be unable to keep it open for the free transmission of supplies. Fortified posts at judiciously selected spots, coupled with liberal douceurs to the neighbouring chieftains, is all that is requisite. An eminent authority has given it as his opinion that 4,000 Infantry with 12 mountain guns, aided by 300 Cavalry for patrolling purposes, would be ample.

The forcing of the Khyber and the necessary construction of a road practicable for wheeled traffic to Cabul would be but the commencement of the trials of an Afghan war. The fortresses of Jellalabad, Cabul, and Ghuznee would have to be reduced; of their present condition little or nothing is known; but from Asiatic sources we have learnt that, subsequent to our departure from the country, Dost Mahomed spent much labour and money in perfecting their defences, and, although it is improbable that they have been completed on any very scientific plans, it is beyond all doubt that they will not fall with the ease Ghuznee fell in the last campaign. Admitting that we have only Afghan organization, unaided by European officers, to war against, we shall require two columns to operate with. Profiting by past lessons, it would be criminal to repeat the blunders of 1839, and send in too small a force. The present leader of the mission, Sir Neville Chamberlain, had bitter experience of the folly of under-estimating a foe in the failure of the Umballa Expedition, so that it may be assumed he will insist on an adequate army accompanying him should he be deputed to bring the Ameer to terms. Twenty-five thousand men for the northern or Khyber column, and 15,000 for the southern or Bolan force, will be ample, without leaving too wide a margin for detachments necessarily left behind to keep open communications. The Bolan Pass, which was the cause of such enormous loss among the cattle of the Army of the Indus, now has a fair road running through it, so that we may expect an expeditionary force to traverse it without its cavalry brigade being reduced to an effective strength of 100 sabres, as was the case in 1839; and we may rest assured recent experience has taught us that 38,000 camp followers are not necessary for an army of 9,500 men. Between Khelat and Candahar there is some very bad ground, a lack of forage, and an utter absence of water. These drawbacks are known, and so can be provided against. We must have no repetition of the mistakes that cost us 16,000 lives in 1841—no divided military and political commands, no effete generals, no underestimating the value of our foes, no faith in Afghan treaties.

The denuding India of 40,000 men is a step that we dare not undertake. Already our army there is dangerously small, those of the feudatory Princes dangerously large. To leave such an element of mischief unwatched would be suicidal policy, and if it is determined to bring the Ameer to book we must not hesitate to reinforce our troops in the East Indies. The near approach of winter will prevent any invasion of Afghanistan being attempted for at least six months, and if by that time Shere Ali has not repented of the insult offered to Her Majesty's representative last Saturday we should be able to mass a force at Jacobabad and Peshawur which would insure his punishment being short, sharp, and decisive.

"Standard" Sept: 25th
(21)

THE INDIAN CRISIS.

IMMINENT ADVANCE ON AFGHANISTAN.

CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS.

THE RUSSIAN MISSION TO CABUL.

CONTINENTAL VIEWS OF THE SITUATION.

(By Eastern Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondents.)

BOMBAY, Tuesday Evening.

Although but three days have elapsed since the Mission was turned back on its way up the Khyber Pass energetic preparations have already been made, and a large number of troops are on the move. The Government are evidently determined to bring matters to a crisis before the winter arrives. There will be no attempt made to induce the Ameer to receive our Envoy; indeed, the Mission is already broken up. Sir Neville Chamberlain is on his way to Madras, and the other members of the Mission have gone to Simla. The native envoy who went on to Cabul has been recalled.

Steps have been taken to strengthen the force at Quetta, and it is considered certain that a forward move will be made from that point upon Candahar.

A force of eight thousand men, including the 59th, 17th, and 60th Rifles, the 23d Pioneers, and a portion of the 10th Hussars, will assemble at Mooltan and advance through the Bolan Pass to Quetta. An advance from that town to Candahar will sever Cabul from Herat, and cut the Ameer off from the larger half of his territory.

A force under General Roberts, six thousand strong, starts from Rawul Pindee to Kohat, some thirty miles south of Peshawur. This column will, it is believed, enter Afghanistan by the Koorum Valley, which lies south of the Khyber Pass, and is separated from the Valley of the Cabul by the Safed Koli range. The road from the head of this valley goes through the Hobandi Pass into the valley of the Logur, and a force arriving there would sever Cabul from Ghazni.

A third column will proceed up the Khyber Pass.

The troops will march from Mooltan and Rawul Pindee in three days' time.

There is seldom much snow before December, so there is plenty of time to occupy Cabul and Candahar before the winter. The Afghans were able to offer no serious opposition to our last invasion, and it is not likely that they will prove themselves more formidable upon the present occasion.

CALCUTTA, Tuesday.

The text of the Viceroy's two letters to the Ameer of Afghanistan is published. It is semi-officially announced that no answer has been received either to these letters, or to a letter which was previously sent.

Orders have been issued to concentrate the troops towards the frontier, with a view to early operations in case events should require such a step.

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(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
PARIS, Tuesday.

Great fears are entertained here that the complications with Afghanistan may bring about a conflict between England and Russia.

The *Temps* accurately defines the state of opinion on this subject. "The gravity of the situation," it says, "consists in the fact that England, holding Russia responsible for the behaviour of the Ameer, might strain the connection which exists between Anglo-India and the Eastern question in general."

This is a guarded way of implying that England might have to fight in Europe to defend her Indian frontier.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
BERLIN, Tuesday.

According to intelligence received here from St. Petersburg the Russian Government has declared itself to be incapable of yielding to England's complaints respecting the Russian mission to Cabul, and therefore no reason can be found to give up its intention to instal a permanent Russian Embassy at Shere Ali's residence.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
VIENNA, Tuesday.

The threatened outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and the Ameer of Afghanistan is the chief topic of discussion here to-day.

The *Presse*, in a leading article, expresses the hope that Russia will be careful not to kindle anew, by yielding to any passionate inspirations, an Eastern war which might have results similar to the conflict which prevailed before the peace of San Stefano.

The *Deutsche Zeitung* remarks that Russia is not in a position at present to carry on another war, and will probably desert her new ally. In the other event it would happen that the Treaty of Berlin would be destroyed in Asiatic battlefields.

The *Tagblatt* blames England for having rather lost sight of the recent evident movement among the Mahometans of Central Asia, which has almost tempted Russia to try to recover in Asia what she has lost in Europe.

The *Free Presse* says that, from Khiva down to Afghanistan, Russian policy is one of broken promises. England, it adds, is bound to protect her *prestige* by avenging the offered affront.

(Reuter's Telegram.)
ST. PETERSBURG, Sept. 24.

With reference to the telegram published yesterday by a London morning paper assuming that an understanding existed between Russia and Afghanistan, it is declared in the best informed quarters that this supposition is purely imaginary; and it is further stated, on the same authority, that no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures.

The *Nord* of Monday night, briefly adverting to the rejection of the Cabul Missi on, says it is somewhat difficult to reconcile that day's news from Calcutta with that recently received respecting the friendly reception of the emissary sent forward by Sir Neville Chamberlain. It was known that a reply was expected from the Ameer to the Viceroy's letter announcing the departure of the Mission; and if that reply was a favourable one it is not easy to explain the hostile reception accorded to the Mission on the frontier of Afghanistan. If it was unfavourable, it is equally difficult to understand how it was that Sir Neville Chamberlain disregarded it. Perhaps, continues the organ of the Russian Foreign Office, he pushed on before receiving the Ameer's reply, and before the authorities on the Afghan frontier had received orders to permit the Mission to proceed. The large military escort which accompanied it, and which imparted to it rather the appearance of an army than that of a pacific Mission, would, moreover, explain the refusal of the authorities on the frontier to permit the Mission, without the formal order of the Ameer, to enter the territory of Afghanistan.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

We publish to-day further telegrams from India respecting the position of affairs between England and Afghanistan. Our Correspondent at Bombay points to the energetic preparations which have been made for an advance against Cabul, a large number of troops being already on the move. Steps, he adds, have been taken to strengthen the force at Quetta, and it is considered certain that from that point an advance will be made upon Candahar. This information is corroborated by our telegram from Calcutta. From Berlin our Correspondent telegraphs that the Russian Government has refused to yield to the representations of England, and persists in its scheme of establishing a permanent Embassy at Cabul. The possibility of hostilities between England and the Ameer is the general topic of discussion in all the Continental capitals, but especially in Vienna, where all the leading newspapers have articles on the subject.

The startling news from the North-Western Frontier of India has lost none of its significance upon reflection. The Cabinet will consider without delay the measures to be adopted in an emergency as trying as any of which the present generation of Englishmen have had experience, and our telegrams show this morning that there is no hesitation with the Indian Government. Meantime there can be no question as to the feeling of the English people. There is no reckless passion for military adventure such as might have been charged, truly or otherwise, against this country if Russia had been challenged during her attack upon Turkey and if war had broken out between England and the Czar in Armenia, or on the banks of the Danube. Englishmen have no desire for conquest in Central Asia; they understand perfectly well that there is little glory and no gain to be derived from a war against Shere Ali. It is the plainest, the most indisputable necessity that drives us to resent by force of arms the insulting conduct of the Ameer of Cabul. The necessity is scarcely contested even by the preachers of "peace at any price;" the representatives of that party are fain to admit that the British Government cannot be expected to remain quiet after such a slap in the face as the melancholy monomaniac who rules in the midst of desolation and terror at Cabul has been prompted to hazard. Every one who knows anything of India is aware that a rebuff like that which has been deliberately administered to Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission cannot be endured with safety, not to speak of dignity. In every bazaar in India the disaffected are exulting at this moment over the humiliation which has fallen upon the Government of the Empress-Queen. Their rejoicing, as the vast majority of the people are convinced, will be short-lived. England will assert, and has already begun to assert, her power, and will compel the Asiatic populations to recognise it. This has long been regarded as a part of the order of nature in Asia, and it would be indeed disastrous for the British rule in India if this tradition were to be broken. We have not imposed our rule upon Hindustan, and much more than Hindustan, by sheer weight of numbers, like the invaders of earlier ages, but chiefly by force of character, and more especially by a resolution never to tolerate insult or disparagement. In the gloomiest days of British rule in Asia we maintained this high tradition, and its acceptance, after long experience, has established that *prestige* at which political theorists sneer as a juggle, but which practical statesmen know to be a reality. It was *prestige* which made the Greeks the masters of their multitudinous Oriental invaders, and the same dominance of the imagination is at least as important a part of our security in India as the armies we maintain. What is it that enables a couple of battalions to keep the peace of a province inhabited by several millions of unruly natives? Nothing but the knowledge that in case of need the whole power of the British Empire would be used to enforce the authority even of a corporal's guard that represented the Government of India. During the Mutiny there was a revolt against this doctrine; but the issue proved that it was vain to brave the power of England. In those days no Englishman dreamed of abandoning resistance because it was too hazardous. Nor is the spirit of this country now so paralysed by the preaching of sour fanatics and disappointed demagogues as to sacrifice a moral ascendancy that is worth more to us than all the armies of Germany or Russia. To punish the insolence of Shere Ali, to conquer the Afghans, to occupy Cabul may be tasks which the English people, if they had a choice, would turn

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away from. But they are part of the price we must be ready to pay for empire. We cannot govern two hundred millions of subjects by the terror of the British name without showing, when the occasion arises, that our power is really to be feared.

It is, therefore, an impending necessity that the defiance of SHERE ALI must be answered by the invasion of Afghanistan with an overwhelming force, and the permanent occupation of the strongest places in the AMEER'S territory. Nothing less than the entry of an imposing British force into Cabul can annul the effects of the blow which SHERE ALI has ventured to deal. We are not exclusively or even chiefly concerned with the influence of events upon the public opinion, so far as there is any, of the Afghans and the hill tribes; it is an Indian question, not a Central Asian question, with which we have to deal, and it is necessary for the country to understand that no mere formal "apology" on the part of the AMEER will do away with the ill-consequences of his wanton outrage. As we have said, the national sentiment upon this point is thoroughly sound and just; there is no recklessly combative disposition, there is no vindictive feeling whatever, but there is a determination not to allow the immense interests of the Anglo-Indian Government to be compromised by timidity or vacillation. The strongest measures will be most readily approved, and in the long run, we are sure, they will be found the most effective and the most economical. The orders given on Monday to General ROBERTS, who is in command of the frontier field force of twelve thousand men, were, of course, only provisional, and the Cabinet at home must direct the future course of events; but there happily has not been an hour's delay in making such a demonstration at least as may warn the Afghans of our determination. It may be, as has been suggested, that an active campaign cannot be undertaken with safety at this season of the year among the passes of the mountains which separate our territory from that of SHERE ALI. But if so there is all the more reason for making it plain that a crushing blow is to fall next spring. SHERE ALI must be made to understand at once that, whether retribution be instant or be delayed for a few months, he cannot hope to escape it. In armed resistance, as he will soon be instructed by his friends and counsellors, there is no hope for him. Russia will not assist him, at least there are as yet no signs that she will venture upon playing her last trump card in the great game of Asiatic policy. The time is not come, in the opinion of her statesmen and strategists, for contesting the power of England in Asia, and after the extraordinary efforts of the war with Turkey it would not probably be convenient for her to engage in a struggle for life and death beyond the barren plains of the half-conquered desert between Orenburg and Balkh. It is possible that the spirit of lawless adventure which has lured Russia to tamper with Afghan policy may carry her still farther, and that the bitter hatred of England which is fostered by the Government may be employed to avert the dangers of revolutionary troubles at home. But, though possible, such an aggressive line of conduct is most improbable, and Russia will no doubt be content, as the Anglo-Russian newspapers repeat with satisfaction, to have embroiled England and Afghanistan, and to watch the issue of the conflict. To wait upon what the chapter of accidents may disclose is now the only prudent policy for Russia, and though she may set prudence at nought once more, we should not be justified in reckoning on such a course of folly. At the same time, it must be remembered that we have ample reasons, if we chose to pick a quarrel, for dragging Russia from behind the mask of SHERE ALI'S Government.

For the present it seems that our task is simply to punish the insolence—by whom inspired we need not ask—of SHERE ALI. The undertaking is by no means so arduous and uncertain as some amongst us try to demonstrate. In the former Afghan wars our armies easily overran the Afghan territory, and always routed the Afghan troops in the field. It is true that military and political incompetence, and, we are sorry to add, moral guilt, led, as Sir JOHN KAYE'S history clearly shows, to the destruction of one out of the three brigades which occupied Afghanistan, and this melancholy episode in the story is dwelt upon by the anti-Imperial school of critics as if it included all that is recorded of our Afghan invasion. But the rising at Cabul, which might have happened at Peshawur, or, indeed, at Allahabad, though a disaster, was such a disaster as prudence might have averted, and as energy might have instantly repaired It was repaired—though Lord CARNARVON, and some Liberal speakers and writers who follow him, choose to forget the fact of the progress of the "Army of Vengeance"—and so effectually that for years no Afghan ventured to dispute the power of England, and DOST MAHOMED himself considered an English alliance one of the main guarantees of his rule. During all the trepidations caused by the massacre at Cabul and the retreat of ELPHINSTONE'S army Candahar and Jellalabad were held by the British troops as firmly as Lucknow was held during the Mutiny. The second invasion, under POLLOCK, was a series of triumphs almost more complete than that of the commanders who brought the mutinous Sepoys to submission in 1858. If the policy which prevailed at the time in the Imperial Government unwisely insisted upon the withdrawal of the victorious troops, who were as completely triumphant as the British army was in Oude after the suppression of the Mutiny, the lesson of history must not for this reason be perverted from its true meaning. Mr. BAXTER has given a key note to several of the Liberal journals by affirming that "there is nothing more terrible in the history of our Indian possessions than the results of the last campaign in that quarter of the world." The assertion, we must presume, is the outcome of what Dr. JOHNSON honestly called "sheer ignorance," for no one will accuse Mr. BAXTER of any deliberate misrepresentation. But whatever may be the origin of the ridiculous legend, it is necessary that its falsity should be exposed. Our last campaign in Afghanistan was a complete triumph, and it affords less reason for declaiming another struggle upon the same ground than does our conflict with the mutineers of 1857. We hold India, nevertheless, encouraged not disheartened by the trials of the Mutiny, and the history of the Afghan wars of past days should teach us that we can punish SHERE ALI and occupy Cabul, not without risks and toils, but with a certain prospect of ultimately establishing our power on this side of the Hindoo Koosh and so foiling the designs of Russia.

OUR LAST AFGHAN WAR.

The imminent possibility of another Afghan war lends interest to the history of the last, in regard to which much misconception and many delusions have prevailed. As the year 1837 was drawing to a close men's minds turned anxiously to the far East, where the political horizon had assumed a lurid hue; and as the year 1838 passed by, greater anxiety and apprehension were aroused by the progress of events in the Indian borderlands. There was one drama, on a small scale perhaps, round which the whole interest of the question settled, yet that drama not only demonstrated the nature of the rival forces, but it also reduced to a focus all the antipathies of the various Powers in Western Asia. That drama was the siege of Herat, and round that fortress and within its walls might be seen Russian ambition, Persian chicane, Afghan vacillation, and English indomitable resolution all personified. It was but the prelude to "the great game in Central Asia." Forty years later on we come down to the mortal strife between Russia and the Porte, and after twelve months' alarm and anxiety we are once more on the threshold of events not widely disconnected in their origin from those that marked the years 1839-40. Once more we have Russian ambition, Afghan vacillation—if it should not be termed by the harsher epithet of treachery—and Persian chicane brought prominently before us by recent events in Cabul and Teheran. To complete the simile, there only remains proof to be given of such resolution as was possessed by Eldred Pottinger. "The great game," of which one scene terminated under the walls of Herat forty years ago, is still in progress, and we are approaching one of the most important acts, if not the last act of all. Let us, then, trace back the story of our last Afghan war, how it arose, what it resulted in, what were its mistakes, and what its glory and practical results.

It is unnecessary to follow in any detail the policy of the Indian Government before the Simla manifesto, and the signature of the Tripartite Treaty to which Lord Auckland, Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, and Runjeet Singh were the signatories. Before the close of the year 1838 it had been resolved to invade Afghanistan in conjunction with the Sikhs, and to place the Sudosye Prince Shuja upon the throne. For more than twenty years that Monarch had lived in exile within the borders of Hindostan, and now he was at last within reach of his former power, through the hostility which Runjeet Singh entertained for his

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countrymen, and the alarm raised in the minds of the English Government by Russia's intrigues in Persia. In those days Ferozepore was the extreme limit of our power in the north-west, and there on the 29th of November, 1838, the Governor General held his first meeting with Runjeet Singh, the Lion of Lahore. During several days these visits of ceremony continued, and round the banks of the Sutlej there assembled as gallant a display of British troops and Sikh soldiers as has ever been seen, for it was the Army of the Indus. But before this the siege of Herat had been raised, and the intrepidity of Eldred Pottinger, to whom this country has not realised its great debt, had repulsed that last assault against its walls on the 24th of June. It was resolved accordingly to reduce the proportions of the army assembled at Ferozepore, and not to send the whole force across the Indus. The Bengal contingent, when reduced, numbered some nine thousand men, and there was a special corps, under Shuja-ul-Mulk, of six thousand more. It was this force which left Ferozepore and advanced on Candahar, through Bhawulpore and Khelat. Shuja-ul-Mulk and his English allies were to strike against Dost Mahomed through the Bholan Pass and Quettah; Runjeet Singh and his Sikhs from Peshawur and the Khyber. But in order to reach Khelat we had to pass through the territory of the Ameers of Scinde, and between them and Runjeet Singh, as well as with Shuja-ul-Mulk, there were various questions in dispute, notably the Shikarpore difficulty. These were settled for the time in that unavoidably arbitrary manner which must be followed when matters have progressed so far as for a large army to have received instructions to advance. The "army of the Indus" had received such orders. It was to march on the Bholan, and to obey it had to pass through the territory of the Ameers of Scinde. Englishmen of the present generation are fortunate in not being compelled to resort to the same expedients to reach Cabul that their fathers were when Pottinger and Burnes were our representatives at Hyderabad (Scinde) and Khyrpore. The task of striking at Cabul from Peshawur and the Khyber had to be confided to Sikhs, whose sympathies with the cause soon became equivocal; and to reach Khelat and Candahar we had to adopt a line of action that was distasteful to some of our best officers. There was another English army in the field also, that of Sir John Keane, from Bombay, whence it had reached the mouths of the Indus by sea.

This triple army—the Bengal column, under Sir Willoughby Cotton; the Bombay column, under Sir John Keane; and the contingent under Shuja-ul-Mulk—made its way through Scinde upon the Bholan. On the 4th of April it rendezvoused at Quettah, having traversed the Bholan in safety, and without difficulty. On the 6th Sir John Keane arrived and assumed the command of the whole army, and on the 9th and 10th it was traversing the Kojuck Pass on the road to Candahar. On the 25th of April we appeared before the walls of that city, the principal place in southern Afghanistan, which opened its gates without any resistance, and Shuja-ul-Mulk was received with acclamation by a small section of the Sudosye faction, or rather so it appeared at first. But, in truth, it was not so. Whatever sentiment of loyalty the family of Ahmed Khan had once attracted to itself had long since disappeared, and Shah Shuja returned almost as a stranger to the land of his ancestors. On the 8th of May it was resolved that the formal ceremonial of installing the Sudosye as ruler should take place, and a grand review was announced to be held in the plains outside the city. But whether this foreign display was the means of alienating Afghan sympathy, or some other cause was at work to mar the harmony of the occasion, there is no doubt that the momentary ebullition of loyalty shown by some of the Afghans had given place to an apathy that was clearly evidenced by the fact that not a hundred Afghans attended the grand ceremonial which marked the return of the Durani Monarch. Dost Mahomed had entrusted the defence of Candahar to his brother, Kohundil Khan, but on the approach of the invading army Kohundil and several of his brothers fled, nor paused until they found safety within the Persian frontier. But Dost Mahomed, the ablest and the most famed of the Barucksye brotherhood, still ruled in Cabul and Ghizni and all the northern country. Whilst our army lingered at Candahar a brigade was despatched under Colonel Sale to occupy Girishk, on the road to Herat, in case Kohundil Khan should endeavour to rally his disheartened followers. Yet the delay at Candahar was not wholly unemployed. Preparations were made for a forward movement, and negotiations were opened up with the Ghiljie clans. In the former some progress was made, in the latter scarcely any.

During the two months' stay at Candahar a certain amount of supplies had been collected, and on the 27th of June the British army resumed its forward movement, this time through the Ghiljie country, upon Ghizni. Sir John Keane appeared before the walls of that celebrated fortress on the 21st of July, and there he found Hyder Gholam, Dost Mahomed's son, in command, with Afzul Khan in the vicinity in charge of a corps of cavalry. Since the days of Mahmoud of Ghizni and Mahomed of Ghor this city fortress has been famed among the Afghans. As Kaye puts it, its strength was their boast, and Dost Mahomed anticipated that the force of the invasion would be broken before its impregnable walls. On the other hand, strange to say, our Commander was disposed to consider that the reputation of Ghizni was undeserved, and he had accordingly advanced against it with only his field guns, and without any regular train. But a glance at the walls of Ghizni showed our Commander that it did not belie its reputation, and that it was a place of great strength, both by nature and by art. Yet was an English army to be turned aside in its march, even by the formidable ramparts of this stronghold, and its resolute garrison under the King's son? The English General resolved that it should not, and, in the absence of his battering train, formed his plans for its capture by assault. To our ally, Shah Shuja, it was incomprehensible how we intended to break into the iron-girt fortress. While the Afghan prince was troubled with the impossibility of breaching the walls, Sir John Keane and his engineers were busy seeking which gate should be blown in. A nephew of Dost Mahomed, Abdul Rashid Khan, had deserted the Baruckaye cause, and it was from him that our General learnt that all the gates had been walled up with the exception of the Cabul Gate. The Cabul Gate was the one weak point in the armour of Ghizni, and it was decided to effect an entrance at that portion of the fortification. Early in the morning of the 23d of July, 1839, the storming party and its supports, consisting of the four English regiments, viz., the 2d, 13th, and 17th of the Line, and the Company's European Regiment, followed the Engineers and Sappers who had gone ahead to explode the mine placed at the foot of the Cabul Gate. The night was stormy, and the early dawn was dark and dreary, weather pre-eminently suited for such a deed as that which lay before Colonels Dennie and Sale. And in the middle of the night Sir John Keane made a demonstration with all his field-pieces against the western and southern sides of the fortress. To the north, where the English Sappers, under Captain Thomson, were busy with the real work of the night, all was quiet. After some hours' cannonade, during which the Afghan garrison was worried by successive alarms in other quarters of the city, Sir John Keane's attack died fitfully away, and all was, for a brief space, tranquil and serene. But it was only for a brief space. Captain Thomson had done his work well and thoroughly. The powder bags had been placed under the Cabul Gate, and Durand "scraping the powder with his finger nails," fired the powder which had failed to ignite on the first application of the port-fire. With a terrific roar up went the solid beams and massive masonry of the gate and its supports, and in rushed the English soldiers. The surprise was complete, and our advanced companies made good their entrance into the outworks of the city. After a brief delay, caused by a mistake, the supports pressed on also, and a desperate hand-to-hand encounter took place in the narrow outlet. The Afghans, driven into a corner, and finding their only avenue for escape barred by the English soldiers, fought well and stubbornly, and rushed like wild mountain-cats upon our men. But their desperation served them to little purpose. Ghizni was ours. This great success cost us only seventeen men killed and one hundred and sixty-five wounded. The Afghans lost close on one thousand killed and wounded, in addition to sixteen hundred prisoners.

But the greatness of the blow is not to be realised by a comparison of the loss alone on either side. Dost Mahomed's fortunes were closely intertwined with the fate of Ghizni, and his whole plan of campaign was founded on the assumption that to capture Ghizni would be a task of months instead of an affair of a few short hours. The moment Afzul Khan learnt of its capture he fled to Cabul with his division, and carried the ill tidings to his father there. As our army advanced northward beyond Ghizni confusion and panic went before it. Dost Mahomed advanced to meet us, and he took up a position at Urghundeh to bar the road to the capital. But there was treachery within his army. One by one his sirdars deserted him, and the Ameer found himself left with a mere handful of personal retainers to check the progress of the victorious English army. He resigned himself to his fate, and fled northwards through Cabul. Close on his track pressed Outram and his five hundred horsemen as far as Bamian; but there they learnt that the fugitive Ameer had crossed the Sighan Valley, and was passing into the dominions of the Usbeg ruler of Kundus. Through the treachery of an Afghan sirdar, by name Hadji Khan Khaukur, who accompanied Outram, and pretended to be our true friend, Dost Mahomed escaped the pursuit of the gallant Outram. The Afghan's treachery did not go unpunished, and he was for many years kept in a state of imprisonment in British India. On the 7th of August our army entered Cabul, and Shah Shuja was placed on the throne he had occupied more than thirty years before, and upon which his father and grandsire had long been seated. With the flight of Dost Mahomed and the entry into Cabul the first act in the Afghan drama terminated. In the short space of three months a great country had been conquered, and the resistance of a turbulent

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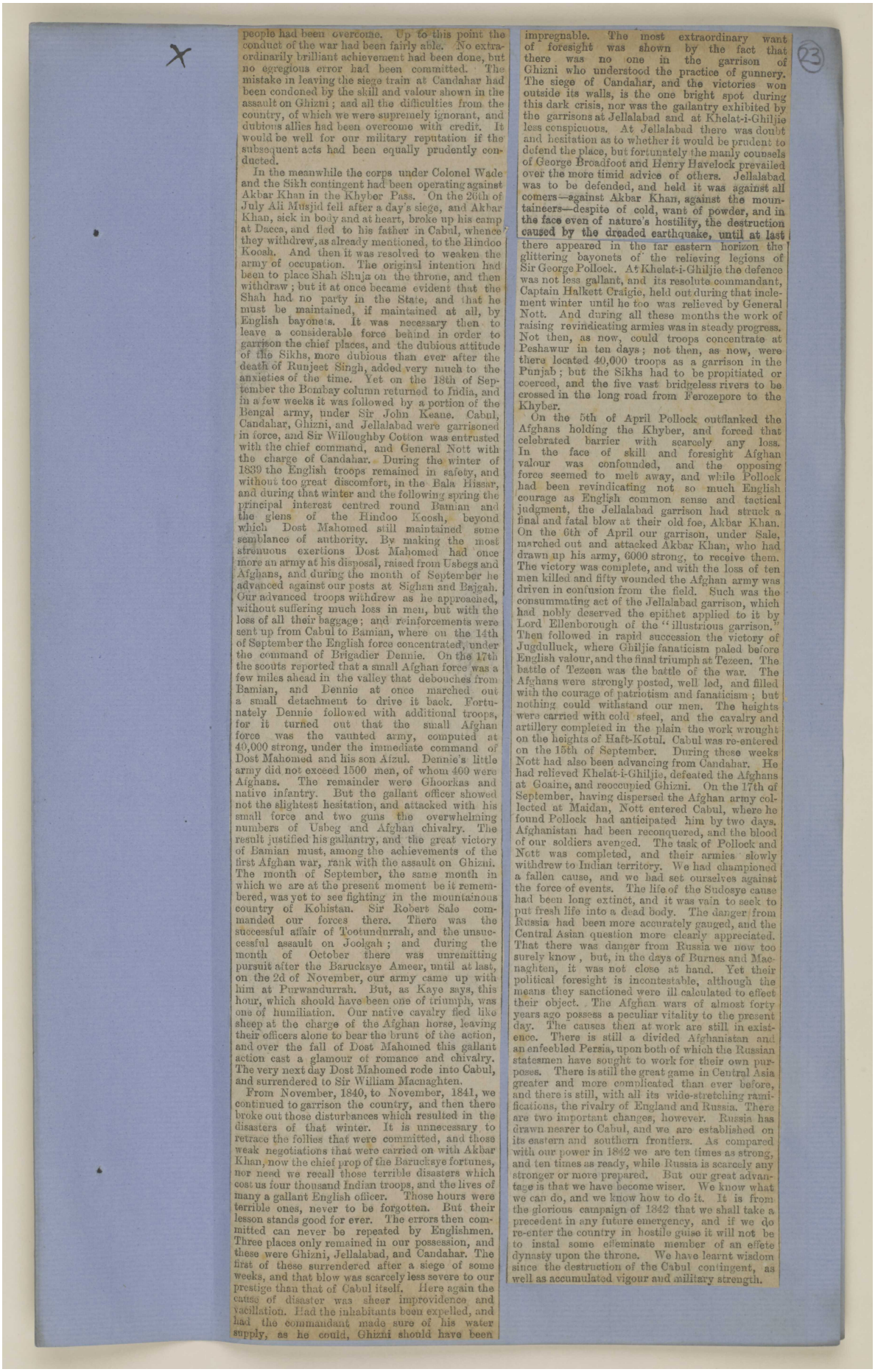

people had been overcome. Up to this point the conduct of the war had been fairly able. No extraordinarily brilliant achievement had been done, but no egregious error had been committed. The mistake in leaving the siege train at Candahar had been condoned by the skill and valour shown in the assault on Ghizni; and all the difficulties from the country, of which we were supremely ignorant, and dubious allies had been overcome with credit. It would be well for our military reputation if the subsequent acts had been equally prudently conducted.

In the meanwhile the corps under Colonel Wade and the Sikh contingent had been operating against Akbar Khan in the Khyber Pass. On the 26th of July Ali Musjid fell after a day's siege, and Akbar Khan, sick in body and at heart, broke up his camp at Dacca, and fled to his father in Cabul, whence they withdrew, as already mentioned, to the Hindoo Koosh. And then it was resolved to weaken the army of occupation. The original intention had been to place Shah Shuja on the throne, and then withdraw; but it at once became evident that the Shah had no party in the State, and that he must be maintained, if maintained at all, by English bayonets. It was necessary then to leave a considerable force behind in order to garrison the chief places, and the dubious attitude of the Sikhs, more dubious than ever after the death of Runjeet Singh, added very much to the anxieties of the time. Yet on the 18th of September the Bombay column returned to India, and in a few weeks it was followed by a portion of the Bengal army, under Sir John Keane. Cabul, Candahar, Ghizni, and Jellalabad were garrisoned in force, and Sir Willoughby Cotton was entrusted with the chief command, and General Nott with the charge of Candahar. During the winter of 1839 the English troops remained in safety, and without too great discomfort, in the Bala Hissar, and during that winter and the following spring the principal interest centred round Bamian and the glens of the Hindoo Koosh, beyond which Dost Mahomed still maintained some semblance of authority. By making the most strenuous exertions Dost Mahomed had once more an army at his disposal, raised from Usbegs and Afghans, and during the month of September he advanced against our posts at Sighan and Bajgah. Our advanced troops withdrew as he approached, without suffering much loss in men, but with the loss of all their baggage; and reinforcements were sent up from Cabul to Bamian, where on the 14th of September the English force concentrated, under the command of Brigadier Dennie. On the 17th the scouts reported that a small Afghan force was a few miles ahead in the valley that debouches from Bamian, and Dennie at once marched out a small detachment to drive it back. Fortunately Dennie followed with additional troops, for it turned out that the small Afghan force was the vaunted army, computed at 40,000 strong, under the immediate command of Dost Mahomed and his son Aizul. Dennie's little army did not exceed 1500 men, of whom 400 were Afghans. The remainder were Ghoorkas and native infantry. But the gallant officer showed not the slightest hesitation, and attacked with his small force and two guns the overwhelming numbers of Usbeg and Afghan chivalry. The result justified his gallantry, and the great victory of Bamian must, among the achievements of the first Afghan war, rank with the assault on Ghizni. The month of September, the same month in which we are at the present moment be it remembered, was yet to see fighting in the mountainous country of Kohistan. Sir Robert Sale commanded our forces there. There was the successful affair of Tootundurrah, and the unsuccessful assault on Joolgah; and during the month of October there was unremitting pursuit after the Barucksye Ameer, until at last, on the 2d of November, our army came up with him at Purwandurrah. But, as Kaye says, this hour, which should have been one of triumph, was one of humiliation. Our native cavalry fled like sheep at the charge of the Afghan horse, leaving their officers alone to bear the brunt of the action, and over the fall of Dost Mahomed this gallant action cast a glamour of romance and chivalry. The very next day Dost Mahomed rode into Cabul, and surrendered to Sir William Macnaghten.

From November, 1840, to November, 1841, we continued to garrison the country, and then there broke out those disturbances which resulted in the disasters of that winter. It is unnecessary to retrace the follies that were committed, and those weak negotiations that were carried on with Akbar Khan, now the chief prop of the Barucksye fortunes, nor need we recall those terrible disasters which cost us four thousand Indian troops, and the lives of many a gallant English officer. Those hours were terrible ones, never to be forgotten. But their lesson stands good for ever. The errors then committed can never be repeated by Englishmen. Three places only remained in our possession, and these were Ghizni, Jellalabad, and Candahar. The first of these surrendered after a siege of some weeks, and that blow was scarcely less severe to our prestige than that of Cabul itself. Here again the cause of disaster was sheer improvidence and vacillation. Had the inhabitants been expelled, and had the commandant made sure of his water supply, as he could, Ghizni should have been impregnable. The most extraordinary want of foresight was shown by the fact that there was no one in the garrison of Ghizni who understood the practice of gunnery. The siege of Candahar, and the victories won outside its walls, is the one bright spot during this dark crisis, nor was the gallantry exhibited by the garrisons at Jellalabad and at Khelat-i-Ghiljie less conspicuous. At Jellalabad there was doubt and hesitation as to whether it would be prudent to defend the place, but fortunately the manly counsels of George Broadfoot and Henry Havelock prevailed over the more timid advice of others. Jellalabad was to be defended, and held it was against all comers—against Akbar Khan, against the mountaineers—despite of cold, want of powder, and in the face even of nature's hostility, the destruction caused by the dreaded earthquake, until at last there appeared in the far eastern horizon the glittering bayonets of the relieving legions of Sir George Pollock. At Khelat-i-Ghiljie the defence was not less gallant, and its resolute commandant, Captain Halkett Craigie, held out during that inclement winter until he too was relieved by General Nott. And during all these months the work of raising revindicating armies was in steady progress. Not then, as now, could troops concentrate at Peshawur in ten days; not then, as now, were there located 40,000 troops as a garrison in the Punjab; but the Sikhs had to be propitiated or coerced, and the five vast bridgeless rivers to be crossed in the long road from Ferozepore to the Khyber.

On the 5th of April Pollock outflanked the Afghans holding the Khyber, and forced that celebrated barrier with scarcely any loss. In the face of skill and foresight Afghan valour was confounded, and the opposing force seemed to melt away, and while Pollock had been revindicating not so much English courage as English common sense and tactical judgment, the Jellalabad garrison had struck a final and fatal blow at their old foe, Akbar Khan. On the 6th of April our garrison, under Sale, marched out and attacked Akbar Khan, who had drawn up his army, 6000 strong, to receive them. The victory was complete, and with the loss of ten men killed and fifty wounded the Afghan army was driven in confusion from the field. Such was the consummating act of the Jellalabad garrison, which had nobly deserved the epithet applied to it by Lord Ellenborough of the "illustrious garrison." Then followed in rapid succession the victory of Jugdulluck, where Ghiljie fanaticism paled before English valour, and the final triumph at Tezeen. The battle of Tezeen was the battle of the war. The Afghans were strongly posted, well led, and filled with the courage of patriotism and fanaticism; but nothing could withstand our men. The heights were carried with cold steel, and the cavalry and artillery completed in the plain the work wrought on the heights of Haft-Kotul. Cabul was re-entered on the 15th of September. During these weeks Nott had also been advancing from Candahar. He had relieved Khelat-i-Ghiljie, defeated the Afghans at Goaine, and reoccupied Ghizni. On the 17th of September, having dispersed the Afghan army collected at Maidan, Nott entered Cabul, where he found Pollock had anticipated him by two days. Afghanistan had been reconquered, and the blood of our soldiers avenged. The task of Pollock and Nott was completed, and their armies slowly withdrew to Indian territory. We had championed a fallen cause, and we had set ourselves against the force of events. The life of the Sudosye cause had been long extinct, and it was vain to seek to put fresh life into a dead body. The danger from Russia had been more accurately gauged, and the Central Asian question more clearly appreciated. That there was danger from Russia we now too surely know, but, in the days of Burnes and Macnaghten, it was not close at hand. Yet their political foresight is incontestable, although the means they sanctioned were ill calculated to effect their object. The Afghan wars of almost forty years ago possess a peculiar vitality to the present day. The causes then at work are still in existence. There is still a divided Afghanistan and an enfeebled Persia, upon both of which the Russian statesmen have sought to work for their own purposes. There is still the great game in Central Asia greater and more complicated than ever before, and there is still, with all its wide-stretching ramifications, the rivalry of England and Russia. There are two important changes, however. Russia has drawn nearer to Cabul, and we are established on its eastern and southern frontiers. As compared with our power in 1842 we are ten times as strong, and ten times as ready, while Russia is scarcely any stronger or more prepared. But our great advantage is that we have become wiser. We know what we can do, and we know how to do it. It is from the glorious campaign of 1842 that we shall take a precedent in any future emergency, and if we do re-enter the country in hostile guise it will not be to instal some effeminate member of an effete dynasty upon the throne. We have learnt wisdom since the destruction of the Cabul contingent, as well as accumulated vigour and military strength.

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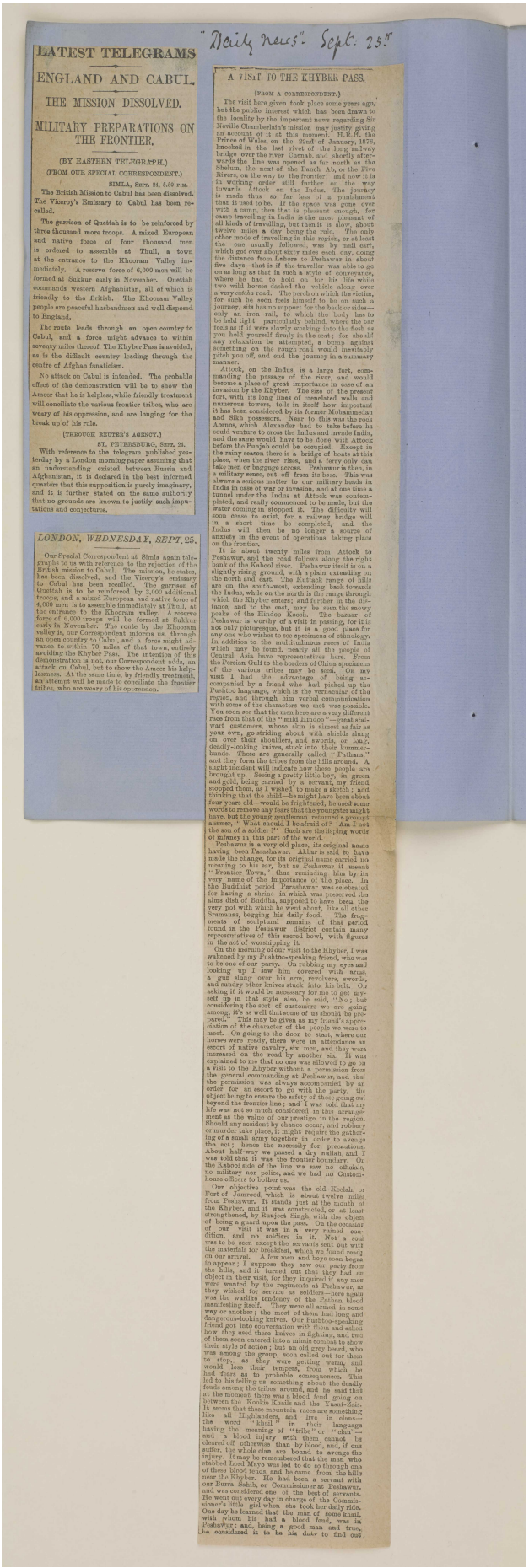

"Daily News" Sept. 25th

LATEST TELEGRAMS

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

THE MISSION DISSOLVED.

MILITARY PREPARATIONS ON THE FRONTIER.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SEPT. 24, 5.50 P.M.

The British Mission to Cabul has been dissolved. The Viceroy's Emissary to Cabul has been recalled.

The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced by three thousand more troops. A mixed European and native force of four thousand men is ordered to assemble at Thull, a town at the entrance to the Khooram Valley immediately. A reserve force of 6,000 men will be formed at Sukkur early in November. Quettah commands western Afghanistan, all of which is friendly to the British. The Khooram Valley people are peaceful husbandmen and well disposed to England.

The route leads through an open country to Cabul, and a force might advance to within seventy miles thereof. The Khyber Pass is avoided, as is the difficult country leading through the centre of Afghan fanaticism.

No attack on Cabul is intended. The probable effect of the demonstration will be to show the Ameer that he is helpless, while friendly treatment will conciliate the various frontier tribes, who are weary of his oppression, and are longing for the break up of his rule.

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 24.

With reference to the telegram published yesterday by a London morning paper assuming that an understanding existed between Russia and Afghanistan, it is declared in the best informed quarters that this supposition is purely imaginary, and it is further stated on the same authority that no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 25.

Our Special Correspondent at Simla again telegraphs to us with reference to the rejection of the British mission to Cabul. The mission, he states, has been dissolved, and the Viceroy's emissary to Cabul has been recalled. The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced by 3,000 additional troops, and a mixed European and native force of 4,000 men is to assemble immediately at Thull, at the entrance to the Khooram valley. A reserve force of 6,000 troops will be formed at Sukkur early in November. The route by the Khooram valley is, our Correspondent informs us, through an open country to Cabul, and a force might advance to within 70 miles of that town, entirely avoiding the Khyber Pass. The intention of this demonstration is not, our Correspondent adds, an attack on Cabul, but to show the Ameer his helplessness. At the same time, by friendly treatment, an attempt will be made to conciliate the frontier tribes, who are weary of his oppression.

A VISIT TO THE KHYBER PASS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

The visit here given took place some years ago, but the public interest which has been drawn to the locality by the important news regarding Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission may justify giving an account of it at this moment. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, on the 22nd of January, 1876, knocked in the last rivet of the long railway bridge over the river Chenab, and shortly afterwards the line was opened as far north as the Sheikum, the seat of the Panch Ab, or the Five Rivers, on the way to the frontier; and now it is in working order still further on the way towards Attock on the Indus. The journey is made thus so far less of a punishment than it used to be. If the space was gone over with a camp, then that is pleasant enough, for camp travelling in India is the most pleasant of all kinds of travelling, but then it is slow, about twelve miles a day being the rule. The only other mode of travelling in this region, or at least the one usually followed, was by mail cart, which got over about sixty miles each day, doing the distance from Lahore to Peshawur in about five days—that is if the traveller was able to go on as long as that in such a style of conveyance, where he had to hold on for his life while two wild horses dashed the vehicle along over a very *catcha* road. The perch on which the victim, for such he soon feels himself to be on such a journey, sits has no support for the back or sides—only an iron rail, to which the body has to be held tight particularly behind, where the tar feels as if it were slowly working into the flesh as you hold yourself firmly in the seat; for should any relaxation be attempted, a bump against something on the rough road would inevitably pitch you off, and end the journey in a summary manner.

Attock, on the Indus, is a large fort, commanding the passage of the river, and would become a place of great importance in case of an invasion by the Khyber. The size of the present fort, with its long lines of crenelated walls and numerous towers, tells in itself how important it has been considered by its former Mohammedan and Sikh possessors. Near to this was the rock Aornos, which Alexander had to take before he could venture to cross the Indus and invade India, and the same would have to be done with Attock before the Punjab could be occupied. Except in the rainy season there is a bridge of boats at this place, when the river rises, and a ferry only can take men or baggage across. Peshawur is then, in a military sense, cut off from its base. This was always a serious matter to our military heads in India in case of war or invasion, and at one time a tunnel under the Indus at Attock was contemplated, and really commenced to be made, but the water coming in stopped it. The difficulty will soon cease to exist, for a railway bridge will in a short time be completed, and the Indus will then be no longer a source of anxiety in the event of operations taking place on the frontier.

It is about twenty miles from Attock to Peshawur, and the road follows along the right bank of the Kabool river. Peshawur itself is on a slightly rising ground, with a plain extending on the north and east. The Kuttack range of hills are on the south-west, extending back towards the Indus, while on the north is the range through which the Khyber enters; and further in the distance, and to the east, may be seen the snowy peaks of the Hindoo Koosh. The bazaar of Peshawur is worthy of a visit in passing, for it is not only picturesque, but it is a good place for any one who wishes to see specimens of ethnology. In addition to the multitudinous races of India which may be found, nearly all the people of Central Asia have representatives here. From the Persian Gulf to the borders of China specimens of the various tribes may be seen. On my visit I had the advantage of being accompanied by a friend who had picked up the Pushtoo language, which is the vernacular of the region, and through him verbal communication with some of the characters we met was possible. You soon see that the men here are a very different race from that of the "mild Hindoo"—great stalwart customers, whose skin is almost as fair as your own, go striding about with shields slung on over their shoulders, and swords, or long, deadly-looking knives, stuck into their kummerbands. These are generally called "Pathans," and they form the tribes from the hills around. A slight incident will indicate how these people are brought up. Seeing a pretty little boy, in green and gold, being carried by a servant, my friend stopped them, as I wished to make a sketch; and thinking that the child—he might have been about four years old—would be frightened, he used some words to remove any fears that the youngster might have, but the young gentleman returned a prompt answer, "What should I be afraid of? Am I not the son of a soldier?" Such are the lisping words of infancy in this part of the world.

Peshawur is a very old place, its original name having been Parashawar. Akbar is said to have made the change, for its original name carried no meaning to his ear, but as Peshawur it meant "Frontier Town," thus reminding him by its very name of the importance of the place. In the Buddhist period Parashawar was celebrated for having a shrine in which was preserved the alms dish of Buddha, supposed to have been the very pot with which he went about, like all other Bramans, begging his daily food. The fragments of sculptural remains of that period found in the Peshawur district contain many representatives of this sacred bowl, with figures in the act of worshipping it.

On the morning of our visit to the Khyber, I was watched by my Pushtoo-speaking friend, who was to be one of our party. On rubbing my eyes and looking up I saw him covered with arms, a gun slung over his arm, revolvers, swords, and sundry other knives stuck into his belt. On asking if it would be necessary for me to get myself up in that style also, he said, "No; but considering the sort of customers we are going among, it's as well that some of us should be prepared." This may be given as my friend's appreciation of the character of the people we were to meet. On going to the door to start, where our horses were ready, there were in attendance an escort of native cavalry, six men, and they were increased on the road by another six. It was explained to me that no one was allowed to go on a visit to the Khyber without a permission from the general commanding at Peshawur, and that the permission was always accompanied by an order for an escort to go with the party, the object being to ensure the safety of those going out beyond the frontier line; and I was told that my life was not so much considered in this arrangement as the value of our prestige in the region. Should any accident by chance occur, and robbery or murder take place, it might require the gathering of a small army together in order to avenge the act; hence the necessity for precautions. About half-way we passed a dry nullah, and I was told that it was the frontier boundary. On the Kabool side of the line we saw no officials, no military nor police, and we had no Custom-house officers to bother us.

Our objective point was the old Kooiah, or Fort of Jumrood, which is about twelve miles from Peshawur. It stands just at the mouth of the Khyber, and it was constructed, or at least strengthened, by Runjeet Singh, with the object of being a guard upon the pass. On the occasion of our visit it was in a very ruined condition, and no soldiers in it. Not a soul was to be seen except the servants sent out with the materials for breakfast, which we found ready on our arrival. A few men and boys soon began to appear; I suppose they saw our party from the hills, and it turned out that they had no object in their visit, for they inquired if any men were wanted by the regiments at Peshawur, or they wished for service as soldiers—here again was the warlike tendency of the Pathan blood manifesting itself. They were all armed in some way or another; the most of them had long and dangerous-looking knives. Our Pushtoo-speaking friend got into conversation with them and asked how they used these knives in fighting, and two of them soon entered into a mimic combat to show their style of action; but an old grey beard, who was among the group, soon called out for them to stop, as they were getting warm, and would lose their tempers, from which he had fears as to probable consequences. This led to his telling us something about the deadly feuds among the tribes around, and he said that at the moment there was a blood feud going on between the Kookie Khails and the Yusuf-Zais. It seems that these mountain races are something like all Highlanders, and live in clans—the word "khail" in their language having the meaning of "tribe" or "clan"—and a blood injury with them cannot be cleared off otherwise than by blood, and, if one suffer, the whole clan are bound to avenge the injury. It may be remembered that the man who stabbed Lord Mayo was led to do so through one of these blood feuds, and he came from the hills near the Khyber. He had been a servant with our Burra Sahib, or Commissioner at Peshawur, and was considered one of the best of servants. He went out every day in charge of the Commissioner's little girl when she took her daily ride. One day he learned that the man of some khail, with whom his had a blood feud, was in Peshawur; and, being a good man and true, he considered it to be his duty to find out,

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THE information which our Special Correspondent at Simla gives us, in the telegram which we publish this morning, shows that the Indian Government is taking the only action which is now possible to it. However much we blame the policy which Lord LYTTON has pursued since his accession to the Viceroyalty, and which has brought about the grave situation in which he now finds himself, we fully recognise the impossibility of acquiescence in the affront which has been administered by the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN. The recall of the mission was inevitable; and military action must follow the rebuff which our diplomacy has met with. The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced; and a body of European and native troops will immediately appear at Thull, at the entrance of the Khoorum Valley. Early in November a reserve force of six thousand men will assemble at Sukkur. Our Correspondent expresses the opinion that the effect of this demonstration will be to show the AMEER that he is helpless, while measures will be taken to conciliate the frontier tribes who are ill-affected to him. A St. Petersburg telegram denies that any understanding exists between Russia and Afghanistan. The statement, so far as it goes, is satisfactory, though it needs further explanation to reconcile it with notorious facts. If the intentions and action of Russia have been misunderstood, it is well that the misapprehension should be rectified. If they have been rightly appreciated, we may hope that the announcement conveys the purpose of reconsidering and reversing them. We trust that, if this be so, our Government will also reconsider its intentions. Instead of challenging the hostility and distrust of the AMEER, and so throwing him into the arms of Russia, its business should be to court his goodwill and to guarantee his independence conditionally upon his practising the duties of friendly neighbourhood. If a different course is adopted we shall simply advance from one folly and imprudence to another. Nothing, so it be adventurous and rash, is impossible to Lord BEACONSFIELD. His policy of fireworks may amuse the country; but there is in it the certainty of increased public burdens, and the probability of confusion and disaster. The taxpayer had better look after himself. Even the demagogic principle of exemptions, which the present Government has largely and unscrupulously used, and which it will no doubt extend, will scarcely make an eightpenny or shilling income-tax acceptable to the country.

What is the purpose for which this and even more serious burdens and difficulties are to be encountered? If we are to catch the drift of the policy upon which the Ministry have persistently refused to take the nation into their confidence, we must connect what we know of their action at Constantinople with what we know of their action in Afghanistan. It was semi-officially stated the other day that the designs of the Government in Afghanistan were part of a great scheme of policy for the better security of our Indian possessions. The scattered hints which have pierced the studied veil of secrecy concerning Government negotiations with the AMEER and the SULTAN have gradually thrown something like clear light upon the general scheme, and even enabled us to guess at the period of its inception. Although the Anglo-Turkish Convention was revealed to the world as a theatrical surprise, the Government may get the credit of not having devised it on the spur of the moment. The proposals to the Afghan ruler which Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN has not been allowed to make to him are declared, with apparent authority, to be the same which were carried last year by Sir LEWIS PELLY. Towards the close of the Session of 1877 the Government were questioned in the House of Commons concerning Sir LEWIS PELLY's mission, but absolutely declined to declare its purport. Lord GEORGE HAMILTON would only say that the Cabinet had resolved to deal with our Indian frontier relations "simultaneously, as in-"divisible parts of a single Imperial ques-"tion, mainly dependent for its solution "on the foreign policy of her MAJESTY'S "Government." This Pythian utterance was unintelligible at the time, and in answer to the pressure of the Opposition leaders the Government would vouchsafe no explanation; but, repeated now in a semi-official communication when some projecting angles of the great scheme have appeared in sight, the oracle is not so difficult to understand. Turkey and Afghanistan were to be dealt with on the same principle. In return for the advantage of an English defensive alliance against Russia they were to give us certain privileges, not yet defined or not yet published, in directing their administration. They were also to permit us to occupy certain posts to facilitate our efforts in defending and superintending them. How SHERE ALI treated our first overtures towards this arrangement was kept secret at the time, but has lately been disclosed. He rejected Sir LEWIS PELLY's proposals. He did not desire the English alliance on the terms offered. He plainly intimated besides that he regarded even our occupation of Quettah as a direct menace to his independence. This rebuff might have been a warning to Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Cabinet not to persevere with their grand scheme of a Mohammedan Confederacy. Their negotiations with SHERE ALI were secret, and they might have returned without dishonour to the policy for defending India which had commended itself to their predecessors, and had obtained the sanction of Conservative as well as Liberal statesmen. But they were bent upon dazzling "the groundlings" with their showy, new-fangled Imperialism. The warning of Sir LEWIS PELLY'S failure fell upon heedless ears. They have sent Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN on the same errand, and he has met with a most ignominious and insulting rebuff. The other branch of their scheme is the Anglo-Turkish Convention. How far that will be successful remains to be seen, but the hints which the SULTAN is said to have dropped about "semi-independent Indian "Princes" seem to show that his jealousy has been awakened by precisely the same considerations as those which impelled the AMEER to reject our overtures, and to repel those who bring them.

So far from combining Turkey and Afghanistan with us in the defence of India, Lord BEACONSFIELD'S policy has only succeeded in touching the jealous susceptibilities of these Powers. That other agencies would be ready to work upon this jealousy to the utmost was an eventuality which her MAJESTY'S Ministers ought to have foreseen before departing from the firm and cautious policy which has hitherto prevailed in the administration of India, and which best befits a strong nation. Why should we have gone out of our way to solicit the assistance of Turkey and Afghanistan in the defence of possessions which we have proved our competence to defend out of our own resources? If we did, it was the extreme of folly to suppose that our proposals would be eagerly accepted when they were coupled with a condition that the Powers addressed should remit some part of their sovereignty. The emphatic and frequent repetition of an assertion that what we proposed would leave their independence untouched was not likely to further negotiations. It would be a wonderful triumph of diplomatic skill to persuade a Sovereign that he had lost not a particle of his prerogative when he allowed a stranger to occupy part of his territories, and pledged himself to listen to advice in the treatment of his subjects. The attempt to enlist religious fanaticism on our side might have been more hopeful if we had not been ourselves a Christian Power. Our treatment of the Mohammedans in India offers a favourable contrast to the Russian treatment of Mohammedans in Central Asia; but is a Mussulman Prince who believes his sovereignty to be menaced likely to draw the right conclusion from such a comparison? We do not proselytise by fire and sword, and we grant an equal toleration to all creeds within our dominions; but neither the SULTAN nor the AMEER is thereby induced to give us a treaty right of superintending their administration. The SULTAN, indeed, has nominally conceded this right, but he has not yet shown any alacrity in promoting its practical exercise. The Convention has given our Ambassador at Constantinople a special *locus standi* among the rival Pachas and other intriguers for the SULTAN'S confidence, but it has not improved his position or added to the weight of his counsels as the repre-

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 25th

MINISTERS AND THE AFGHAN INCIDENT.

"THE Cabinet," says a Tory paper this morning, "will consider without delay the measures to be adopted in an emergency as trying as any of which the present generation of Englishmen have had experience." Another paper, which wishes to be thought still the only genuine ministerial organ, expatiates at large on the fact that our Afghan troubles are due to Russia, and must be dealt with by her Majesty's Ministers accordingly. We know nothing. But, viewing the matter by our natural lights, we think it highly probable that both these newspapers will presently acknowledge that they have made a mistake. It is possible, indeed, that the Cabinet may meet, it is reasonable to expect that the Cabinet should meet, "to consider without delay the measures to be adopted in a trying emergency." But it should be no surprise if Lord BEACONSFIELD agrees with Lord SALISBURY not to call a Council under the circumstances; or at any rate not to assemble the Cabinet till it may seem to meet for general purposes. And this for the reason indicated in the second newspaper article to which we have referred. These Afghan troubles are of course due to Russia. They are directly and manifestly the work of Russia. They originate in a hostile determination to break engagements, made over and over again with England, not to interfere in Afghanistan: engagements made, not by one provincial Governor with another, but by the CZAR to the QUEEN; insisted upon on the one hand and undertaken on the other (this should be borne in mind) because it was understood and acknowledged that any such interference would be and must be regarded as a menace to the British Empire. Now, after all, Ministers are but men, with some of the weaknesses as well as some of the sterner and better qualities of their kind. They have reputations to lose. It is possible for them to be placed in awkward and even ridiculous positions. No more than other people can they be indifferent to the discovery that they have not been so wise, or so courageous, or so triumphant as they held themselves out to be. At any rate, it is not to be expected of them that they should be the first to acknowledge that at a momentous crisis they so managed matters as to plunge the country deeper into the manifest dangers which they undertook to preserve it from, and from which they announced that they had preserved it. Now if, after dispersing themselves over Europe in confidence that nothing was likely to happen to disturb a well-earned repose, they were suddenly to meet together to consider what measures were to be taken in respect of these Indian difficulties, what would the inference be? The inference would be that they recognized them as serious. But if they are serious, they are so because they are due to Russian hostility, made audacious by the triumph of Russia over their weak, distracted, aimless, overawed, discomfited selves. Why, therefore, should they push forward to acknowledge themselves disconcerted by this same audacious hostility, or to seem to be so? How long ago is it since the Prime Minister formally assured his countrymen that the relations of Russia and England were "essentially friendly," and that the Czar's Government were now convinced that "a restless and warlike spirit is one that must debase and perhaps even ruin their country?" How long since was this blessed result attributed by his colleagues and his scribes in the press to the energetic and overmastering policy of the Beaconsfield Cabinet, and the grave lesson read to the Czar from a timely display of British resolution and British power? How long since is it (as we said the other day) that our Plenipotentiaries came bragging back from Berlin with the cry of "Peace with honour," and of how sure they were that Russia had been overawed? All this is only a few weeks old; and how natural will it be, therefore, if now they hesitate to make a great Government matter of armed operations which are nothing less than war for the preservation of India against Russia once more in the act of tearing up her pledges and flinging them in our faces? How can they acknowledge, as the *Telegraph* says they must acknowledge, that within a few weeks they are actually pitted against the openly defiant and hostile machinations of a Power whose ability to disturb the empire they ridiculed while they were helping her with means to do it? No. It may be that we are mistaken. It may be that the Government will really look the facts in the face, and deal with them as they are, even at the cost of avowing themselves overreached and deceived. But we doubt it. Their cue is *not* to acknowledge that there is anything more than a mere frontier disturbance to meet. To be sure, it does not seem easy to do so in face of the Russian mission to Cabul, which, quite apart from the conduct of the Ameer, is an act of menacing and defiant bad faith in a matter acknowledged on both sides to be one of vital importance to the English Empire. But already the word has gone forth. Their own organ, the *Times*, has told the country that "our reckoning will be with the Ameer, and with him alone. There is nothing worse before us than one of those troublesome little wars to which we have so often found ourselves committed in every quarter of

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the globe." We take it that Lord LYTTON will be allowed to do as he pleases in a matter regarded as of purely Indian concern, a mere frontier squabble, and not at all involving larger considerations or necessitating general or deeper action on the part of the Government at home.

And there is a particular reason why the Government may be expected (though we sincerely hope it may not be so) to take this course. A general election is near. They apprehend that their financial administration may become a trouble to them; and none the less because the expenditure of six millions on a feeble and futile game of brag, utterly exploded at Berlin and by these Indian events, begins to look ridiculously wasteful. Now if the facts are faced, then this impending little war must be recognized for what it is—a war against Russia, an "Imperial" affair, and not a mere frontier squabble. In that case it would only be reasonable and right for the Indian Government to seek assistance from the Imperial Treasury: its own being absolutely exhausted and quite incapable of bearing the expense of the war without sinking deeper into insolvency. This, too, it may be thought, should be avoided. But as to that we say no more at the moment than that it will be a disgrace and a wrong if India is made to pay for a war which, if it comes, will be an immediate, direct product of gross mismanagement of the Eastern Question here in London.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

Several telegrams from India are published in the morning papers respecting the relations between England and Afghanistan. The *Daily News* correspondent at Simla telegraphs:—

The British mission to Cabul has been dissolved. The Viceroy's emissary to Cabul has been recalled. The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced by 3,000 more troops. A mixed European and native force of 4,000 men is ordered to assemble at Thull, a town at the entrance to the Khooram Valley, immediately. A reserve force of 6,000 men will be formed at Sukkur early in November. Quettah commands western Afghanistan, all of which is friendly to the British. The Khooram Valley people are peaceful husbandmen and well disposed to England. The route leads through an open country to Cabul, and a force might advance to within seventy miles thereof. The Khyber Pass is avoided, as is the difficult country leading through the centre of Afghan fanaticism. No attack on Cabul is intended. The probable effect of the demonstration will be to show the Ameer that he is helpless, while friendly treatment will conciliate the various frontier tribes, who are weary of his oppression, and are longing for the break-up of his rule.

A Bombay telegram in the *Standard*, dated Tuesday evening, says:—

The Government are evidently determined to bring matters to a crisis before the winter arrives. There will be no attempt made to induce the Ameer to receive our envoy; indeed, the mission is already broken up. Sir Neville Chamberlain is on his way to Madras, and the other members of the mission have gone to Simla. The native envoy who went on to Cabul has been recalled. Steps have been taken to strengthen the force at Quettah, and it is considered certain that a forward move will be made from that point upon Candahar. A force of eight thousand men, including the 59th, 17th, and 60th Rifles, the 23rd Pioneers, and a portion of the 10th Hussars, will assemble at Mooltan and advance through the Bolan Pass to Quettah. An advance from that town to Candahar will sever Cabul from Herat, and cut the Ameer off from the larger half of his territory. A force under General Roberts, six thousand strong, starts from Rawul Pindee to Kohat, some thirty miles south of Peshawur. This column will, it is believed, enter Afghanistan by the Khooram Valley, which lies south of the Khyber Pass, and is separated from the valley of the Cabul by the Safed Koli range. The road from the head of this valley goes through the Hobandi Pass into the valley of the Logur, and a force arriving there would sever Cabul from Ghazni. A third column will proceed up the Khyber Pass. The troops will march from Mooltan and Rawul Pindee in three days' time. There is seldom much snow before December, so there is plenty of time to occupy Cabul and Candahar before the winter.

The same paper publishes a despatch from Calcutta which states that the text of the Viceroy's two letters to the Ameer of Afghanistan has been published. It is semi-officially announced that no answer has been received either to these letters or to a letter which was previously sent.

A Simla telegram in the *Daily Telegraph* says:—"The commissioner at Peshawur is engaged in negotiations which have for their object to detach the Khyberees from the Ameer; and the authorities are hopeful that the end will be attained, as the Khyberees, by their friendly bearing to the mission, have incurred the severe displeasure of Shere Ali."

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

It is announced to-day in several telegrams from India that the British mission to Cabul has been dissolved, that Sir Neville Chamberlain has returned to Simla, and that the Viceroy's emissary to Cabul has been recalled. The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced by 3,000 troops, and a mixed European and native force of 4,000 men is to assemble immediately at Thull, at the entrance to the Khooram valley. A reserve force of 6,000 troops will be formed at Sukkur early in November. Hopes are said to be entertained that negotiations in which the Commissioner at Peshawur is engaged, with the object of detaching the Khyberees from the Ameer, will be successful. A telegram in the *Standard* speaks of the probability of an advance on Cabul, but the *Daily News* correspondent at Simla says that the demonstration is not an attack on Cabul, but to show the Ameer his helplessness. The possibility of hostilities between England and the Ameer is attracting much attention on the Continent of Europe, especially at Vienna. A St. Petersburg telegram published yesterday stated that in the "best informed quarters" the supposition that an understanding exists between Russia and Afghanistan is declared to be "purely imaginary."

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"Daily Telegraph" Sept 25th

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

Our special correspondent telegraphs from Simla that orders have issued for the concentration of troops at the Thull entrance to the Kurrum Valley, and also at Quetta above the Bolan Pass. Hopes are entertained that negotiations in which the Commissioner at Peshawur is engaged, with the object of detaching the Khyberees, will be successful. The Cabul Mission has been broken up, and Sir Neville Chamberlain returns to Simla at once.

A telegram of yesterday's date from St. Petersburg affirms that in the best informed quarters there the supposition of an understanding existing between Russia and Afghanistan is held to be purely imaginary. It is added, on the same authority, that no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures.

LORD LYTTON is preparing to act, in the crisis that has arisen upon our Indian frontier, with a spirit becoming the Government which has been so openly insulted and defied by the Ameer SHERE ALI. It will be seen by our telegraphic despatch from Simla that orders have been issued for the immediate concentration of troops at two important points; while in the Khyber itself, where the British Mission has been so arrogantly stayed, negotiations are on foot which aim at detaching the tribes of the pass from subservience to Cabul, and rendering them friendly to ourselves. This, as our telegram states, is by no means beyond the range of a well-founded hope, for the Ameer had already threatened the Khyberees with his displeasure for their amicable tendencies towards the British, and these hill-people are removed from the influence of the Russian agent at Cabul, who has apparently persuaded SHERE ALI to affront us. It will be remembered that before Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN started for Peshawur arrangements had been made with the Khyberees for a peaceful passage through their defiles, and, as guarantees of this, hostages had been sent down into British territory in conformity with the border practice. If the present negotiation prospers the lower portion of the Khyber at least will be thrown open to us; but the mountaineers will want very distinct assurances as to our intentions, and here, as in every other aspect of this matter, a clear, resolute, and well-considered policy must be acted upon. That such a policy would be followed, as it is, by the Viceroy was to be expected, for the alternative of hostile behaviour on the part of the Afghan ruler must have been canvassed at Simla before the Mission departed. We have, moreover, welcome proofs of it in the additional intelligence communicated by our despatch. The points of concentration chosen for the British troops have great significance to those who study the frontier map with well-informed eyes. A force is to be at once assembled in the entrance of the Kurrum Pass at a spot called Thul. This lies between Kohat and Bannu, both British military centres, and is the gateway of a mountain road which goes by Kurrum fort, by the Paiwar and the Shaturgardan, directly to Cabul. Quetta, the other point where our troops are to be gathered, is at the northern or outside end of the Bolan Pass, and was already held in force by her Majesty's arms; but this position, which has now become very valuable, admits us by an easy road, if necessary, to Candahar. Thence by Kalat-i-Ghilzi and Ghazni there is an open route to Cabul; although, indeed, to occupy Candahar would of itself give us control of Southern and Western Afghanistan, and possibly lead to the flight of SHERE ALI, if he were not more quickly disposed of by the disaffected among his nobles and people. Thus by three different approaches the Government of India is already indicating its determination to try conclusions with the Ameer; and, while an armed demonstration by two of the routes to his capital is well calculated to perplex the military schemes of SHERE ALI, the occupation of Candahar would be, we believe, the best step which could be taken as a means of bringing him to his senses. The inhabitants of this part of the country are, on the whole, favourably disposed towards us, and the passage of the defiles would become a less imperative duty when the Ameer had once been outflanked and menaced by a British force holding Candahar and the Tarnek Valley.

It is not, perhaps, without relevance to the conduct of SHERE ALI and the frontier question that our Special Correspondent at Simla alludes to the necessity which has arisen for strengthening the British naval squadron in the Persian Gulf. Between Persia and Afghanistan there exists indeed little love. The attacks heretofore made on Herat and the Seistan dispute have left bad blood behind, and Teheran would never be likely to sympathise much with Cabul. But with Russia behind all these hostile intrigues, and far too influential in Persia, we may need to be strong in the Persian Gulf for other causes than the piracies which are reported there; and it is satisfactory on all accounts to know that a large addition to our force in these important waters will be at once made. That the gross insult to British power offered by the Ameer has its origin in Russian machinations cannot for one instant be doubted. Nothing is more certain than that SHERE ALI would never have dared to close the confines of his kingdom against Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN except upon encouragement from the Muscovite Commissioner at present resident in Cabul. A few years ago this very Prince was gladly receiving gifts from the British Government and begging us to send such a Mission as that which has just been stopped under threat of compulsion; and if, later on, at the time of Sir LEWIS PELLY'S conference, SHERE ALI objected to admit a British Resident to his capital, the reason alleged was that in that case it would be so difficult to keep a Russian representative away. Now we witness the Czar's agent entertained at Cabul with every demonstration of amity, and the QUEEN'S envoy repulsed in a manner which all India recognises as a studied and notorious insult. It is quite impossible, we repeat, that SHERE ALI would have taken such a course without special incentive. He may be besotted with opium or hemp, he may be morose and desperate at the death of his favourite boy, ABDULLAH JAN; but that which we witness is a policy, not a passionate freak, and the Russian agent must have promised him enough, in the Czar's name, to supply the requisite audacity for the order. In fact, the semi-official organs of St. Petersburg do not give themselves the trouble to deny what must be sufficiently obvious. The *Nord*, writing somewhat impudently upon the feeling excited in this country by the news from Peshawur, admits that the Oxus expedition was despatched "to the British address," and says, "It was very natural that Russia, threatened with a maritime blockade, should endeavour to seek her enemies at that point where it was believed they were vulnerable, and should make a diversion in the direction of India to the expected attack of the Indian contingents transported to Europe. It is true that the effective of these contingents was just sufficient peaceably to conquer Cyprus from Turkey, and that the fire which Indian troops were destined to light on the shores of the Black Sea reduced itself to a harmless squib. But the most elementary prudence recommended to the Russian Government to take this demonstration as a serious one. When peace was made the expedition of the Oxus became a dead letter, and will only be revived as a measure of defence. England is doubtless aware of this, but the mere eventuality of a Russian advance in the direction of the Indian Empire is sufficient to terrify her." We have as yet no news of this same Oxus expedition, but SHERE ALI probably knows where it is and what it aimed at, while we see the fruits of the Russian Mission to Cabul, which—dead against the solemn pledges of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF—formed part of the total "diversion." It is beyond argument, therefore, that the insolent behaviour of the Afghan ruler owes its inspiration to Russia, nor is such a fact in the least surprising to persons well informed about Eastern affairs. But what is the position to-day of those who told us that there was no possible connection between the Eastern Question and India, and that the "sisterly voice" of Russia boded nothing save blessing to us and the world? They see now—and they ought to see with shame and silence—that the Asiatic and European conspiracies went abreast; while as for the plea that these Oxus and Afghan plots were answers to our Indian contingent, it is a shameless falsehood,

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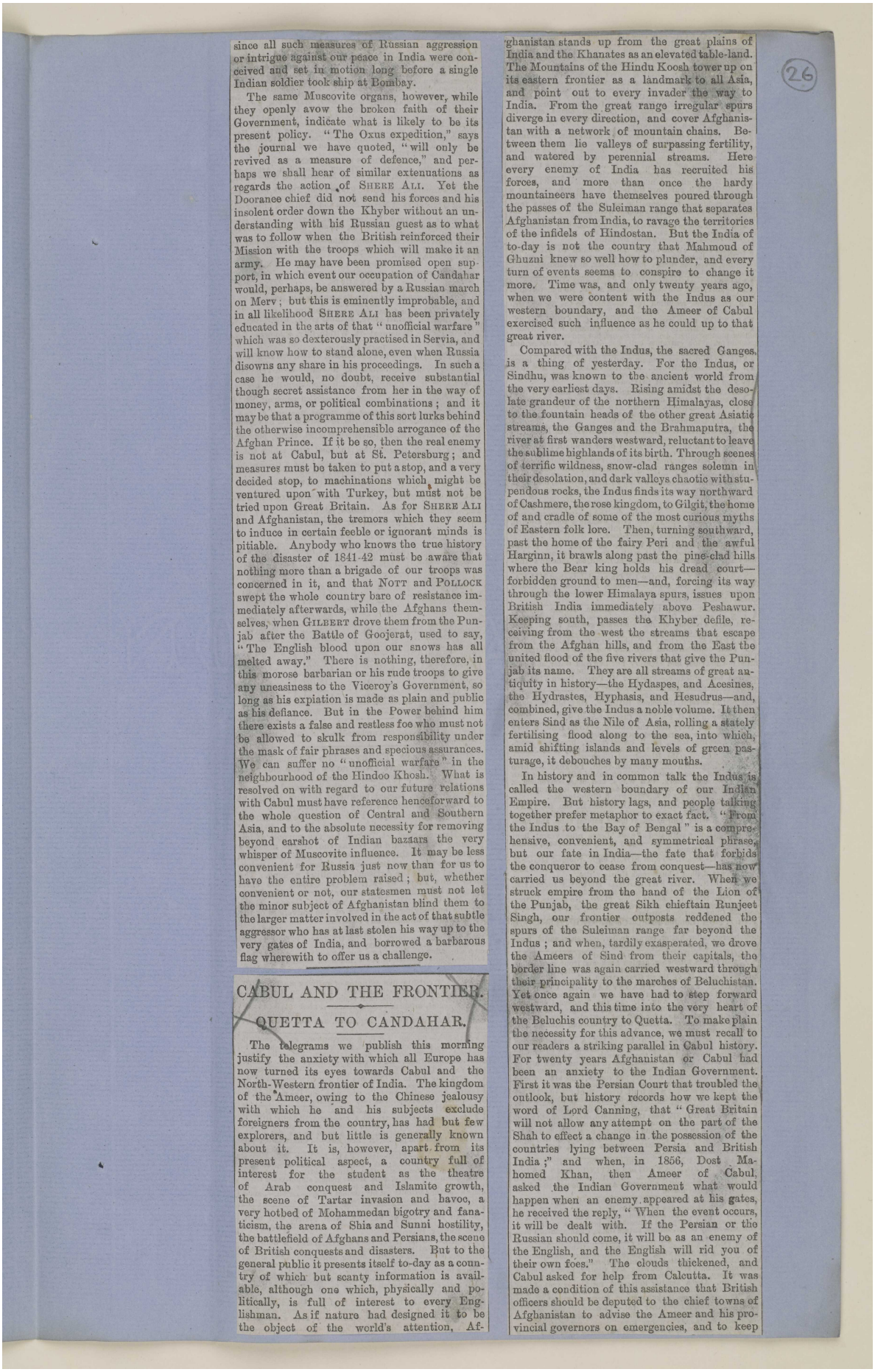

since all such measures of Russian aggression or intrigue against our peace in India were conceived and set in motion long before a single Indian soldier took ship at Bombay.

The same Muscovite organs, however, while they openly avow the broken faith of their Government, indicate what is likely to be its present policy. "The Oxus expedition," says the journal we have quoted, "will only be revived as a measure of defence," and perhaps we shall hear of similar extenuations as regards the action of SHERE ALI. Yet the Dooranee chief did not send his forces and his insolent order down the Khyber without an understanding with his Russian guest as to what was to follow when the British reinforced their Mission with the troops which will make it an army. He may have been promised open support, in which event our occupation of Candahar would, perhaps, be answered by a Russian march on Merv; but this is eminently improbable, and in all likelihood SHERE ALI has been privately educated in the arts of that "unofficial warfare" which was so dexterously practised in Servia, and will know how to stand alone, even when Russia disowns any share in his proceedings. In such a case he would, no doubt, receive substantial though secret assistance from her in the way of money, arms, or political combinations; and it may be that a programme of this sort lurks behind the otherwise incomprehensible arrogance of the Afghan Prince. If it be so, then the real enemy is not at Cabul, but at St. Petersburg; and measures must be taken to put a stop, and a very decided stop, to machinations which might be ventured upon with Turkey, but must not be tried upon Great Britain. As for SHERE ALI and Afghanistan, the tremors which they seem to induce in certain feeble or ignorant minds is pitiable. Anybody who knows the true history of the disaster of 1841-42 must be aware that nothing more than a brigade of our troops was concerned in it, and that NOTT and POLLOCK swept the whole country bare of resistance immediately afterwards, while the Afghans themselves, when GILBERT drove them from the Punjab after the Battle of Goojerat, used to say, "The English blood upon our snows has all melted away." There is nothing, therefore, in this morose barbarian or his rude troops to give any uneasiness to the Viceroy's Government, so long as his expiation is made as plain and public as his defiance. But in the Power behind him there exists a false and restless foe who must not be allowed to skulk from responsibility under the mask of fair phrases and specious assurances. We can suffer no "unofficial warfare" in the neighbourhood of the Hindoo Khosh. What is resolved on with regard to our future relations with Cabul must have reference henceforward to the whole question of Central and Southern Asia, and to the absolute necessity for removing beyond earshot of Indian bazaars the very whisper of Muscovite influence. It may be less convenient for Russia just now than for us to have the entire problem raised; but, whether convenient or not, our statesmen must not let the minor subject of Afghanistan blind them to the larger matter involved in the act of that subtle aggressor who has at last stolen his way up to the very gates of India, and borrowed a barbarous flag wherewith to offer us a challenge.

CABUL AND THE FRONTIER.

QUETTA TO CANDAHAR.

The telegrams we publish this morning justify the anxiety with which all Europe has now turned its eyes towards Cabul and the North-Western frontier of India. The kingdom of the Ameer, owing to the Chinese jealousy with which he and his subjects exclude foreigners from the country, has had but few explorers, and but little is generally known about it. It is, however, apart from its present political aspect, a country full of interest for the student as the theatre of Arab conquest and Islamite growth, the scene of Tartar invasion and havoc, a very hotbed of Mohammedan bigotry and fanaticism, the arena of Shia and Sunni hostility, the battlefield of Afghans and Persians, the scene of British conquests and disasters. But to the general public it presents itself to-day as a country of which but scanty information is available, although one which, physically and politically, is full of interest to every Englishman. As if nature had designed it to be the object of the world's attention, Afghanistan stands up from the great plains of India and the Khanates as an elevated table-land. The Mountains of the Hindu Koosh tower up on its eastern frontier as a landmark to all Asia, and point out to every invader the way to India. From the great range irregular spurs diverge in every direction, and cover Afghanistan with a network of mountain chains. Between them lie valleys of surpassing fertility, and watered by perennial streams. Here every enemy of India has recruited his forces, and more than once the hardy mountaineers have themselves poured through the passes of the Suleiman range that separates Afghanistan from India, to ravage the territories of the infidels of Hindostan. But the India of to-day is not the country that Mahmoud of Ghuzni knew so well how to plunder, and every turn of events seems to conspire to change it more. Time was, and only twenty years ago, when we were content with the Indus as our western boundary, and the Ameer of Cabul exercised such influence as he could up to that great river.

Compared with the Indus, the sacred Ganges is a thing of yesterday. For the Indus, or Sindhu, was known to the ancient world from the very earliest days. Rising amidst the desolate grandeur of the northern Himalayas, close to the fountain heads of the other great Asiatic streams, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, the river at first wanders westward, reluctant to leave the sublime highlands of its birth. Through scenes of terrific wildness, snow-clad ranges solemn in their desolation, and dark valleys chaotic with stupendous rocks, the Indus finds its way northward of Cashmere, the rose kingdom, to Gilgit, the home of and cradle of some of the most curious myths of Eastern folk lore. Then, turning southward, past the home of the fairy Peri and the awful Harginn, it brawls along past the pine-clad hills where the Bear king holds his dread court—forbidden ground to men—and, forcing its way through the lower Himalaya spurs, issues upon British India immediately above Peshawur. Keeping south, passes the Khyber defile, receiving from the west the streams that escape from the Afghan hills, and from the East the united flood of the five rivers that give the Punjab its name. They are all streams of great antiquity in history—the Hydaspes, and Acesines, the Hydrastes, Hyphasis, and Hesudrus—and, combined, give the Indus a noble volume. It then enters Sind as the Nile of Asia, rolling a stately fertilising flood along to the sea, into which, amid shifting islands and levels of green pasturage, it debouches by many mouths.

In history and in common talk the Indus is called the western boundary of our Indian Empire. But history lags, and people talking together prefer metaphor to exact fact. "From the Indus to the Bay of Bengal" is a comprehensive, convenient, and symmetrical phrase, but our fate in India—the fate that forbids the conqueror to cease from conquest—has now carried us beyond the great river. When we struck empire from the hand of the Lion of the Punjab, the great Sikh chieftain Runjeet Singh, our frontier outposts reddened the spurs of the Suleiman range far beyond the Indus; and when, tardily exasperated, we drove the Ameers of Sind from their capitals, the border line was again carried westward through their principality to the marches of Beluchistan. Yet once again we have had to step forward westward, and this time into the very heart of the Beluchis country to Quetta. To make plain the necessity for this advance, we must recall to our readers a striking parallel in Cabul history. For twenty years Afghanistan or Cabul had been an anxiety to the Indian Government. First it was the Persian Court that troubled the outlook, but history records how we kept the word of Lord Canning, that "Great Britain will not allow any attempt on the part of the Shah to effect a change in the possession of the countries lying between Persia and British India;" and when, in 1856, Dost Mahomed Khan, then Ameer of Cabul, asked the Indian Government what would happen when an enemy appeared at his gates, he received the reply, "When the event occurs, it will be dealt with. If the Persian or the Russian should come, it will be as an enemy of the English, and the English will rid you of their own foes." The clouds thickened, and Cabul asked for help from Calcutta. It was made a condition of this assistance that British officers should be deputed to the chief towns of Afghanistan to advise the Ameer and his provincial governors on emergencies, and to keep

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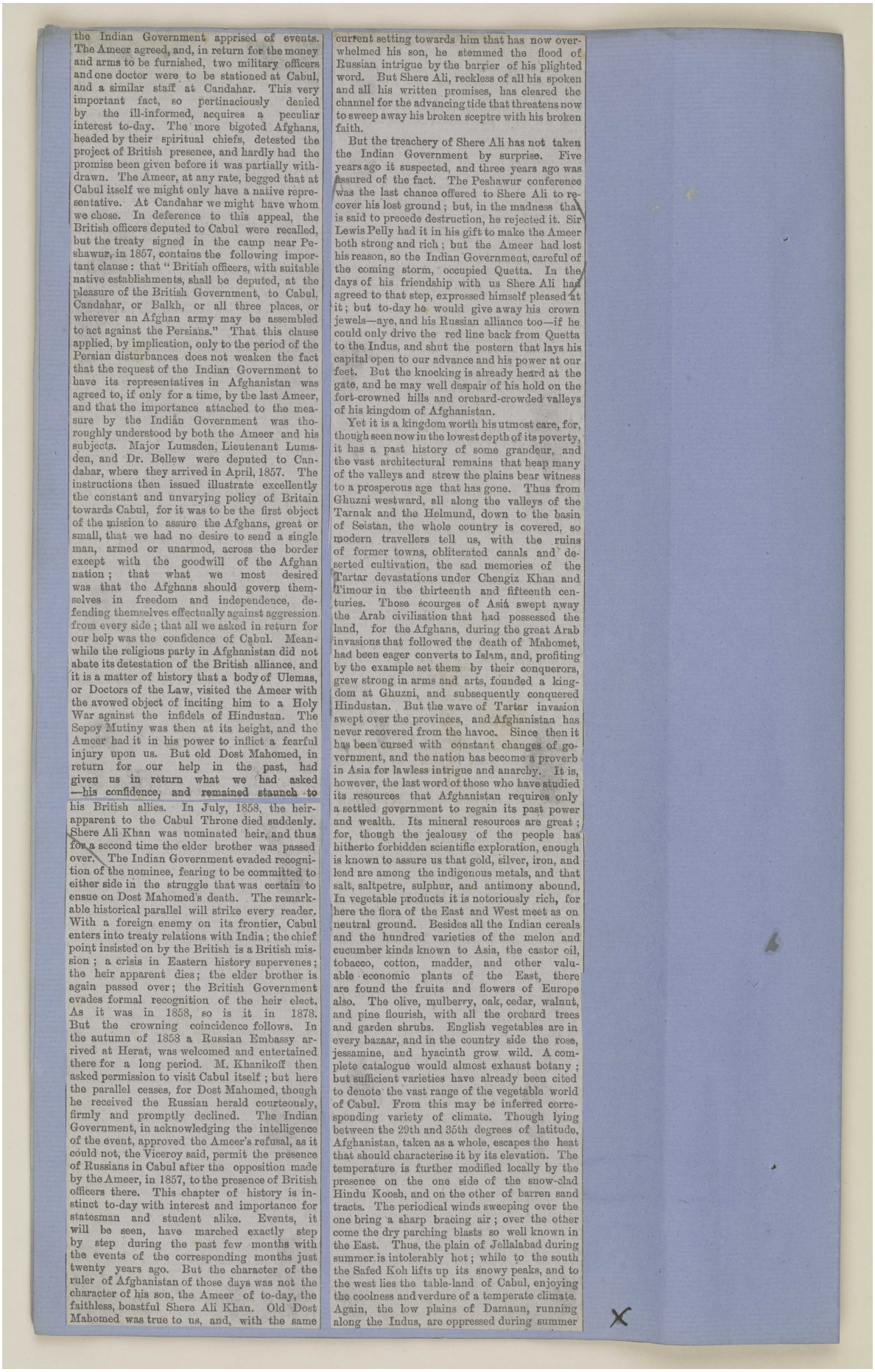

the Indian Government apprised of events. The Ameer agreed, and, in return for the money and arms to be furnished, two military officers and one doctor were to be stationed at Cabul, and a similar staff at Candahar. This very important fact, so pertinaciously denied by the ill-informed, acquires a peculiar interest to-day. The more bigoted Afghans, headed by their spiritual chiefs, detested the project of British presence, and hardly had the promise been given before it was partially withdrawn. The Ameer, at any rate, begged that at Cabul itself we might only have a native representative. At Candahar we might have whom we chose. In deference to this appeal, the British officers deputed to Cabul were recalled, but the treaty signed in the camp near Peshawur, in 1857, contains the following important clause: that "British officers, with suitable native establishments, shall be deputed, at the pleasure of the British Government, to Cabul, Candahar, or Balkh, or all three places, or wherever an Afghan army may be assembled to act against the Persians." That this clause applied, by implication, only to the period of the Persian disturbances does not weaken the fact that the request of the Indian Government to have its representatives in Afghanistan was agreed to, if only for a time, by the last Ameer, and that the importance attached to the measure by the Indian Government was thoroughly understood by both the Ameer and his subjects. Major Lumsden, Lieutenant Lumsden, and Dr. Bellew were deputed to Candahar, where they arrived in April, 1857. The instructions then issued illustrate excellently the constant and unvarying policy of Britain towards Cabul, for it was to be the first object of the mission to assure the Afghans, great or small, that we had no desire to send a single man, armed or unarmed, across the border except with the goodwill of the Afghan nation; that what we most desired was that the Afghans should govern themselves in freedom and independence, defending themselves effectually against aggression from every side; that all we asked in return for our help was the confidence of Cabul. Meanwhile the religious party in Afghanistan did not abate its detestation of the British alliance, and it is a matter of history that a body of Ulemas, or Doctors of the Law, visited the Ameer with the avowed object of inciting him to a Holy War against the infidels of Hindustan. The Sepoy Mutiny was then at its height, and the Ameer had it in his power to inflict a fearful injury upon us. But old Dost Mahomed, in return for our help in the past, had given us in return what we had asked —his confidence, and remained staunch to his British allies. In July, 1858, the heir-apparent to the Cabul Throne died suddenly. Shere Ali Khan was nominated heir, and thus for a second time the elder brother was passed over. The Indian Government evaded recognition of the nominee, fearing to be committed to either side in the struggle that was certain to ensue on Dost Mahomed's death. The remarkable historical parallel will strike every reader. With a foreign enemy on its frontier, Cabul enters into treaty relations with India; the chief point insisted on by the British is a British mission; a crisis in Eastern history supervenes; the heir apparent dies; the elder brother is again passed over; the British Government evades formal recognition of the heir elect. As it was in 1858, so is it in 1878. But the crowning coincidence follows. In the autumn of 1858 a Russian Embassy arrived at Herat, was welcomed and entertained there for a long period. M. Khanikoff then asked permission to visit Cabul itself; but here the parallel ceases, for Dost Mahomed, though he received the Russian herald courteously, firmly and promptly declined. The Indian Government, in acknowledging the intelligence of the event, approved the Ameer's refusal, as it could not, the Viceroy said, permit the presence of Russians in Cabul after the opposition made by the Ameer, in 1857, to the presence of British officers there. This chapter of history is instinct to-day with interest and importance for statesman and student alike. Events, it will be seen, have marched exactly step by step during the past few months with the events of the corresponding months just twenty years ago. But the character of the ruler of Afghanistan of those days was not the character of his son, the Ameer of to-day, the faithless, boastful Shere Ali Khan. Old Dost Mahomed was true to us, and, with the same current setting towards him that has now overwhelmed his son, he stemmed the flood of Russian intrigue by the barrier of his plighted word. But Shere Ali, reckless of all his spoken and all his written promises, has cleared the channel for the advancing tide that threatens now to sweep away his broken sceptre with his broken faith.

But the treachery of Shere Ali has not taken the Indian Government by surprise. Five years ago it suspected, and three years ago was assured of the fact. The Peshawur conference was the last chance offered to Shere Ali to recover his lost ground; but, in the madness that is said to precede destruction, he rejected it. Sir Lewis Pelly had it in his gift to make the Ameer both strong and rich; but the Ameer had lost his reason, so the Indian Government, careful of the coming storm, occupied Quetta. In the days of his friendship with us Shere Ali had agreed to that step, expressed himself pleased at it; but to-day he would give away his crown jewels—aye, and his Russian alliance too—if he could only drive the red line back from Quetta to the Indus, and shut the postern that lays his capital open to our advance and his power at our feet. But the knocking is already heard at the gate, and he may well despair of his hold on the fort-crowned hills and orchard-crowded valleys of his kingdom of Afghanistan.

Yet it is a kingdom worth his utmost care, for, though seen now in the lowest depth of its poverty, it has a past history of some grandeur, and the vast architectural remains that heap many of the valleys and strew the plains bear witness to a prosperous age that has gone. Thus from Ghuzni westward, all along the valleys of the Tarnak and the Helmund, down to the basin of Seistan, the whole country is covered, so modern travellers tell us, with the ruins of former towns, obliterated canals and deserted cultivation, the sad memories of the Tartar devastations under Chengiz Khan and Timour in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Those scourges of Asia swept away the Arab civilisation that had possessed the land, for the Afghans, during the great Arab invasions that followed the death of Mahomet, had been eager converts to Islam, and, profiting by the example set them by their conquerors, grew strong in arms and arts, founded a kingdom at Ghuzni, and subsequently conquered Hindustan. But the wave of Tartar invasion swept over the provinces, and Afghanistan has never recovered from the havoc. Since then it has been cursed with constant changes of government, and the nation has become a proverb in Asia for lawless intrigue and anarchy. It is, however, the last word of those who have studied its resources that Afghanistan requires only a settled government to regain its past power and wealth. Its mineral resources are great; for, though the jealousy of the people has hitherto forbidden scientific exploration, enough is known to assure us that gold, silver, iron, and lead are among the indigenous metals, and that salt, saltpetre, sulphur, and antimony abound. In vegetable products it is notoriously rich, for here the flora of the East and West meet as on neutral ground. Besides all the Indian cereals and the hundred varieties of the melon and cucumber kinds known to Asia, the castor oil, tobacco, cotton, madder, and other valuable economic plants of the East, there are found the fruits and flowers of Europe also. The olive, mulberry, oak, cedar, walnut, and pine flourish, with all the orchard trees and garden shrubs. English vegetables are in every bazaar, and in the country side the rose, jessamine, and hyacinth grow wild. A complete catalogue would almost exhaust botany; but sufficient varieties have already been cited to denote the vast range of the vegetable world of Cabul. From this may be inferred corresponding variety of climate. Though lying between the 29th and 35th degrees of latitude, Afghanistan, taken as a whole, escapes the heat that should characterise it by its elevation. The temperature is further modified locally by the presence on the one side of the snow-clad Hindu Koosh, and on the other of barren sand tracts. The periodical winds sweeping over the one bring a sharp bracing air; over the other come the dry parching blasts so well known in the East. Thus, the plain of Jellalabad during summer is intolerably hot; while to the south the Safed Koh lifts up its snowy peaks, and to the west lies the table-land of Cabul, enjoying the coolness and verdure of a temperate climate. Again, the low plains of Damaun, running along the Indus, are oppressed during summer

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with scorching heat; but the shepherds retire to the mountains and find for their flocks a cool retreat and grassy valleys. At Candahar the temperature in summer is excessive, but proceeding north towards the Helmund River the cold increases, and, leaving heat behind him, the traveller finds himself advancing into a region still covered with snow. At Cabul itself the winter is more regular in its severity than in England, and in summer the heat is greater. The inhabitants, therefore, wear at one time clothes of felt, with cloaks of sheepskin, sleeping at night under rugs before a fire; and at another thin chintz or muslin robes, and have their beds out under the trees.

But, whatever the changes, the climate, judged by the people, must be eminently healthy, for, as a race, there are few to compare with the Afghans in physique and energy of character. They are all stalwart, active, and brave. This does not hold true of all the inhabitants of Afghanistan, but of the Afghans or Pukhtuns proper only—for the country is peopled by an infinite diversity of races. The Tajik, of Persian origin, and the Hazara, the residue of Tartar invasion, Uzbegs and Turkomans of various tribes, Kuzzilbash Moguls, and a bewildering variety of Hindi and Kashmiri colonists all combine to form the population, while southward, but still subjects of the Ameer of Cabul, are the Brahoes and Beluchis, descended from different stocks and speaking different languages, and a medley of emigrant communities from Hindustan and Persia. In one or two respects, however, all these diverse people resemble each other—their lawless independence of character and their poverty. They are all equally ready to join in plunder, and murder if need be, and may be all reckoned upon to join the leader that promises most. To a force invading Cabul from the south they will afford the exact material wanted for scouring ravines and reconnoitring hills, for collecting forage and keeping open communications. Such a force would enter it most easily from Jacobabad in Sindh, and, proceeding *vid* Gandava to Khelat, thence reach Quetta by the Bolan Pass, sixty miles in length, already patrolled by British troops. From Quetta to Candahar the advance would meet with few obstacles if the inhabitants were well disposed. The valley northwards, looking from Quetta, is overshadowed by the Zarghun range infested by the Kakarr tribe, the most hardy mountaineers of a country where all are hardy, and hopelessly lawless. The freebooting Domarr again make unsafe for travellers and even caravans the direct road to Candahar, but to an armed force could offer little molestation. These tribes muster in all some 70,000 households, but they are scattered over so wide an area that when recently their suzerain the Khan of Khelat organised a punitive expedition against them no trouble was found in reducing them in detail to submission. In December snow falls, and often after that the road, though never impassable, is rendered difficult. The Murghi Pass leads by an easy route down to the Peshin district, and at Kushlac, fourteen miles from Quetta, a small stream of that name is passed, which demarcates the frontier of Khelat and Cabul. Another eighteen miles of practicable road brings the traveller by the Surmaghazi Pass to Hykalzai, situated on a plain of red clay soil—a favourite rendezvous of the nomad Sarins, and marked by numerous ruins and several inhabited villages. From Hykalzai a march of fifteen miles attains Araubi Kariz, several streams being crossed *en route*, and a fair sprinkling of inhabitants encountered.

Excellent roadway obtains thence past the spurs of the Toba range, the populous villages of the Dihsuri Glen, to the Khojak Pass, at all times practicable in spite of its narrowness. On the southern side the elevation has been recorded to be 7,000 feet, at the top of the Pass 7,410, and at Chaokah, on the northern end, 5,600, and here, as everywhere else along the road, pasture is abundant for three-fourths of the year. From Chaokah to Chaman, and thence to Gatai, some twenty-five miles, the route lies north-westerly along a gradual slope on to the undulating sweep of the plain; and from Gatai a march of fourteen miles reaches Mel Maudah, the road lying across a plain and rolling downs, without inhabitants, as pasturage is very scanty, and the water brackish. After eighteen miles further Máká Karez is made; the Barghana Pass, which lies midway at an elevation of 4,100 feet, presenting no difficulty to the traveller. Thence a winding ravine leads to the village of Máká, and sixteen miles further, across an undulating plain as far as the Arghesan river (a very shallow stream, though of considerable width), and thence across broken country, lies Mund Hissar. From here to Candahar is twelve miles. The whole route, it will be seen, is as easy as an invading army has any right to expect, and from end to end water and pasturage abound, while in the numerous flocks of sheep that are driven into the district to graze an abundant source of meat is at hand. The only apprehension, therefore, is from the inhabitants themselves; but from the well-established popularity of the British at Quetta, and the general friendliness of the Beluchis towards us, there seems no ground for suspecting interference with the advance. Even, however, should such hostility be evinced by any tribe, their neighbours are at all times willing, for a pecuniary consideration, to undertake their punishment. Should it, therefore, be necessary for a British force to invade Cabul from the south, Nature, by providing so easy a route to Candahar, has supplemented the political sagacity that acquired Quetta.

To an army invading Cabul from the east, the Khyber Pass presents itself as the most obvious avenue of advance. That famous defile is already so well known that no description is needed. Suffice it to say that from end to end the Khyberis territory is 180 miles in length, and that, held by a determined foe, its passage be a serious undertaking. But, as we pointed out in our issue of yesterday, the Khyberees are to-day more peaceably disposed towards us than they have ever been since. We pushed our frontier up to the foot of their hills. They are an independent tribe, owing allegiance to none, and willing to sell their services in the best market. For many years they have been anxious to attain the dignity of treaty relations with us, and in the telegram from our Special Correspondent at Simla, which we publish to-day, it will be seen that Lord Lytton, with the same sagacious promptitude that has marked his direction of affairs, is prepared to accede to their wishes. With the Khyberees in our service, Cabul becomes as British as Peshawur.

Thal (or Thull), which our telegrams inform us has acquired a sudden importance as a strategic point, is situated about midway between the frontier outposts of Kohat and Bannu. It commands the entrance to that Kurum Valley the occupation of which we suggested in our issue of yesterday, and a force marching along it would strike the road to Cabul at a point about fifty miles from that city. Supposing, therefore, that the Khyber were by any unexpected circumstances closed against an advancing force, the route from Thal would be always open to us as the alternative.

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS.

BREAK-UP OF THE MISSION.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, SEPT. 24.

Orders have been issued for the concentration of troops at the Thull entrance to the Kurrum Valley, and also at Quetta above the Bolan Pass.

The Commissioner at Peshawur is engaged in negotiations which have for their object to detach the Khyberrees from the Ameer; and the authorities are hopeful that the end will be attained, as the Khyberrees, by their friendly bearing to the mission, have incurred the severe displeasure of Shere Ali.

The Mission itself is now broken up, and Sir Neville Chamberlain returns at once to Simla.

Serious piracies are reported from the Persian Gulf. As the Turkish authorities are unable to control the Arabs, it is probable that the British naval force in the gulf will be strengthened at once.

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[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]
VIENNA, TUESDAY NIGHT.

The semi-official organ *Die Presse* publishes a leading article entitled "The Anglo-Afghan Difficulty," from which I subjoin an extract:

The independent conduct of England in the Eastern Question, clearly manifested by the Anglo-Turkish Treaty, aroused the full mistrust of Russia. It was perfectly well known in St. Petersburg which was the weak side of British policy, and General Kauffmann, who commanded the Russian expedition on the Oxus, received instructions to offer Russia's friendship to the Ameer of Afghanistan. . . . . Russia has taken her revenge at Cabul for the crippling of the Treaty of San Stefano. The Convention she has concluded with the Ameer is her answer to England's pact with the Sultan. . . . The Cabinet of St. Petersburg has repeatedly promised not to extend military conquest beyond the conventional neutral zone formed by Persia and Afghanistan, but the advance to Khiva ought to have shown Englishmen that Russia's loyalty in such matters is doubtful. The late experience at Cabul is well calculated to excite England's suspicions to the utmost.

The article concludes by advising Russia not to yield to the impulse of the moment, to avoid at any price a conflict with England, and not to give her the opportunity of annihilating an enfeebled rival and enemy.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]
PARIS, TUESDAY MIDNIGHT.

The Cabul incident is very naturally attracting considerable attention here. Indeed, it was felt that on the very day that the Indian troops landed in Malta the axis of the Eastern Question was set in fresh bearings, and that henceforward the Slav and the Turkish Questions would yield to the Anglo-Indian Question. In commenting on the mission of Sir Neville Chamberlain, *Le Temps* of this evening reproduces, with Lord Carnarvon, the criticism of Mr. Gladstone. The escort, it says, given to Sir Neville was too strong for a mission and too weak for an army. Whether the refusal to receive this mission has come from the Ameer or from the mountaineers, we might have expected what has happened. The mission entrusted to Major Sandeman, observes the journal, had a similar escort of 1,000 men, and it succeeded; but it succeeded too well in the eyes of the Ameer of Cabul and of the independent tribes of the Afghan frontier, for both feared to see the English get a footing amongst them, as they have in Beloochistan. *Le Temps* does not think it proved that British honour has experienced an affront such as defies all chance of appeasement or smoothing over. The Ameer, it argues, even without disavowing his officer, can furnish acceptable explanations. His written answer may dissipate misunderstandings, if there be any. Perhaps he will offer to receive the English mission on the single condition that it presents itself without warlike accompaniments. *Le Temps* seems to think that the British Government has acted with some precipitation in the measures it has taken. If the Ameer has not said his last word it questions the wisdom of cutting him off from all retreat. Would it not be more politic, it asks, to accept the idea of the independence of the mountaineers, and to make an arm of it against the Ameer? Is it not an excellent occasion to propose to him a settlement of the frontier questions, and if, as is probable, he should reject it, would not a complete and definitive occupation of the Khyber Passes suffice to secure British interests? If war is inevitable every effort should be made to localise the conflict. The gravity of the situation lies entirely in this fact—that England, in laying the responsibility of the Ameer's acts upon Russia, might stretch, at the risk of producing a diplomatic rupture, the bond which joins the Anglo-Indian Question to the Eastern Question in general.

The *Journal des Débats* of this evening does not see how the honour of Great Britain can escape from the alternative of the Ameer making excuses for the occupation of Afghanistan by English troops. In any case, it says, there is no reason to hurry, and the English seem inclined to take advantage of that great diplomatist, Time. Doubtless, adds the journal, this would be all well and good if it were only a question of the Ameer, but it must not be forgotten that the Russians are behind him, and if the English take their time the Russians will not lose theirs.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 24.

With reference to the telegram published yesterday by a London morning paper, assuming that an understanding existed between Russia and Afghanistan, it is declared, in the best informed quarters, that this supposition is purely imaginary, and it is further stated, on the same authority, that no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures.

"Times" - Sept: 26th

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

(BY TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS.)

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 25.

The Mission has been dissolved, and Sir Neville Chamberlain returns to Madras.

The troops have been ordered to advance towards the frontier, and a force will be despatched to the Koorum Valley. General Roberts commands a brigade of all arms, and will march on the 27th for Khelat.

The Commandant of Ali Musjid Fort threatened Major Cavagnari, saying that save for his personal friendship he would shoot him on the spot.

War is believed to be inevitable.

BERLIN, SEPT. 25.

Afghan news has created considerable sensation in Germany. The whole German Press discusses the incident, looking forward to fresh complications in the East.

TURKISH AFFAIRS.

VIENNA, SEPT. 25.

A letter from Constantinople in the *Political Correspondence* asserts that it was only after great resistance to the pressure brought to bear upon him by Sir Henry Layard that the Sultan consented to the return of Midhat Pasha, though he would in nowise grant an influential position to the exile. Midhat is said merely to have received permission to take up his residence in Crete as a simple private person. On the other hand, Mahmound Nedim Pasha is said to have received permission by an autograph letter of the Sultan to return straightway to Stamboul. This is interpreted to mean the restoration of Russian influence.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, SEPT. 24.*

Orders have been issued for the concentration of troops on the Afghan frontier, with a view of undertaking very early ulterior operations should circumstances render military action necessary.

It is understood that Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission has been dissolved. Gholam Hussein Khan, the Envoy sent by the Viceroy to Cabul with a letter from his Excellency to the Ameer, has been recalled.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain will resume his command at Madras.

A force under General Roberts will be despatched to the Koorum Valley, and a column of 6,000 men will assemble at Mooltan. A force of 8,000 men will be sent to Quettah.

Active military preparations are being made at Rawul Pindee.

*Delayed in transmission.

AFGHANISTAN.

The telegram we publish this morning from our Special Correspondent in Calcutta removes all doubt as to the conduct of the commandant of Ali Musjid. We learnt on Monday that the Mir Akhor, or Master of the Horse, was present at the interview between Major Cavagnari and the Afghan Commander, and if the statement is true that the latter in presence of one of Shere Ali's most tried servants—a member of his household—threatened to shoot our envoy, and only refrained on account of his personal friendship towards him, there can be little error in assuming that the threat and opposition alike were in accordance with instructions received direct from the Ameer at the hands of the Mir Akhor. War, says our Calcutta Correspondent, is believed to be inevitable. A column is to be moved forward to the Koorum Valley, while General Roberts, with a brigade of all arms, is to leave on the 27th for Khelat. The selection of this officer is most judicious: in the prime of life, active, vigorous, and

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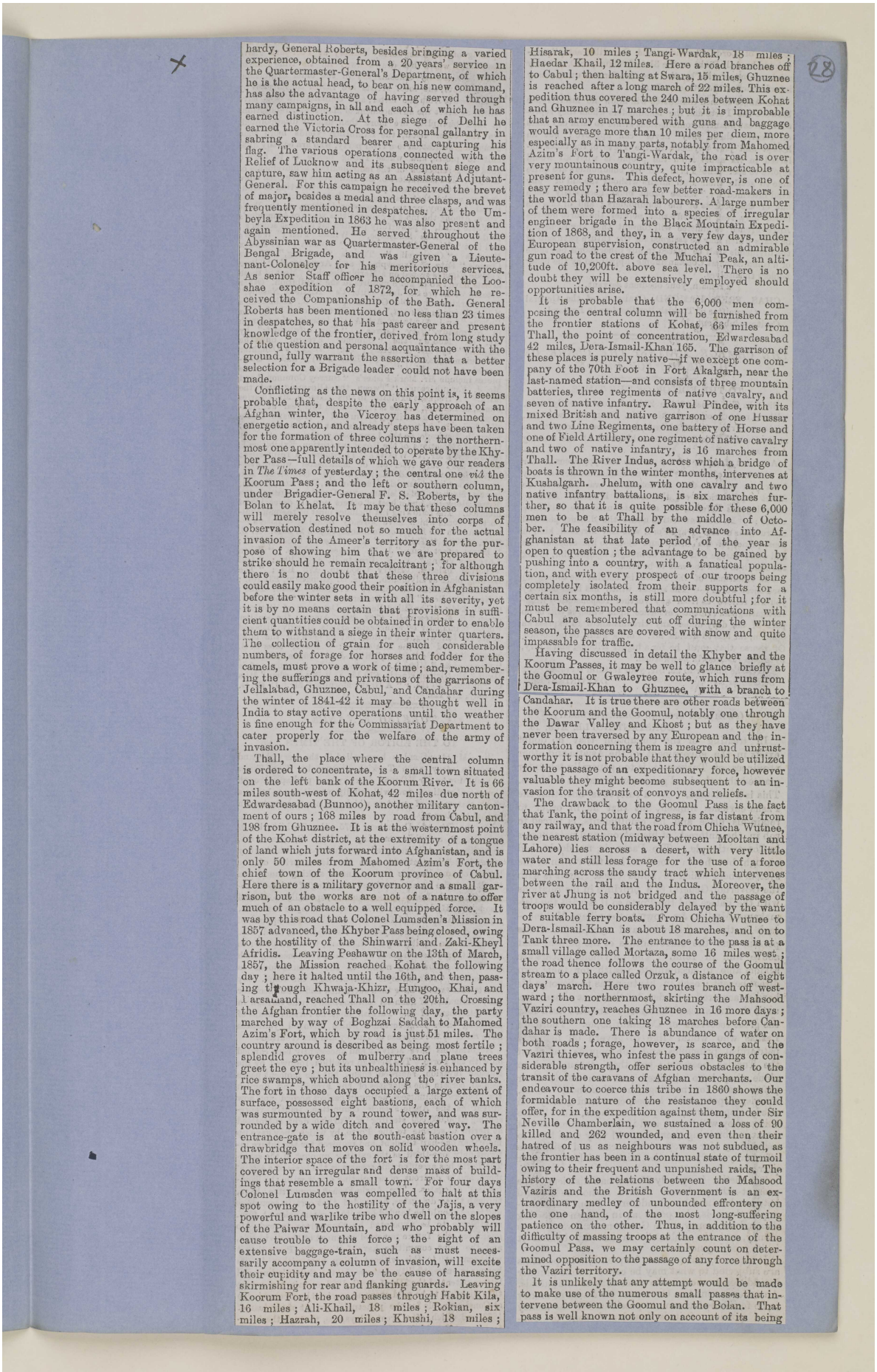

hardy, General Roberts, besides bringing a varied experience, obtained from a 20 years' service in the Quartermaster-General's Department, of which he is the actual head, to bear on his new command, has also the advantage of having served through many campaigns, in all and each of which he has earned distinction. At the siege of Delhi he earned the Victoria Cross for personal gallantry in sabring a standard bearer and capturing his flag. The various operations connected with the Relief of Lucknow and its subsequent siege and capture, saw him acting as an Assistant Adjutant-General. For this campaign he received the brevet of major, besides a medal and three clasps, and was frequently mentioned in despatches. At the Umbeyla Expedition in 1863 he was also present and again mentioned. He served throughout the Abyssinian war as Quartermaster-General of the Bengal Brigade, and was given a Lieutenant-Colonelcy for his meritorious services. As senior Staff officer he accompanied the Looshae expedition of 1872, for which he received the Companionship of the Bath. General Roberts has been mentioned no less than 23 times in despatches, so that his past career and present knowledge of the frontier, derived from long study of the question and personal acquaintance with the ground, fully warrant the assertion that a better selection for a Brigade leader could not have been made.

Conflicting as the news on this point is, it seems probable that, despite the early approach of an Afghan winter, the Viceroy has determined on energetic action, and already steps have been taken for the formation of three columns: the northernmost one apparently intended to operate by the Khyber Pass—full details of which we gave our readers in *The Times* of yesterday; the central one *vid* the Koorum Pass; and the left or southern column, under Brigadier-General F. S. Roberts, by the Bolan to Khelat. It may be that these columns will merely resolve themselves into corps of observation destined not so much for the actual invasion of the Ameer's territory as for the purpose of showing him that we are prepared to strike should he remain recalcitrant; for although there is no doubt that these three divisions could easily make good their position in Afghanistan before the winter sets in with all its severity, yet it is by no means certain that provisions in sufficient quantities could be obtained in order to enable them to withstand a siege in their winter quarters. The collection of grain for such considerable numbers, of forage for horses and fodder for the camels, must prove a work of time; and, remembering the sufferings and privations of the garrisons of Jellalabad, Ghuznee, Cabul, and Candahar during the winter of 1841-42 it may be thought well in India to stay active operations until the weather is fine enough for the Commissariat Department to cater properly for the welfare of the army of invasion.

Thall, the place where the central column is ordered to concentrate, is a small town situated on the left bank of the Koorum River. It is 66 miles south-west of Kohat, 42 miles due north of Edwardesabad (Bunnoo), another military cantonment of ours; 168 miles by road from Cabul, and 198 from Ghuznee. It is at the westernmost point of the Kohat district, at the extremity of a tongue of land which juts forward into Afghanistan, and is only 50 miles from Mahomed Azim's Fort, the chief town of the Koorum province of Cabul. Here there is a military governor and a small garrison, but the works are not of a nature to offer much of an obstacle to a well equipped force. It was by this road that Colonel Lumsden's Mission in 1857 advanced, the Khyber Pass being closed, owing to the hostility of the Shinwarri and Zaki-Kheyl Afridis. Leaving Peshawur on the 13th of March, 1857, the Mission reached Kohat the following day; here it halted until the 16th, and then, passing through Khwaja-Khizr, Hungoo, Khai, and Darsamand, reached Thall on the 20th. Crossing the Afghan frontier the following day, the party marched by way of Boghzai Saddah to Mahomed Azim's Fort, which by road is just 51 miles. The country around is described as being most fertile; splendid groves of mulberry and plane trees greet the eye; but its unhealthiness is enhanced by rice swamps, which abound along the river banks. The fort in those days occupied a large extent of surface, possessed eight bastions, each of which was surmounted by a round tower, and was surrounded by a wide ditch and covered way. The entrance-gate is at the south-east bastion over a drawbridge that moves on solid wooden wheels. The interior space of the fort is for the most part covered by an irregular and dense mass of buildings that resemble a small town. For four days Colonel Lumsden was compelled to halt at this spot owing to the hostility of the Jajis, a very powerful and warlike tribe who dwell on the slopes of the Paiwar Mountain, and who probably will cause trouble to this force; the sight of an extensive baggage-train, such as must necessarily accompany a column of invasion, will excite their cupidity and may be the cause of harassing skirmishing for rear and flanking guards. Leaving Koorum Fort, the road passes through Habit Kila, 16 miles; Ali-Khail, 18 miles; Rokian, six miles; Hazrah, 20 miles; Khushi, 18 miles; Hisarak, 10 miles; Tangi-Wardak, 18 miles; Haedar Khail, 12 miles. Here a road branches off to Cabul; then halting at Swara, 15 miles, Ghuznee is reached after a long march of 22 miles. This expedition thus covered the 240 miles between Kohat and Ghuznee in 17 marches; but it is improbable that an army encumbered with guns and baggage would average more than 10 miles per diem, more especially as in many parts, notably from Mahomed Azim's Fort to Tangi-Wardak, the road is over very mountainous country, quite impracticable at present for guns. This defect, however, is one of easy remedy; there are few better road-makers in the world than Hazarah labourers. A large number of them were formed into a species of irregular engineer brigade in the Black Mountain Expedition of 1868, and they, in a very few days, under European supervision, constructed an admirable gun road to the crest of the Muchai Peak, an altitude of 10,200ft. above sea level. There is no doubt they will be extensively employed should opportunities arise.

It is probable that the 6,000 men composing the central column will be furnished from the frontier stations of Kohat, 63 miles from Thall, the point of concentration, Edwardesabad 42 miles, Dera-Ismail-Khan 165. The garrison of these places is purely native—if we except one company of the 70th Foot in Fort Akalgarh, near the last-named station—and consists of three mountain batteries, three regiments of native cavalry, and seven of native infantry. Rawul Pindee, with its mixed British and native garrison of one Hussar and two Line Regiments, one battery of Horse and one of Field Artillery, one regiment of native cavalry and two of native infantry, is 16 marches from Thall. The River Indus, across which a bridge of boats is thrown in the winter months, intervenes at Kushalgarh. Jhelum, with one cavalry and two native infantry battalions, is six marches further, so that it is quite possible for these 6,000 men to be at Thall by the middle of October. The feasibility of an advance into Afghanistan at that late period of the year is open to question; the advantage to be gained by pushing into a country, with a fanatical population, and with every prospect of our troops being completely isolated from their supports for a certain six months, is still more doubtful; for it must be remembered that communications with Cabul are absolutely cut off during the winter season, the passes are covered with snow and quite impassable for traffic.

Having discussed in detail the Khyber and the Koorum Passes, it may be well to glance briefly at the Goomul or Gwaleyree route, which runs from Dera-Ismail-Khan to Ghuznee, with a branch to Candahar. It is true there are other roads between the Koorum and the Goomul, notably one through the Dawar Valley and Khost; but as they have never been traversed by any European and the information concerning them is meagre and untrustworthy it is not probable that they would be utilized for the passage of an expeditionary force, however valuable they might become subsequent to an invasion for the transit of convoys and reliefs.

The drawback to the Goomul Pass is the fact that Tank, the point of ingress, is far distant from any railway, and that the road from Chicha Wutnee, the nearest station (midway between Mooltan and Lahore) lies across a desert, with very little water and still less forage for the use of a force marching across the sandy tract which intervenes between the rail and the Indus. Moreover, the river at Jhung is not bridged and the passage of troops would be considerably delayed by the want of suitable ferry boats. From Chicha Wutnee to Dera-Ismail-Khan is about 18 marches, and on to Tank three more. The entrance to the pass is at a small village called Mortaza, some 16 miles west; the road thence follows the course of the Goomul stream to a place called Orzuk, a distance of eight days' march. Here two routes branch off westward; the northernmost, skirting the Mahsood Vaziri country, reaches Ghuznee in 16 more days; the southern one taking 18 marches before Candahar is made. There is abundance of water on both roads; forage, however, is scarce, and the Vaziri thieves, who infest the pass in gangs of considerable strength, offer serious obstacles to the transit of the caravans of Afghan merchants. Our endeavour to coerce this tribe in 1860 shows the formidable nature of the resistance they could offer, for in the expedition against them, under Sir Neville Chamberlain, we sustained a loss of 90 killed and 262 wounded, and even then their hatred of us as neighbours was not subdued, as the frontier has been in a continual state of turmoil owing to their frequent and unpunished raids. The history of the relations between the Mahsood Waziris and the British Government is an extraordinary medley of unbounded effrontery on the one hand, of the most long-suffering patience on the other. Thus, in addition to the difficulty of massing troops at the entrance of the Goomul Pass, we may certainly count on determined opposition to the passage of any force through the Vaziri territory.

It is unlikely that any attempt would be made to make use of the numerous small passes that intervene between the Goomul and the Bolan. That pass is well known not only on account of its being

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the route followed by our troops in 1839, but also by reason of the lucid accounts of its difficulties and dangers graphically related by Surgeon-Major Bellew in his work "From the Indus to the Tigris," and by Captain H. Marsh in his "Ride through Islam." Since those days the occupation of Quettah has required that attention should be paid to the road, and the difficulties have been, to a great extent, obliterated. The road from Herat through Candahar to Quettah is equally well known, it having been traversed in 1877 by Colonel C. M. Macgregor, C.S.I., and Captain R. B. Lockwood, of the Bengal Quartermaster-General's Department, officers well qualified to make a more than ordinarily valuable report of the route. As far, then, as Quettah we may assume that the road is passable for artillery, and that the measures taken for keeping open communication between Jacobabad and our newly acquired frontier cantonment leave nothing to be desired. Between that and Candahar, however, we know, from past experience as well as from the reports of the above-named officers, that serious obstacles do exist to impede the rapid march of troops, the want of water being the principal drawback. From Jacobabad through the Bolan to Quettah is about 60 miles, while on to Candahar the distance is close on 260. It is obvious, then, that although a force may be despatched through the Bolan to Quettah, it will be merely for the purpose of strengthening the garrison of that place. Sir John Keane's army took 23 days covering the distance between it and Candahar, and the further march to Ghuznee occupied another 24 days.

The early move of reinforcements to Quettah is imperative, as the garrison there does not exceed 1,500 men. General Roberts will not only be able to strengthen that important post, but also to relieve the Khan of Khelat from all fear of Afghan invasion by throwing forward a strong detachment for the protection of his capital. The warm welcome accorded to the British by the Khan excited the Ameer's wrath against him, and it would be well to prevent his suffering any harm for having acceded to our request for a cantonment in his dominions. It will take fully six weeks even for troops at Mooltan to reach Quettah, but that will be quite early enough to enable General Roberts to secure a base of operations for an advance on Candahar.

Taking into consideration the inhospitable nature of the country, the very doubtful reception our troops will meet with from the Afghans, the absolute necessity of providing defensible works for the men, with abundance of provisions, forage, and firewood for the army in winter quarters, and the present advanced season of the year, it is a very open matter as to whether Lord Lytton will risk an immediate advance into Afghanistan. If troops are massed at the entrance of the various passes we have enumerated, Shere Ali will learn that they merely foreshadow a forward movement in the spring, and there is yet hope that he may have time to reflect on the evil consequences of his extraordinarily fanatical conduct, and solicit a visit from the Mission he has so gratuitously insulted.

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—I was Commissioner of Police in Bombay all through the mutiny, and, speaking with an intimate knowledge of native feeling, I say that any procrastination in meeting the insult we have received in the Khyber Pass will be fatal to us in India. We may put off entering Cabul until the spring, but should at once advance on and seize the Khyber Pass and Candahar. To procrastinate till the spring would give Russia time to secretly supply the Ameer with mitrailleuses, &c., by means of which 100 men could keep 100,000 from entering the Khyber.

Now, 5,000 men might overrun and occupy Afghanistan. The conquest of that country would give absolute finality to our territorial development in Asia, and secure India from all alarms for ever. Only when we have obtained, by alliance or occupation, complete military and political control of Afghanistan will the people of India accept our rule as the fiat of fate, and only then can we begin to really reduce our military expenditure within bounds. We might do so by one half at once.

Very faithfully yours,
C. FORJETT, late Commissioner of Police of Bombay.

41, Torrington-square, London, Sept. 24.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—It is certainly to be hoped that the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief have been preparing for the possible refusal of the Ameer to receive our mission. If so, it is also to be hoped that the necessary force will be able to be sent presently, and before the passes become blocked with snow.

Having had some experience of the hills in India, I think I am right in saying that the passes into Afghanistan will be more open in October than they will be next April, or even May, perhaps. In 1853 I went up into Cashmere in the latter half of April, and I believe I and my two friends were the first party to cross the Pir Punjal. If we are to wait till next spring before taking notice of the Ameer's insult, the delay will be very prejudicial to our prestige, and the Ameer might by that time have received [considerable help from Russia.

The blow, to be of any use, must be "sharp and decisive." But even supposing that an expedition cannot be sent until the beginning of winter, it must go all the same, and we must not mind the passes being rendered difficult from snow.

Yours obediently,
September 24. A RETIRED FIELD OFFICER.

LONDON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1878.

Our latest news from Calcutta leaves little room for doubt that we must expect war with Afghanistan. Military operations have, in fact, been commenced already. Quettah must at least be strengthened. Our troops are on their way to the frontier, and it will probably not be long before we shall hear that they are threatening Afghan territory, or have even entered it. The more we learn of the circumstances under which our Mission was turned back, the more necessary it is shown to be that the outrage we have received should be followed by prompt punishment, and the less likely does it appear that there will be any such submission and reparation on the part of Shere Ali as the Indian Government could accept. Our envoys were not only refused a passage at the frontier line, but were repelled, we are now told, with threats of personal violence, which were only just not carried out. It must have been the intention of this conduct to make the breach between England and Afghanistan irreparable, and such doubtless will be its effect. The Indian Government, it would appear, is in a position to act at once. The men and the *matériel* are in readiness. Winter, indeed, is approaching, but there may yet be time for some of the work before us to be done in the remaining open weeks during which military operations will be practicable. If we can succeed in occupying two or three important military stations in the enemy's country—and this at least ought to be well within our power—we shall have gone a long way towards finishing the war. If more yet remains to be done, if Shere Ali is not content with the first stroke he will receive, and if his attitude is unchanged in spite of it, we can go on with the return of spring. There will, we trust, be no repetition of the errors for which we paid so dearly in the former war. We must not be betrayed a second time into an undue contempt for our enemy or into an imprudent trust in his word. There must be a careful estimate of the resistance we may expect to meet, and a force sufficient to bear it down. This will be the first duty of the responsible officers to whom the direction of the war will be intrusted, and the nation rely upon them not to fail in it. Our success, whatever be the cost, must be attained decisively, if not speedily. A prolonged war, with a series of stirring adventures, and no clear result after them, would be only just better than a defeat. Our invasion of Afghanistan will be no unopposed march over. The Ameer, we may conclude, must have been well aware of the extent of the provocation he was giving us, and of the manner in which it would be met on our part. He, like ourselves, must have been making ready for war, and though he may have no allies to help him, yet he may receive a good deal of volunteered assistance. We can be in no doubt that we shall be well able to deal with him and with his friends, but it would be dangerous for us to imagine that we can do so without effort. Our blow, when it is given, must be effectual. We cannot suffer it either to fail or to be turned aside in half course. If we are not prepared to enter on war with a force sufficient to secure our objects and to demonstrate our irresistible superiority, we should do better not to enter on war at all, or to delay it until we are in better readiness.

The letter we print this morning from our Special Correspondent at Constantinople brings before us another phase of Eastern affairs. Our duties in Asia Minor, peaceful as they are and are likely to be, may prove a more abiding trouble than our North-West frontier question in India. In Asia Minor we have to deal, not with an open enemy who can be subdued by force of arms, but with a corrupt system of misgovernment which we can hardly hope to bring to so speedy and positive an issue. Our Correspondent's letter puts us face to face with the difficulties before us. It is something to know how the matter stands and what there is for us to rely upon, even if the information be that there is nothing we can rely upon at all. This, indeed, would seem to be the conclusion to which our Correspondent's letter points. It is not, in the first place, from the local Governors of Asia Minor that we are to look for a reform of administration. They, we are told, are bad enough in all ranks. Worse still is it to learn that it would be of no avail if we could get rid of

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them and have others appointed in their stead. The men are bad chiefly because the system is bad. The provinces are plundered, but not to the advantage of the first plunderer. From the lowest to the highest, each in turn is forced to yield up his booty to his next superior, on whom he is dependent, and from whom he has purchased his place. So things proceed upwards from rank to rank, and we must go very high indeed before we come to the first cause, to the *primum mobile* of the meanest village extortion. The plunder is reaped from many quarters, but it is to the SULTAN and his favourites that it all comes in the end. Sometimes, indeed, the demands of the Government are pressing, and they are met by special requisitions. The mode of procedure is a simple one. An order is sent off to some local Governor for the sums needed, and he has no choice but to produce them. His services would soon be dispensed with if he were to be found failing in such a duty as this. The requirements of the Palace are more regular, and the method by which they are satisfied is much the same. The chief difference is that the course is a little more roundabout. The whole machinery of government in Asia Minor is set at work and is kept going in order to meet the wants of the SULTAN or of some one in direct intercourse with the SULTAN—a eunuch, a female favourite, or, perhaps, some one still lower, in direct intercourse with these. It is for such recipients that industrious villagers are overtaxed and robbed. The Christians are not the chief sufferers. These, our Correspondent says, can mostly manage to make themselves heard, or can find champions who will be heard for them. The poor Mussulmans have no advocates, and it is on them, accordingly, that the burden descends and rests in the last instance.

A sketch such as this shows sufficiently from what quarters an impulse in the direction of reform is not likely to proceed. We shall not look with much hope to the governing classes, who have everything to lose by the change. The SULTAN himself, even if he were willing to move, is tied hand and foot by social bonds. The influence of those who are always with him has the best chance of making itself felt. He may listen to remonstrances, and may make promises in reply to them, but he will soon pass into a company where no such trouble will be given him, and where soft entreaties will be made to an effect precisely the opposite of the former ones. Turkey, it would appear, must be reformed altogether, or it cannot be reformed at all. The task, our Correspondent says, will be difficult, and this we can well believe. It is gratifying, however, after all the proof he has given us of its difficulty, to learn that he is still of opinion that the difficulties are not insuperable. It is to the Palace he points as the place in which a beginning must be made. We are shown the Augean stables, and we get a hint, moreover, of the hero who is to undertake the cleansing of them. It is to the national deputies that our Correspondent looks as the most available agents of reform, but the unwillingness of the SULTAN and his Ministers to call them together, and so put arms into their hands, must be overcome first, and this will not be overcome easily.

"Daily News." Sept: 26

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

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General Sir Neville Chamberlain will resume his command at Madras.

A force under General Roberts will be despatched to the Kooram Valley, and a column of 6,000 men will assemble at Mooltan. A force of 8,000 men will be sent to Quetta.

Active military preparations are being made at Rawul Pindee.

* Delayed in transmission

THE latest intelligence from India shows that the authorities there are making energetic preparations for active military operations in Afghanistan. We have had occasion before, and shall have again, to characterize as it deserves the foolish and reckless policy which has led us into the present difficulty, and which, if it be not checked, will plunge us further into embarrassment. But the most immediate subject of interest is what are we going to do, and how are we going to do it? The telegram from our Special Correspondent at Simla which we published yesterday gives an outline of the preparations made to exact reparation for the insult offered to the British Representative. According to our Correspondent these preparations are not as yet on a large scale. The garrison of Quettah is to be reinforced by 3,000 additional troops, a reserve of 6,000 men is to be assembled at Sukkhur, in the north of Scinde, early in November, and a column of 4,000 men will be brought to Thull in order to enter Afghanistan through the Khoorum Pass. The Khoorum Pass is situate near Bunnoo and is south of the Khyber, being separated from the Cabul valley by a range of mountains called the Sufaid Koh. The superiority of this route over the traditional entrance by the Khyber Pass is very great. The road by the Khoorum Valley leads through an open country inhabited by peaceful husbandmen supposed to be friendly to England, and by it a point only seventy miles from Cabul can easily be reached. It strikes at right angles the main road from Candahar and Ghuznee to Cabul. Consequently there is no reason why the last seventy miles to the capital should present any great difficulty.

According to our Correspondent no attack on Cabul is contemplated, and our operations will be restricted to a mere military demonstration in support, we presume, of diplomatic action. It, however, seems to have been overlooked by the Government of India that the AMEER may decline to be impressed by this demonstration, and by his conduct may render more serious operations necessary. It certainly is difficult to believe that a column of only 4,000 men, with long communications, skirting a mountain range from which desultory attacks on our convoys may with certainty be anticipated, is likely to be looked upon by SHERE ALI as a very serious danger. Unless, indeed, other columns advanced simultaneously by other routes, and all the communications were strongly guarded by etappen troops, the Khoorum column would run no slight danger of destruction. We must suppose, therefore, that a strong column will also be sent through the Khyber. That our army will immediately advance by the Bolan Pass on Candahar and Ghuznee seems improbable. It would take some time to collect and organize the force, and the distance from the Scinde frontier to Candahar is 300 miles. The distance between Candahar and Cabul is nearly 200 miles. The passes between these two towns are closed by the snow as early sometimes as November. For the present purpose, therefore, little can be accomplished by the Quettah-Candahar route. It is scarcely probable that all preparations could be made for an expeditionary force at Peshawur before the end of the first week in October at the earliest, and the season for active operations would be over about the 7th December, thus giving about sixty available days. The distance between Jumrood and Cabul is about seventeen marches. Allowing for halting days, the journey would, for an army of ordinary dimensions, and not encumbered by much baggage, occupy about three weeks. It would therefore be possible to march to Cabul, capture it, destroy the fortifications, and return either to Jellalabad or British territory before the setting in of the winter. Only a force advancing through the Khyber, however, could accomplish this. The question is whether it is better to undertake a feat of this sort while so greatly hampered by considerations of time, or to put off serious operations till the spring, when everything will be ready for a crushing blow. Unless we send a force through the Khyber the utmost we could accomplish before the winter would be the capture and occupation of Candahar. By so doing we should to a great extent cut off the AMEER from Southern and Western Afghanistan, for by far the best road from Cabul to Herat

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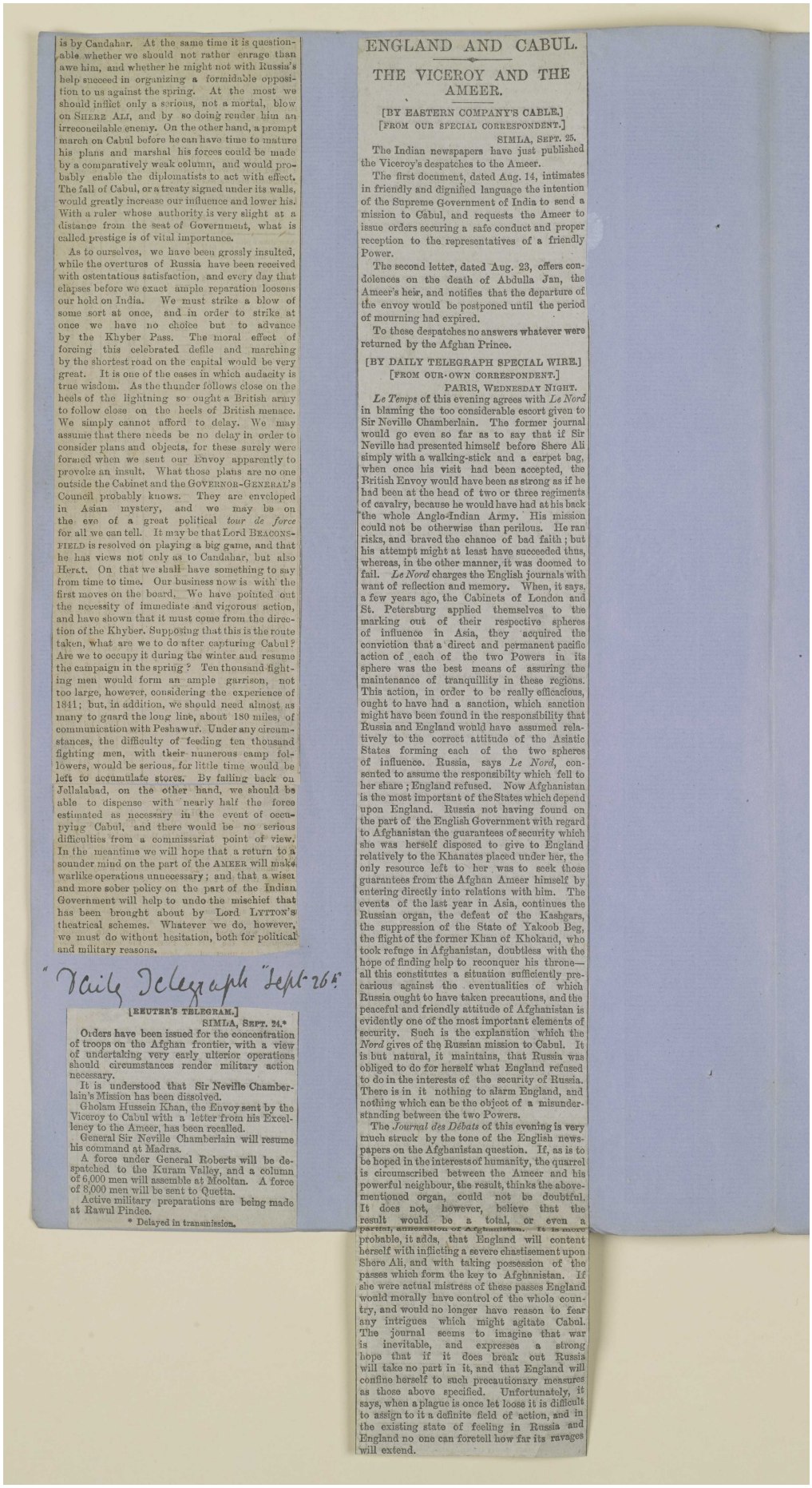

is by Candahar. At the same time it is questionable whether we should not rather enrage than awe him, and whether he might not with Russia's help succeed in organizing a formidable opposition to us against the spring. At the most we should inflict only a serious, not a mortal, blow on SHERE ALI, and by so doing render him an irreconcilable enemy. On the other hand, a prompt march on Cabul before he can have time to mature his plans and marshal his forces could be made by a comparatively weak column, and would probably enable the diplomatists to act with effect. The fall of Cabul, or a treaty signed under its walls, would greatly increase our influence and lower his. With a ruler whose authority is very slight at a distance from the seat of Government, what is called prestige is of vital importance.

As to ourselves, we have been grossly insulted, while the overtures of Russia have been received with ostentatious satisfaction, and every day that elapses before we exact ample reparation loosens our hold on India. We must strike a blow of some sort at once, and in order to strike at once we have no choice but to advance by the Khyber Pass. The moral effect of forcing this celebrated defile and marching by the shortest road on the capital would be very great. It is one of the cases in which audacity is true wisdom. As the thunder follows close on the heels of the lightning so ought a British army to follow close on the heels of British menace. We simply cannot afford to delay. We may assume that there needs be no delay in order to consider plans and objects, for these surely were formed when we sent our Envoy apparently to provoke an insult. What those plans are no one outside the Cabinet and the GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S Council probably knows. They are enveloped in Asian mystery, and we may be on the eve of a great political *tour de force* for all we can tell. It may be that Lord BEACONSFIELD is resolved on playing a big game, and that he has views not only as to Candahar, but also Herat. On that we shall have something to say from time to time. Our business now is with the first moves on the board. We have pointed out the necessity of immediate and vigorous action, and have shown that it must come from the direction of the Khyber. Supposing that this is the route taken, what are we to do after capturing Cabul? Are we to occupy it during the winter and resume the campaign in the spring? Ten thousand fighting men would form an ample garrison, not too large, however, considering the experience of 1841; but, in addition, we should need almost as many to guard the long line, about 180 miles, of communication with Peshawur. Under any circumstances, the difficulty of feeding ten thousand fighting men, with their numerous camp followers, would be serious, for little time would be left to accumulate stores. By falling back on Jellalabad, on the other hand, we should be able to dispense with nearly half the force estimated as necessary in the event of occupying Cabul, and there would be no serious difficulties from a commissariat point of view. In the meantime we will hope that a return to a sounder mind on the part of the AMEER will make warlike operations unnecessary; and that a wiser and more sober policy on the part of the Indian Government will help to undo the mischief that has been brought about by Lord LYTTON'S theatrical schemes. Whatever we do, however, we must do without hesitation, both for political and military reasons.

"Daily Telegraph" Sept. 26th

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

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ENGLAND AND CABUL.

THE VICEROY AND THE AMEER.

[BY EASTERN COMPANY'S CABLE.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, SEPT. 25.

The Indian newspapers have just published the Viceroy's despatches to the Ameer.

The first document, dated Aug. 14, intimates in friendly and dignified language the intention of the Supreme Government of India to send a mission to Cabul, and requests the Ameer to issue orders securing a safe conduct and proper reception to the representatives of a friendly Power.

The second letter, dated Aug. 23, offers condolences on the death of Abdulla Jan, the Ameer's heir, and notifies that the departure of the envoy would be postponed until the period of mourning had expired.

To these despatches no answers whatever were returned by the Afghan Prince.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

PARIS, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

Le Temps of this evening agrees with *Le Nord* in blaming the too considerable escort given to Sir Neville Chamberlain. The former journal would go even so far as to say that if Sir Neville had presented himself before Shere Ali simply with a walking-stick and a carpet bag, when once his visit had been accepted, the British Envoy would have been as strong as if he had been at the head of two or three regiments of cavalry, because he would have had at his back the whole Anglo-Indian Army. His mission could not be otherwise than perilous. He ran risks, and braved the chance of bad faith; but his attempt might at least have succeeded thus, whereas, in the other manner, it was doomed to fail. *Le Nord* charges the English journals with want of reflection and memory. When, it says, a few years ago, the Cabinets of London and St. Petersburg applied themselves to the marking out of their respective spheres of influence in Asia, they acquired the conviction that a direct and permanent pacific action of each of the two Powers in its sphere was the best means of assuring the maintenance of tranquillity in these regions. This action, in order to be really efficacious, ought to have had a sanction, which sanction might have been found in the responsibility that Russia and England would have assumed relatively to the correct attitude of the Asiatic States forming each of the two spheres of influence. Russia, says *Le Nord*, consented to assume the responsibility which fell to her share; England refused. Now Afghanistan is the most important of the States which depend upon England. Russia not having found on the part of the English Government with regard to Afghanistan the guarantees of security which she was herself disposed to give to England relatively to the Khanates placed under her, the only resource left to her was to seek those guarantees from the Afghan Ameer himself by entering directly into relations with him. The events of the last year in Asia, continues the Russian organ, the defeat of the Kashgars, the suppression of the State of Yakoob Beg, the flight of the former Khan of Khokand, who took refuge in Afghanistan, doubtless with the hope of finding help to reconquer his throne—all this constitutes a situation sufficiently precarious against the eventualities of which Russia ought to have taken precautions, and the peaceful and friendly attitude of Afghanistan is evidently one of the most important elements of security. Such is the explanation which the *Nord* gives of the Russian mission to Cabul. It is but natural, it maintains, that Russia was obliged to do for herself what England refused to do in the interests of the security of Russia. There is in it nothing to alarm England, and nothing which can be the object of a misunderstanding between the two Powers.

The *Journal des Débats* of this evening is very much struck by the tone of the English newspapers on the Afghanistan question. If, as is to be hoped in the interests of humanity, the quarrel is circumscribed between the Ameer and his powerful neighbour, the result, thinks the above-mentioned organ, could not be doubtful. It does not, however, believe that the result would be a total, or even a partial, annexation of Afghanistan. It is more probable, it adds, that England will content herself with inflicting a severe chastisement upon Shere Ali, and with taking possession of the passes which form the key to Afghanistan. If she were actual mistress of these passes England would morally have control of the whole country, and would no longer have reason to fear any intrigues which might agitate Cabul. The journal seems to imagine that war is inevitable, and expresses a strong hope that if it does break out Russia will take no part in it, and that England will confine herself to such precautionary measures as those above specified. Unfortunately, it says, when a plague is once let loose it is difficult to assign to it a definite field of action, and in the existing state of feeling in Russia and England no one can foretell how far its ravages will extend.

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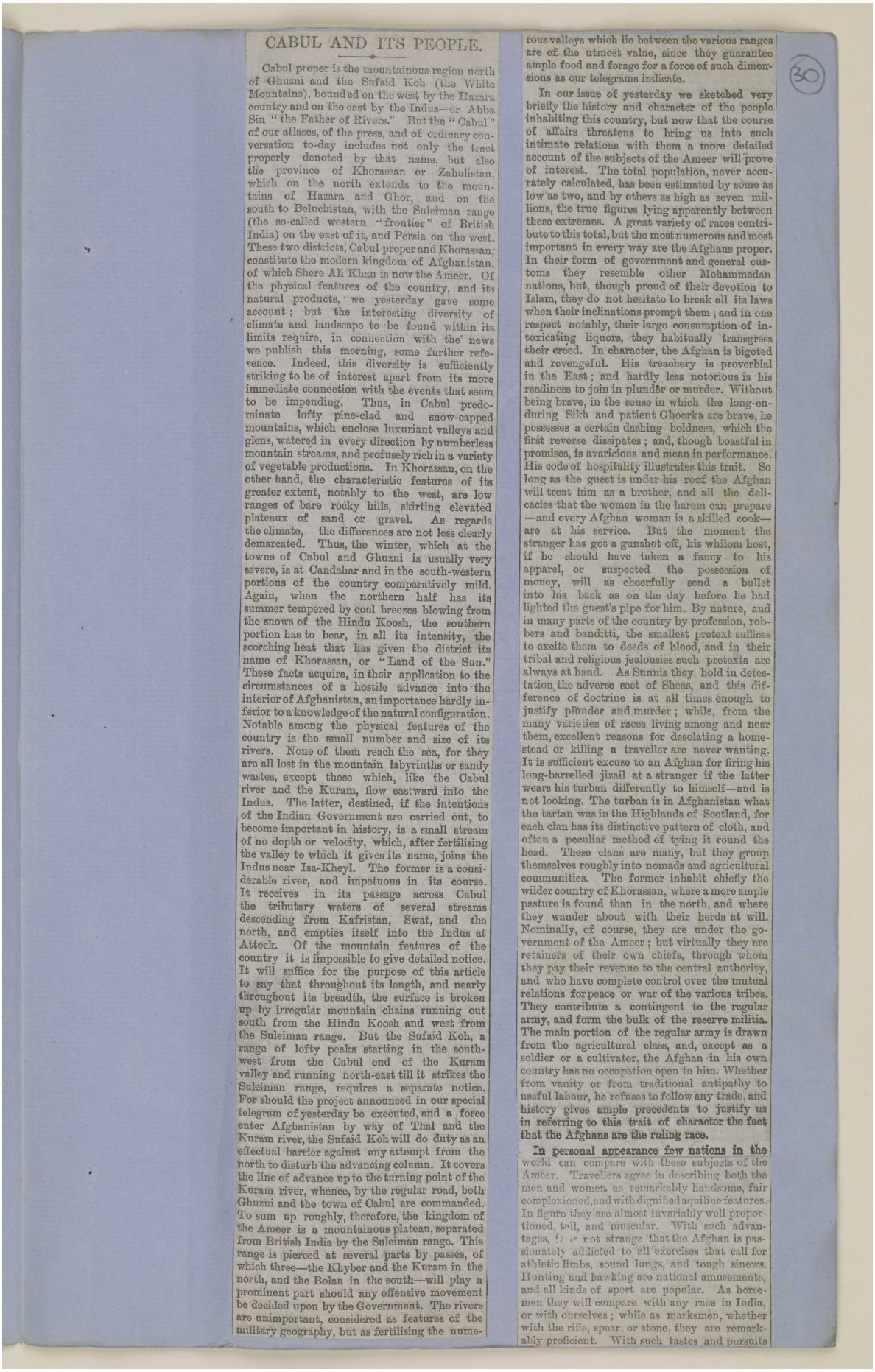

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CABUL AND ITS PEOPLE.

Cabul proper is the mountainous region north of Ghuzni and the Sufaid Koh (the White Mountains), bounded on the west by the Hazara country and on the east by the Indus—or Abba Sin "the Father of Rivers." But the "Cabul" of our atlases, of the press, and of ordinary conversation to-day includes not only the tract properly denoted by that name, but also the province of Khorassan or Zabulistan, which on the north extends to the mountains of Hazara and Ghor, and on the south to Beluchistan, with the Suleiman range (the so-called western "frontier" of British India) on the east of it, and Persia on the west. These two districts, Cabul proper and Khorassan, constitute the modern kingdom of Afghanistan, of which Shere Ali Khan is now the Ameer. Of the physical features of the country, and its natural products, we yesterday gave some account; but the interesting diversity of climate and landscape to be found within its limits require, in connection with the news we publish this morning, some further reference. Indeed, this diversity is sufficiently striking to be of interest apart from its more immediate connection with the events that seem to be impending. Thus, in Cabul predominate lofty pine-clad and snow-capped mountains, which enclose luxuriant valleys and glens, watered in every direction by numberless mountain streams, and profusely rich in a variety of vegetable productions. In Khorassan, on the other hand, the characteristic features of its greater extent, notably to the west, are low ranges of bare rocky hills, skirting elevated plateaux of sand or gravel. As regards the climate, the differences are not less clearly demarcated. Thus, the winter, which at the towns of Cabul and Ghuzni is usually very severe, is at Candahar and in the south-western portions of the country comparatively mild. Again, when the northern half has its summer tempered by cool breezes blowing from the snows of the Hindu Koosh, the southern portion has to bear, in all its intensity, the scorching heat that has given the district its name of Khorassan, or "Land of the Sun." These facts acquire, in their application to the circumstances of a hostile advance into the interior of Afghanistan, an importance hardly inferior to a knowledge of the natural configuration. Notable among the physical features of the country is the small number and size of its rivers. None of them reach the sea, for they are all lost in the mountain labyrinths or sandy wastes, except those which, like the Cabul river and the Kuram, flow eastward into the Indus. The latter, destined, if the intentions of the Indian Government are carried out, to become important in history, is a small stream of no depth or velocity, which, after fertilising the valley to which it gives its name, joins the Indus near Isa-Kheyl. The former is a considerable river, and impetuous in its course. It receives in its passage across Cabul the tributary waters of several streams descending from Kafristan, Swat, and the north, and empties itself into the Indus at Attock. Of the mountain features of the country it is impossible to give detailed notice. It will suffice for the purpose of this article to say that throughout its length, and nearly throughout its breadth, the surface is broken up by irregular mountain chains running out south from the Hindu Koosh and west from the Suleiman range. But the Sufaid Koh, a range of lofty peaks starting in the south-west from the Cabul end of the Kuram valley and running north-east till it strikes the Suleiman range, requires a separate notice. For should the project announced in our special telegram of yesterday be executed, and a force enter Afghanistan by way of Thal and the Kuram river, the Sufaid Koh will do duty as an effectual barrier against any attempt from the north to disturb the advancing column. It covers the line of advance up to the turning point of the Kuram river, whence, by the regular road, both Ghuzni and the town of Cabul are commanded. To sum up roughly, therefore, the kingdom of the Ameer is a mountainous plateau, separated from British India by the Suleiman range. This range is pierced at several parts by passes, of which three—the Khyber and the Kuram in the north, and the Bolan in the south—will play a prominent part should any offensive movement be decided upon by the Government. The rivers are unimportant, considered as features of the military geography, but as fertilising the numerous valleys which lie between the various ranges are of the utmost value, since they guarantee ample food and forage for a force of such dimensions as our telegrams indicate.

In our issue of yesterday we sketched very briefly the history and character of the people inhabiting this country, but now that the course of affairs threatens to bring us into such intimate relations with them a more detailed account of the subjects of the Ameer will prove of interest. The total population, never accurately calculated, has been estimated by some as low as two, and by others as high as seven millions, the true figures lying apparently between these extremes. A great variety of races contribute to this total, but the most numerous and most important in every way are the Afghans proper. In their form of government and general customs they resemble other Mohammedan nations, but, though proud of their devotion to Islam, they do not hesitate to break all its laws when their inclinations prompt them; and in one respect notably, their large consumption of intoxicating liquors, they habitually transgress their creed. In character, the Afghan is bigoted and revengeful. His treachery is proverbial in the East; and hardly less notorious is his readiness to join in plunder or murder. Without being brave, in the sense in which the long-enduring Sikh and patient Ghoorka are brave, he possesses a certain dashing boldness, which the first reverse dissipates; and, though boastful in promises, is avaricious and mean in performance. His code of hospitality illustrates this trait. So long as the guest is under his roof the Afghan will treat him as a brother, and all the delicacies that the women in the harem can prepare —and every Afghan woman is a skilled cook— are at his service. But the moment the stranger has got a gunshot off, his whilom host, if he should have taken a fancy to his apparel, or suspected the possession of money, will as cheerfully send a bullet into his back as on the day before he had lighted the guest's pipe for him. By nature, and in many parts of the country by profession, robbers and banditti, the smallest pretext suffices to excite them to deeds of blood, and in their tribal and religious jealousies such pretexts are always at hand. As Sunnis they hold in detestation the adverse sect of Sheas, and this difference of doctrine is at all times enough to justify plunder and murder; while, from the many varieties of races living among and near them, excellent reasons for desolating a homestead or killing a traveller are never wanting. It is sufficient excuse to an Afghan for firing his long-barrelled jizail at a stranger if the latter wears his turban differently to himself—and is not looking. The turban is in Afghanistan what the tartan was in the Highlands of Scotland, for each clan has its distinctive pattern of cloth, and often a peculiar method of tying it round the head. These clans are many, but they group themselves roughly into nomads and agricultural communities. The former inhabit chiefly the wilder country of Khorassan, where a more ample pasture is found than in the north, and where they wander about with their herds at will. Nominally, of course, they are under the government of the Ameer; but virtually they are retainers of their own chiefs, through whom they pay their revenue to the central authority, and who have complete control over the mutual relations for peace or war of the various tribes. They contribute a contingent to the regular army, and form the bulk of the reserve militia. The main portion of the regular army is drawn from the agricultural class, and, except as a soldier or a cultivator, the Afghan in his own country has no occupation open to him. Whether from vanity or from traditional antipathy to useful labour, he refuses to follow any trade, and history gives ample precedents to justify us in referring to this trait of character the fact that the Afghans are the ruling race.

In personal appearance few nations in the world can compare with these subjects of the Ameer. Travellers agree in describing both the men and women as remarkably handsome, fair complexioned, and with dignified aquiline features. In figure they are almost invariably well proportioned, tall, and muscular. With such advantages, it is not strange that the Afghan is passionately addicted to all exercises that call for athletic limbs, sound lungs, and tough sinews. Hunting and hawking are national amusements, and all kinds of sport are popular. As horsemen they will compare with any race in India, or with ourselves; while as marksmen, whether with the rifle, spear, or stone, they are remarkably proficient. With such tastes and pursuits

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heartiness in conviviality is generally found associated; but the Afghans, in their boisterous debauchery, distort the amiable trait into bestiality of the vilest description. This is especially the case among the higher classes; for the bulk of the people are unable from their excessive poverty to indulge their tastes. As an evening amusement chess finds favour with every grade, but in common with all Orientals the Afghan prefers to listen to a story-teller to doing anything else. The interminable nature of Eastern tales, which go on from night to night, branching off from the original narrative at every opportunity into the adventures of other characters that happen to be introduced, would be maddening to an European audience, but the Afghan, patient in this alone, lies on his sheepskin hour after hour quite content if some one of the company will only drone out the involved labyrinth of indecent episodes that he calls a tale. The women, whom we have already said are fair-complexioned, handsome, and of good figure, enhance their charms by all the artifices of cosmetics, dyes, and picturesque dress; and tattooing with indigo takes the place of the patches once in vogue in England. The hair, worn in long plaits, is often adorned with tassels and rough but effective ornaments of metal and glass; but the jealous seclusion in which the better classes are kept by their lords and masters has prevented travellers from obtaining details of their personal appearance. Enough, however, is known of their lives and habits within the harem to assure us that the standard of morality is not elevated by this compulsory seclusion.

Next to the Afghans, the Tajiks of Persian origin are the most numerous class of the Ameer's subjects. Physically they rival the Afghans in graces of person, but differ from them widely in character and habits. As a rule they are an orderly and law-abiding race; and though as ignorant and superstitious as their neighbours, are less turbulent and bigoted. In the rural districts they follow agriculture as a profession, and in towns occupy themselves in any trade or industry. A considerable number join the army, in which they are known as Toorks, and not a few are to be found serving in the Punjab branch of the British force. Among the remaining elements of the population of Afghanistan, the Kazzilbash Moghul and the Hazara tribe deserve special notice. The former are of Turki origin, and wherever they go enjoy the reputation of being splendid soldiers. In the Irregular Cavalry of India, one of the finest arms of any service, they are marked men, and in Afghanistan they form the bulk of the cavalry and artillery forces in the Ameer's service. The Hazaras are of Tartar descent, as their unprepossessing features and diminutive stature abundantly testify. They serve the other races as menials, and, as such, are looked upon as faithful and docile. In independence, however, they display a remarkable hatred of the Afghans, who, owing to the savage daring shown by these mountaineers, have never been able to pierce to their strongholds.

Brief as are these sketches of the chief races of Afghanistan, they suffice to show how the population contains within itself all the elements of intestine discord, and none of cohesion in a common cause. The "Sunni" Afghans at a word would turn in the name of religion upon the "Shia" Moghuls; while the Hazaras, and besides them the Hindu tribes scattered about the country, which we have not the space to specify, would readily, in the hope of plunder, fight against both.

LONDON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26.

Our special correspondent at Simla telegraphs that two despatches, dated August 14 and August 23, from the Viceroy to the Ameer, have just been published in the Indian newspapers, the first notifying the fact that it had been decided to send a mission to Cabul, and asking for it a safe-conduct and proper reception; the second, offering condolences on the death of the Ameer's heir. To neither of these despatches was any answer returned by the Afghan Prince.

An inspired telegram from St. Petersburg, which appeared yesterday, declares, with reference to the assumption that an understanding exists between Russia and Afghanistan, that such a "supposition is purely imaginary." This statement is made, it avers, "in the best-informed quarters;" and on the same imposing but vague authority it adds that "no grounds are known to justify such imputations and conjectures." The semi-official message possibly indicates what kind of language will be forthcoming from the Russian Chancellery when our inevitable question upon the subject is put to Prince Gortschakoff; and, so far as it foreshadows a desire on the part of the Czar's Government to keep the peace with us, nothing could be more satisfactory. Nevertheless, such an assurance will have to be framed in much clearer and more categorical words if the just suspicions of the English nation are to be laid at rest. "An understanding" may mean anything; an "imaginary supposition" is a tautological phrase which merely implies that all suppositions are ideas until evidence or events convert them into facts; while, as to the statement that "no grounds are known" at St. Petersburg "to justify such imputations and conjectures," this too might be quite compatible with the most positive collusion between the action of the Muscovite representative at Cabul and the conduct of the Ameer. From Afghanistan to Livadia or the Baltic is a vast distance for news to traverse—as it is for commands to be transmitted—nor do we doubt that the first intelligence of Shere Ali's affront to the British Government reached Prince Gortschakoff by way of London. Yet it might be interesting to know whether or not these tidings proved a great surprise in the Russian Foreign Office; and this depends upon the character of the Ministerial instructions which the Czar's agent received when he set out for the Afghan capital. Prince Gortschakoff is not likely to communicate the precise nature of those orders by Baron Reuter's agency, though it would be more convincing than any statement volunteered "in the best-informed quarters." The plain and palpable facts which the Russian Government will have to explain are these. It had given us the most positive pledge that Afghanistan "lay outside the sphere of Russian actions and intentions;" it had appended to that pledge no condition or reservation except an unnecessary hope that Great Britain would keep the Afghan Ruler from disturbing the peace upon his northern frontiers, and there has been no such disturbance; yet without notice or explanation the Czar's Government has sent expeditions by land and water to the Middle and Upper Oxus, and planted a Russian Resident in Cabul. Of the progress of those expeditions nothing at present is publicly known; according to the latest advices they were concentrating on the ferries of the Amu Daria towards Bokhara and Balkh or Merv. But apparently the first fruit of the breach of faith involved in the interloping movement at Cabul is that this petty Prince of the mountains defies and insults the British Power before India and all the world in a spirit wholly incomprehensible except upon the assumption that he has been ordered or encouraged to take such a step by suggestions derived from a greater power than his own. If such be not the case, it is one of the most curious coincidences known to history, and the Russians are much to be pitied for being the victims of the singular accident which made Shere Ali affront an English Envoy just at the moment when the Czar had an agent at his ear whispering nothing but good faith and friendship towards us.

Lord Augustus Loftus, our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, left Berlin on Tuesday night, journeying towards the Czar's capital; and no doubt he bears the necessary instructions from his Government to demand the most explicit elucidation of these mysteries. If, however, his Excellency has been sufficiently equipped for the catechism, it is not alone upon the matter of an "understanding" with Shere Ali about Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission that our Ambassador will ask for information. The Indian Government is, we believe, in possession of documents and authenticated copies of letters which are said to throw a strong light upon the recent conduct of the Afghan Ruler. Some of these draw for the Cabul Court the outlines of just such a dangerous policy as that which Shere Ali has initiated, and this, moreover, in the name of Russia, and by the pen or the voice of Russian agents. The territory he would be permitted to annex from British India, in case of a successful war, is named in

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some of these epistolary incentives; the subsidy he might count upon receiving from his ally, openly or privately, is also set forth; and even at the remote date when the papers to which we refer came to the knowledge of the Indian Government it is certain that Russian money was largely current already in the bazaars of Cabul and Jellalabad. It may of course have come legitimately in the way of trade from the Orenburg caravans—perhaps it did; and the awkward revelations which have been transmitted to Simla by some of these semi-official communications may be indignantly disowned at St. Petersburg—perhaps they will. But it would be interesting to bring them to the notice of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, and to learn whether certain other experiments which are said to have been made by Russian agents on the cupidity or ambition of some of our great feudatory Princes in India were equally unauthorised by Russia and disconnected with her Asiatic policy. Muscovite statesmanship is accustomed to disown abruptly any detected enterprise of the kind, and probably the explanations we should receive would leave little to be desired in this way. With prominent commanders like General KAUFFMANN and regularly appointed diplomatic envoys like General ABRAMOFF, however, another course has usually been adopted. When Khiva was practically annexed in violation of the solemn promise from the Czar conveyed to Lord GRANVILLE by Count SCHOUVALOFF, the apology offered was that the force of circumstances had proved too strong for the Emperor and his servants. The *fait accompli* was pointed to with a diplomatic shrug in reply to all our remonstrances, and Mr. GLADSTONE'S Cabinet rested content with it. Yet no military necessity, as far as Central Asia was concerned, operated to cause the expeditions to the Oxus, while the mission of a Russian envoy to Cabul was a glaring breach of faith and pledge, which—as Muscovite organs confess—was devised as a hostile counter-stroke, and has had the mischievous results expected from the step. It cannot but appear, therefore, absolutely incumbent to demand the withdrawal of the Czar's agent at Cabul without delay. Nothing less than this, in our judgment, could meet the necessity of the case, if amicable relations are to be preserved between England and Russia, for nothing less can establish a conviction that what has happened was designed under different circumstances and against a contingency which has never arisen. Russia has no sort of business, political, commercial, or military, in a frontier Indian State which must remain either independent or else become feudatory to her Majesty; and, with whatever diplomatic politeness the demand may be accompanied, nothing short of prompt compliance with it can remove the universal suspicion that the Afghan Ruler has been but a puppet in the hands of that Power which perpetually moves towards India by Constantinople, and towards Constantinople by India.

In presence of the Imperial crisis thus arising it is satisfactory to see that the reckless agitation which gave Russia so much advantage in the recent war has not again reared its unpatriotic front. No voices of the least authority have so far denied that our course in this matter is simple and plain, and that for the honour and safety of the Empire we must make the reparation for the rebuff we have received as public and signal as the outrageous affront itself. An ignorant utterance here and there talks indeed of "altered policy" and "disastrous possibilities;" but when events change policies must be accommodated to meet them, and Lord LAWRENCE himself would not now maintain an attitude of "masterly inactivity" with a Russian agent domiciled in Cabul, and such intrigues as we have alluded to brought to the knowledge of the Indian Government. In this and that pro-Russian quarter it is feebly pretended that our Mission was too strong in escort, and that SHERE ALI might be excused, perchance, for objecting to the retinue of a thousand armed men who accompanied Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN. But these glib advocates would do well to take notice of the announcement made by our Special Correspondent at Simla to the effect that two preparatory letters had been sent to the Ameer by Lord LYTTON, at intervals, one after the other, explaining the friendly significance of the Mission, and that to neither of these was any answer vouchsafed by the arrogant Afghan. Moreover, the Khyber Pass is not a road which a British Mission could be expected to enter without a sufficient body-guard; nor did SHERE ALI himself come down to Lahore to meet Lord MAYO without a becoming attendance. The character, however, of what has happened is only too obvious, and its rectification must be decisive and prompt. The Ruler of Cabul may, perhaps, endeavour to temporise and extenuate, but this ought not to stand in the way of clear insistance and resolute action on our part. The defiance has been ventured upon in the eyes and ears of all India, and all India will watch and criticise the nature of our reply. No time should be lost, and we believe that no time is being lost, in demonstrating our perfect readiness to cope with the novel and sinister phenomenon of a Russian Prince MILAN at Cabul. Still such a phenomenon must not endure too long, and when we have dealt summarily with it, the yet greater peril behind it must be removed—by agreement or in some other way—far out of reach of another experiment upon our frontier-peace and authority.

"Standard". Sept: 26th

THE INDIAN CRISIS.

THE LETTERS FROM THE VICEROY TO SHERE ALI.

SIR N. CHAMBERLAIN'S NOTE.

THE SITUATION ON THE FRONTIER.

VIEWS OF THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

BOMBAY, WEDNESDAY.

There is considerable excitement here, as it is thought probable that if an invasion of Afghanistan is undertaken, a division will be sent up from Kurrachee, by the Indus, to join the forces which will operate by the Bholan Pass.

According to the orders at present issued the situation may be summed up as follows:—One column of eight thousand men has assembled at Mooltan to march across to Quetta and hold the Bholan Pass; six thousand men are assembling in the Koolum Valley in order to seize the Kohat Pass and facilitate the entrance of a third column, which is now forming, into the more formidable Khyber Pass. When all the three passes have been seized in order to produce an effect on the Ameer, an insurrection among the Afghan tribes, many of whom have long been in a state of discontent verging upon hostility to the central Government, is considered probable.

It is believed to be quite possible that Persia, acting under the advice of Russia, will take advantage of the confusion, which will ensue upon our advance, to make a fresh attempt to capture Herat.

Orders have been at once issued to draw other bodies of troops, besides those mentioned above, towards the frontier, with a view of very early ulterior operations should the course of affairs render it necessary.

It will be remembered that a most courteous and friendly letter, written in 1876 by the Viceroy to the Ameer with a view of discussing and improving the relations between the British Government and Afghanistan, has up to this day remained totally unanswered.

Since that time no communication whatever has been held with Shere Ali until, on the 14th of August, the following letter was sent by the Viceroy from Simla:—

"The authentic intelligence which I have lately received as to the course of recent events at Cabul and in the countries bordering on Afghanistan, has rendered it necessary that I should communicate fully and without reserve with your Highness upon matters of importance, which concern the interests of India and Afghanistan.

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"For this reason I have considered it expedient to depute an especial and confidential envoy of high rank, who is known to your Highness—his Excellency General Sir Neville Bowles Chamberlain. He will visit your Highness immediately, in order that he may converse personally with your Highness regarding these urgent affairs.

"It appears certain that they can best be arranged for the welfare and tranquillity of both States, and the preservation of friendship between the two Governments, by a full and frank statement of the present position.

"This letter is, therefore, sent in advance to your Highness by the hand of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, C.S.I., a faithful and honoured Sirdar of my Government, who will explain all the necessary details, the time and manner of the Envoy's visit, and will ask that your Highness may be pleased to issue commands to your Sirdars and all the other authorities of Afghanistan upon the route between Peshawur and Cabul, and will make, without delay, whatever arrangements may be necessary and proper for effectually securing to my Envoy, as the representative of a friendly Power, a due safe conduct and suitable accommodation according to his dignity, while passing with his retinue through the dominions of your Highness.

"I beg to express the high consideration which I entertain of your Highness, and to subscribe myself, &c."

Ten days later was despatched the second letter, dated August 23. The following is the text :—

"After the despatch from Simla of my letter, dated 14th August, 1878, which the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan will deliver with this letter to your Highness, I received from Peshawur the melancholy news that your Highness has suffered a great affliction by the untimely death of Sirdar Abdulla Jan, the heir apparent to Cabul and its dependencies.

"I desire to express to your Highness personally the sincere regret which this intelligence has caused to me ; but life and death are in the hands of God, and resignation to His will is unavoidable.

"In consequence of this calamity I have directed my Envoy to postpone for a short time his departure, in order that your Highness may not be troubled by public business, however important or urgent, until the usual period of mourning has elapsed."

No answer was received to either of these letters.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

The following is the text of the letter sent by Sir Neville Chamberlain to the Ameer's Commandant at the Fort of Ali Musjid—Faiz Muhammed Khan. After the usual compliments Sir Neville says :—

"I write to inform you that, by the command of his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General, a friendly Mission of British officers, with a suitable escort, is about to proceed to Cabul through the Khyber Pass, and an intimation of the despatch of this Mission has been duly communicated to his Highness the Ameer by the hand of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan.

"I hear that an official from Cabul has recently visited at Ali Musjid. He has, doubtless, instructed you in accordance with his Highness, the Ameer's, commands.

"As, however, information has now been received that you have summoned from Peshawur the Khyber headmen with whom we are making arrangements for the safe conduct of the British Mission through the Khyber Pass, I therefore write to inquire of you whether, in accordance with the instructions you have received, you are prepared to guarantee the safety of the British Mission to Dhakka or not, and to request a clear reply to this inquiry, which may be speedily communicated to the bearer of this letter, as I cannot delay our departure from Peshawur.

"It is well known that the Khyber tribes are in the receipt of allowances from the Cabul Government, and, like other independent tribes on this frontier, have relations also with the British Government.

"It may be well to let you know that when the present negotiations were opened with the Khyber tribes it was solely with the object of arranging with them for the safe conduct of the Mission through the Khyber Pass in the same manner as was done with regard to the despatch of our agent Nawab Khan, and the tribes had been given to understand that the negotiations were in no way intended to prejudice their relations with the Ameer, as it is well known that the object of the Mission was altogether of a friendly character to the Ameer and the people of Afghanistan.

"I trust that, in accordance with the instructions you have received from the Ameer, your reply to this letter will be satisfactory, and will contain the required assurances that the Mission will be safely conducted to Dhakka.

"I expect to receive a reply not later than the 18th instant, so please understand that the matter is most urgent.

"At the same time it is my duty to inform you in a frank and friendly manner that if your answer be not what I trust it will be, or if you delay to send an early reply, I have no alternative but to make whatever arrangements may seem to me best for carrying out the instructions I have received from my Government."

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ALLAHABAD, WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

The general opinion among military men here is that the force massing on the frontier is intended as a demonstration against Cabul rather than for a real attack, and that for this autumn an advance upon Candahar only will be undertaken.

It is thought probable that the Ameer will give in immediately he sees that our preparations are serious.

General Biddulph, with 3000 men, is moving up to reinforce the garrison of Quetta. 4000 troops, under General Roberts, will march upon Thull, at the mouth of the Koorum Valley, and 4000 will be collected at Mooltan, under General Stewart.

General Chamberlain will, I believe, take the chief command of the operations.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ST. PETERSBURG, WEDNESDAY.

The *Golos*, referring to the rejection of the English Mission to Cabul, says :—

"It will excite no wonder if British diplomacy, after the failure of its Mission to Afghanistan, attempts, for the purpose of distracting Russia's attention from England's 'sore point,' to give a sharp turn to all the complications that have of late arisen in the politics of Europe."

Referring to the Convention with Austria, the same paper continues :—

"Probably no one in Europe supposes that Russia ought not to take advantage of these complications as she may think fit. It is not our fault that in Vienna it has been found necessary to strike a German-Hungarian wedge between the Slavonian Duchies."

The *St. Petersburg News* considers a war between England and Afghanistan simply a local one :—"Our Government," it says, "will probably not interfere in the struggle between Shere Ali and England. An alliance between Afghanistan and Russia is indispensable to Shere Ali, who desires to feel secure as regards Russia in his war with England. Such an alliance by no means compromises the relations between Russia and England. Great Britain found it possible morally to support Turkey in her recent war against Russia. In London it was considered requisite to bring native troops from India to Europe, which is in itself a proof that England is unable without foreign aid to cope with Russia on land. It would be an unnatural and thoroughly senseless piece of disinterestedness not to take advantage of such an occasion for the purpose of giving Eastern affairs a turn, and paralysing the anti

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Russian clauses introduced into the Berlin Treaty by Count Andrassy and Lord Beaconsfield."

The *Novoe Vremya* of to-day says :—

"The English Press will probably either urge the disaffection of England's numerous Indian subjects, as an excuse for putting up with the insult, or it will advocate a war with Shere Ali. In either case the situation in India removes every probability of Great Britain's interference with the results of the Berlin Conference."

(By Submarine Telegraph.)

(From our own correspondent.)

PARIS, Wednesday.

In an article on the Afghan difficulty, the *Débats* expresses the opinion that the refusal of Shere Ali to receive the English Mission is a Russian *revanche* for the Treaty of Berlin and the occupation of Cyprus. The *Débats* thinks that the conciliatory process advocated by some organs of English opinion may be attended with danger. "Such a course," it says, "would be unobjectionable if the English had only the Ameer to deal with, but it should not be forgotten that the Russians are behind him, and that if the English take their time the Russians will certainly lose none."

The *Nord*, of Brussels, in its issue of Tuesday, returns at greater length to the subject of the crisis in India brought about by the stoppage and rejection of the British Mission to Cabul. Recalling its observations of a few days ago that "the question of Afghanistan is treated by the London press with the absence of *sang froid*, and with the febrile agitation which characterises the English Government," it says that 24 hours have happily sufficed to bring about a certain degree of *sang froid* and to call forth a sounder judgment on the part of English journalists. They are still, says the *Nord*, very much enraged against Shere Ali, but they leave Russia out of the question; they demand that the Ameer shall be "chastised," but add that care must be taken not to bring Russia into the conflict. Perhaps this appeasement may make further progress in a few days; but at present the situation is far from being clear. The only fact as yet known is that General Sir Neville Chamberlain's Embassy has returned to Peshawur, one of Shere Ali's officers, posted on the frontier with considerable forces, having opposed his further progress. As for the letter which the Ameer should have sent in reply to that from the Viceroy of India announcing the approaching departure of the Embassy, the most perfect silence continues to be preserved. It would, however, be interesting to know its contents, and what has become of it. It was clear, from the telegram from Bombay announcing this exchange of letters between the Viceroy and the Ameer, that the Embassy was to await Shere Ali's reply before proceeding towards Cabul. Has Sir Neville Chamberlain done so? Upon this point nothing is said; and it is necessary that some light should be thrown upon the matter before the incident can be properly appreciated. It may, perhaps, be objected that it was sufficient that the arrival of the Embassy was notified to the Ameer in order to secure it a becoming reception, and that the reply of the Ameer to this notification being looked forward to as favourable, it was useless for Sir Neville Chamberlain to delay proceeding on his journey. Such an objection would be plausible enough if it were a question of an ordinary mission; but this was not the case. Sir Neville Chamberlain had a large military following, considerably exceeding the customary and legitimate proportions of an escort. It is doubtful whether the Russian Mission, of which so much has been said during the past few weeks, went to Afghanistan surrounded by a military paraphernalia so unusual for an embassy. There was, continues the *Nord*, no necessity for Sir Neville Chamberlain taking with him so considerable a military force; and it is not absolutely impossible that Shere Ali, whilst showing a disposition to give the Viceroy of India's Envoy the best of receptions, should have begged him to leave behind a portion at least of the *corps d'armée* forming his escort. If such were the case, it would be difficult to attribute all the fault to the Ameer. When, a few years ago, the Cabinets of London and St. Petersburg endeavoured to arrive at an understanding as to the spheres of their respective influence in Asia, they came to the conclusion that a pacific, direct, and permanent action of each of the two Powers was the best means of assuring the maintenance of tranquillity in those regions. Russia consented to accept her portion of the responsibility; but England refused. Now, Afghanistan is the most important of the States which depend, more or less directly, upon England. Russia not having received, from the English Government, so far as concerns Afghanistan, the guarantees of security which she herself was disposed to give to England respecting the Khanates under its dependence, it followed that no other recourse remained to it but to endeavour to secure those guarantees from the Ameer of Afghanistan himself, by entering into direct relations with him. The events which have transpired in Asia during the past year; the defeat of the Kashgarians; the suppression of the State of Yakoub-Beg; and the flight of the former Khan of Khokand—who took refuge in Afghanistan in the hope, no doubt, of finding assistance for the recovery of his throne—all these constitute a state of things somewhat precarious, against the eventualities of which Russia was bound to guard herself; and the pacific and friendly attitude of Afghanistan is evidently one of the most important elements of security. Such, it appears to the *Nord*, is a sufficient explanation of the Russian Mission to Cabul. It depended upon England that no Russian Embassy should ever put its foot into Cabul. England disregarded the opportunity; and what she refused to do in the interest of the security of Russia, the latter must necessarily do for herself. There is nothing in this which is not very natural; nothing to cause disquietude on the part of England; nothing that can create a misunderstanding between the two Powers.

LONDON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26.

We publish to-day the text of the letters which the Viceroy of India addressed to the Ameer of Afghanistan before the departure of the Mission to Cabul. It will be recollected that in 1876 communications were sent to Shere Ali with a view to improve the relations between him and the British Government, but he took no notice of them. On the 14th ult. the Viceroy wrote to him again, pointing out that in consequence of recent events at Cabul he had deemed it necessary to send to him a special Envoy of high rank, who would converse with him personally on urgent affairs, adding that the welfare and tranquillity of both States would best be assured by a full and frank statement of the present position. In consequence, however, of the death of the Heir Apparent to Cabul the Viceroy sent a second letter expressing his sympathy, and adding that he had postponed sending the Mission until the usual period of mourning had elapsed. Our Bombay Correspondent also telegraphs the text of the letter which Sir Neville Chamberlain addressed to the Ameer's commandant in charge of the Khyber Pass—with what result has already been made public. We also publish the views of the Russian press on the critical position of affairs.

We publish this morning several telegrams from our Indian Correspondents, who give us the text of the Viceroy's two letters to Shere Ali, as well as of Sir Neville Chamberlain's note to Faiz Mahomed Khan, the Governor of the Khyber fort of Ali Musjid. The tone of those letters, it will be observed, is eminently conciliatory and friendly. Lord Lytton in his first communication, dated the 14th of August, addresses the Ameer as a trusted friend and ally, with whom there is necessity to discuss matters of grave importance; and Sir Neville Chamberlain emphasises the fact that our recent arrangements with the Khyberees for a safe conduct relate simply to the present occasion, and are intended in no sense to weaken Shere Ali's Suzerain rights. Lord Lytton's second letter, bearing date the 23d August, was called forth by the death of the heir apparent, Abdullah Jan, and in it his Excellency expressly mentions that, despite the urgency and importance of the matter, he does not desire to trouble his Highness with matters of State until a proper interval had elapsed for mourning. To neither of those letters did Shere Ali deign to reply. Our Bombay Correspondent aptly reminds us that the Ameer committed a similar act of discourtesy in 1876, although that offence must be held to have been condoned by the Peshawur negotiations in January, 1877. Sir Neville Chamberlain was on one point more explicit than the Viceroy. He had made his arrangements, he said, with the hillmen for a safe-conduct to Ali Musjid, and he requested a reply to his communication before the 18th inst.; in the event of his receiving no reply he must adopt such measures as seemed best suited to promote the object the Indian Government had in view. No reply came, and after giving the Afghan officer three days' grace, the Chamberlain Mission set out from Peshawur on the 21st inst. Major Cavagnari preceded it through the Khyber, and having reached Ali Musjid was compelled to return to Jumrood in the manner already known to us. The importance of the text of the Viceroy's letters is that it proves that even the aggravated, unfriendly conduct of Shere Ali during several years, and the surprise that attended the announcement that a Russian Mission had been received at Cabul, did not move Lord Lytton to make use of threaten-

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ing language. Each letter breathes a pre-eminently conciliatory spirit, and SHERE ALI to the last has been treated as an independent and reputedly friendly Prince. The studious moderation exhibited throughout the crisis redounds greatly to the credit of our Government, and stifles the adverse criticism raised in some quarters, to the effect that Lord LYTTON was striving to precipitate a rupture with Russia. To every reasonable man it was, and is, evident that it would be impossible to preserve our position in India if we permitted Russia to settle down as the presiding genius among the Afghan people; and the despatch of the mission of General ABRAMOV was the first step towards effecting that object; its reception and continued residence in the capital the first tokens that it might be successful. Yet our diplomatic equanimity was unruffled, and we still observed the same friendly attitude we had ever maintained towards the AMEER. The hostile action of the Commandant of Ali Musjid has been promptly answered by the military preparations which are being made throughout North-west India. Troops are being drawn together at the frontier in all directions. One column is being concentrated at Mooltan for a forward movement through Scinde. This will be composed of eight thousand men, of whom more than half will be English troops. Another force drawn from Peshawur and Attock is advancing through the Kohat Pass and from the Indus, to secure communication between Peshawur and Kohat, and, having effected this, is to advance on Thull, which commands the eastern entrance of the Khurum Pass. Six thousand men will be concentrated at Thull within the next week, and by this corps the Khyber Pass can be out-flanked if necessary. The occupation of the valley of Khurum, which is of great strategical importance as being parallel to the Khyber, and as dominating the Afghan district of Khost, has often been advocated during our border troubles, and now, in view of a more serious danger, is about to be carried out. A third, and the largest, column is being formed at Peshawur, and the nucleus for this will be the present garrison and the regiments intended to comprise the camp of exercise which was to be held at Hassan Abdal. This column will probably number fifteen thousand men. The movements of the second and third columns will at first be restricted to securing the Khurum and Khyber Passes, which will be done by our troops holding the entrances, and by arrangements with the Khyber Malliks, who will be freely subsidised. But the work before the first column is more arduous, and with its movements the interest of the early stages of our military preparations will consequently be more closely bound up.

The troops which are assembling at Mooltan can be rapidly conveyed by the Indus Valley Railway to either Sukhur or Larkhana, whence it is an easy march to our frontier post at Jacobabad. From Jacobabad to Dadar there is a good road, and at both of these places there is, or was recently, a considerable number of troops. Beyond Dadar the Bholan Pass begins, and at the western extremity of it lies Quettah, the garrison of which was lately augmented by Jacob's rifles. From Jacobabad to Quettah the distance is one hundred and eighty miles, of which the Bholan Pass occupies seventy. In 1839 five days were occupied in traversing the Bholan alone; but since then many of its difficulties have been smoothed down. The column now concentrating at Mooltan, when joined to the garrisons of Jacobabad, Dadar, and Quettah, should give an available fighting force of ten thousand men, and with that army the whole of Southern Afghanistan might be subdued before the cold weather sets in in December. With great rapidity this force might be at Quettah on the 16th of October, and Candahar, which is one hundred and fifty miles to the north, could be occupied before the 10th of November. But, so far as the military arrangements go at present, it is intended to pause when the passes west of Peshawur and Kohat have been secured, and when the small garrison of Quettah has been raised to the dimensions of an army. Our columns will then halt to observe the effect, and our future action will be guided entirely by the events that may take place within Cabul itself. It is probable that insurrections will break out among the ever-discontented Afghans, who, although to some extent overawed by SHERE ALI'S successful campaigns in 1868-69, have not so far acquiesced in his rule—rendered unpopular, too, by the institution of various reforms in their national customs after the Umbala Durbar, when his affection for us was in its first glow—as to make it certain that it will not be challenged from within as soon as danger shows itself from without. And it will be by the course of events within Cabul that our subsequent military action will be regulated. We concentrate our columns on various points of the frontier, and by seizing the passes we make sure of an entrance into Afghanistan when the moment comes for such a step, and we await in that expectant attitude the further development of events. If those demonstrations serve to bring SHERE ALI to his senses so much the better, and we shall receive his excuses in no half-hearted spirit of satisfaction. But it is not probable that SHERE ALI will so quickly quail before the storm which he has raised, and which, when he sent his instructions to ALI MUSJID, he must have anticipated. He has not lived during the various epochs of Anglo-Afghan history since we first entered Cabul without knowing that our power was something more than a name; and the promptitude with which this country resented his reception of the Russian Envoy must have apprised him that no trifling would be tolerated by us in the question of how England and Afghanistan were to be related in the future. Yet he has flung down the glove, and by whom has he been urged to commit this act of hostility? Are we to suppose that it was simply some insane pride, or a mistaken notion of his own power and resources, which bade him decline to receive our Mission, and impelled him to frame his refusal in the most discourteous and offensive manner? It may be so, but if it is there is little chance of SHERE ALI coming to his senses. His pride will forbid him to abandon a line of action which was decided upon in a hasty moment and in an outbreak of petulance, and he will pursue his mad career to the bitter end.

On the other hand, if he has defied us either at the instigation of General ABRAMOV, or through an unfounded belief that Russia would support him against the exercise of force on our side, then he may yet render us complete reparation if he find that the Russian authorities in Europe are resolved to repudiate the whole arrangement, and that he will not receive that support to which he believes his hostility to England has entitled him, and upon the promise of which he, trusting to the delusive phrases of the Russian Envoy, has grown so bold. The extracts we publish from the *Golos* and other Russian journals clearly show that, although there is great satisfaction at the prospect of an Anglo-Afghan war, no intention or desire has yet been manifested to support the Afghan ruler in arms against this country. The *St. Petersburg News* considers a war between England and Afghanistan to be simply a local one, yet, with a strange perversion of logic, asserts that an alliance, "indispensable to SHERE ALI," between Russia and Afghanistan would "by no means compromise the relations between Russia and England." We fear this amicable view will scarcely find favour amongst Englishmen, who cannot but attribute to Russian policy and intrigue more than to anything else the remarkable impulse SHERE ALI'S sentiments have received since Russian agents first began to break ground in Cabul after the Khivan campaign. Nor will SHERE ALI himself much approve of so benevolent an intention, which, if carried out, would leave him powerless in our hands. The principal danger then will be encroachments under Russian auspices against Balkh and Herat. The Persians, who always assail Herat the moment an Afghan Ameer is engaged elsewhere, will be instigated to repeat the attempt of MAHOMED SHAH in 1838, and the discomfiture of SHERE ALI in Cabul will be the signal for ABDERRAHMAN KHAN'S appearance in Balkh. The immediate danger from Russia is to the outlying dependencies of Cabul when their master shall have been overthrown, and it is in many senses a very grave peril. There is another contingency infinitely more serious, but that is, if the Russian press reveals the national mind, or rather that of the Government, barely probable. The time has not yet arrived for Russia to interfere actively and prominently in Cabul, nor would she be wise at the present time to attempt it; and she will most probably permit SHERE ALI to be crushed while she strives to absorb the Balkh region for her minion ABDERRAHMAN, and to place Herat in safe hands.

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"Evening Standard"
Sept: 26th

The *Nord*, continuing its observations upon what it regards as the unnecessarily large military escort which accompanied General Sir Neville Chamberlain, says that the ostensible and avowed object of his mission was, as is well known, the establishment of regular and permanent relations with Afghanistan; it was essentially, according to official declarations made both at London and Calcutta, a mission of peace and friendship. It would appear strange that if a person offering his friendship to another should do so armed to the teeth, unless, indeed, it were with the object of applying the well-known saying, "Be my friend, or I will kill you." But neither between States nor between individuals is such an application in the natural order of things; and it must be hoped that the Government of British India will know how to act otherwise in order to convince Shere Ali of the usefulness of its friendship, and to cause it to be accepted.

The *Bombay Gazette*, received to-day, says that at the close of the diplomatic negotiations of 1873, the main object of which was to fix the northern boundary of Afghanistan and thus set a limit to the Russian advance, it cannot be forgotten that after Prince Gortschakoff had volunteered a declaration that Russia considered Afghanistan beyond her own sphere of action, but would hold England responsible for keeping the Ameer in order and preventing Afghan raids across the Oxus, Mr. Gladstone got up in the House of Commons and said England would undertake no responsibility for the actions of the Ameer; and so the proposed bargain fell through, leaving Russia at liberty to take her own way in Central Asia. Last year, again, there were futile negotiations, in the course of which the Ameer asked for what Sir N. Chamberlain must now be empowered to offer him, a guarantee of the integrity of his dominions against Russia, coupled with a large subsidy. The grant of such terms will, of course, be now made conditional on the occupation by British troops of certain strategical points in Afghan territory; but the negotiations should be carried on in a perfectly friendly manner with the Ameer if he be inclined to listen to reason, and, should he prove recalcitrant, English troops should at once occupy his country, without setting up any pretender. A word of caution seems to be necessary regarding the escort which is going up with Sir N. Chamberlain, and which is not strong enough to defend itself against attack. The Ameer has always said that he could not guarantee the safety of any English Resident sent to his Court; and it appears a mistake to give Sir Neville an escort of cavalry alone, when the addition of a couple of horse artillery guns would free it from the risk of being assailed and overwhelmed by a savage and treacherous enemy.

The *Times of India* contains the following:—"We hear from Simla that the latest advices from Cabul, dated August 21st, state that the Ameer, after much persuasion from the Mustaphi, attended durbar again for the first time. All kinds of rumours are current, as appears from the following Simla telegram—"Reports are becoming more positive that Yakoob Khan has escaped to Ghuznee, where there is said to be some disturbance or rising. Russian movements in that direction appear to be unknown. Rumour says we shall force on the Mission whether the Ameer consents or not. Quiet preparations are being made to this end, and it is understood that we may move on Herat." With a view to eventualities, a contemporary makes the following suggestions:—"To secure a position which would really dominate Cabul, a force should be moved into the valley of the Kuram River without loss of time. The military advantage of an occupation of this post is notorious to all acquainted with the topography of the frontier. The valley is extensive, fertile, highly cultivated, and capable of supplying a large force. It is inhabited principally by the Turi tribe of the Shiah sect, who are extremely well disposed towards the British, hating their Suni rulers at Cabul. A station constructed within five or six marches only of our present frontier would be within eight or nine marches of Cabul itself, with a good road leading to the capital over the Shah Gurdun Pass, easy of approach from the Kuram side, but somewhat long and difficult on the Afghan side. Our own village of Thul would form a good post in connection with the advance to Kuram, being about 50 miles in rear, and Kohat would form a convenient base about 60 miles behind Thul. We should like to see this position occupied before the Mission to Cabul sets out. Its possession would form a very effectual 'material guarantee' for the honourable reception of the British Envoy by the Ameer, and would (without any hostile demonstration whatever, for the Turis and Bangush, another tribe in the valley, would rejoice in our advance) serve to convince the Afghans that civility to us is their best policy. This important point in our hands, the Mission, with an escort considerably larger than that already named, might advance by the Khyber secure in the good will of the Pass Afridis, who are far more ill-disposed towards the Ameer than towards ourselves, and secure also in the far more important matter of the respect ever accorded to visible and tangible strength and resolution. This is the method by which only England can now exert her influence in Afghanistan and the States of Central Asia."

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THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 26.

If Shere Ali and his Russian friends imagined that the "great insult done the Queen" would be an unexpected blow likely to plunge the British Government into a state of consternation and alarm, by this time they are undeceived. Anticipating with wise foresight such a termination to the Mission, the Viceroy has made "quiet preparations," which are likely to cease their quietude and make a noise in the world ere many days. For it is extremely satisfactory to learn that the Cabinet distinctly recognises the absolute necessity for immediate action. It is not considered advisable to wait for a year or two and see whether Shere Ali may not be disposed to say that he regrets the unfortunate little accident, and that a mistake was made by subordinate officials. Neither will Englishmen—except, perhaps, Mr. Jenkins, the member for Dundee, and his friends—be satisfied with the assurances of Prince Gortschakoff's organ, the *Nord*, to the effect that in the understanding between Russia and Afghanistan "there is nothing to cause disquietude on the part of England; nothing that can create a misunderstanding between the two Powers." We prefer trusting to the opinion of such men as the late Commissioner of Police of Bombay, whose experiences in that capacity during the Mutiny give special value to his views. "Speaking with an intimate knowledge of native feeling, I say," he writes, "that any procrastination in meeting the insult we have received in the Khyber Pass will be fatal to us in India. We may put off entering Cabul until the spring, but should at once advance on and seize the Khyber Pass and Candahar. To procrastinate till the spring would give Russia time to secretly supply the Ameer with mitrailleuses, &c., by means of which 100 men could keep 100,000 from entering the Khyber. Now, 5000 men might overrun and occupy Afghanistan. The conquest of that country would give absolute finality to our territorial development in Asia, and secure India from all alarms for ever." "A Retired Field Officer," whose knowledge of India is considerable, joins heartily in the same advice. "If we are to wait till next spring before taking notice of the Ameer's insult, the delay will be very prejudicial to our *prestige*, and the Ameer might by that time have received considerable help from Russia." It is, of course, by no means certain that this considerable help has not already been given, and the insolent tone of the Russian journals seems to show a very strong conviction on their part that their triumph is a substantial one. Probably, however, in this matter they have done injustice to the wisdom of Lord Lytton's calculations. He, it is to be hoped and presumed, when counting his enemies, has left a liberal balance for the "moral support"—including troops, arms, and ammunition—of the Ameer's Russian friends, and has not committed what was once before the terribly fatal mistake of under-estimating his adversary's strength.

So much has been proved about the excellence of the rocket as a weapon of offence, that it is to be sincerely hoped the expeditionary forces to Afghanistan will be well supplied with this most effective missile. During the Ashantee war the rocket was proved not only to have a most destructive, but at the same time a most demoralising, effect on the warriors of King Coffee. When well started, in many cases the missile takes a most peculiar serpentine course, and, bending about, maims and injures to the right and left of it for a considerable distance. The rocket also, against a light stockade, such as the Afghans would be very likely to make use of, is more destructive and effective than any field shell or shot invented, for on meeting with steady resistance it still keeps on pounding away until the whole charge is burnt out. On the Gold Coast this last instance of its efficacy was frequently observable during the attacks and bombardments of the native villages. When the rockets first fired struck the well-constructed buildings or stockades, as no harm seemed to be done, for the moment a feeling of disappointment was felt by every one engaged in action; but in the course of a few seconds it was discovered that the rockets which at the first blow failed to destroy the resistance offered to them, yet by their perpetual pounding movement did in the end more real work than a good battery of light artillery. Again by this "pounding," the rocket in the Afghan passes could not fail to be most successful, if only directed against the rocks in the near neighbourhood of the mountaineers. On meeting with sharp-pointed surfaces it would strike and turn right and left, ascend and descend, and cause general consternation all round. Above all, too, be it remembered as the "passes" cannot fail to cause great difficulty in transit of any sort, we should bear in mind that the rocket requires no gun nor mortar to start it, but is fired from a lightly constructed frame, of very little weight and occupying but little compass.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 26th

HOW WE STAND WITH RUSSIA.

ALL the news from India points to an immediate attack on the Ameer, who seems to be, not merely through the volunteer insolence of a half-instructed servant but directly and personally, answerable for the defiant insult levelled at the Government of India. A plan of campaign has already been formed, and considerable bodies of troops are on the march to punish the Afghan chief And it is agreed even amongst the most discordant of our political factions at home that nothing else could be done with honour or safety.

But SHERE ALI is not the only person to be dealt with in this business. To all observers it appears as nearly certain as anything can be that, however rash, intemperate, and sudden may be the temper of the Ameer, he would not have brought an English army into his country without the encouragement of a Power which he naturally deems a stronger one than the Power he defies. Those who doubt that he is working at the instigation of Russia are very few indeed; nor have the Russians shown themselves at all inclined, so far, to deny that they have mixed for us this little new imbroglio. By-and-by, however, they probably will deny it—officially, "with civil leer." Meantime it does not appear that we have any proof of the instigation which everybody believes in; and without proof it would be rash to act upon such a belief. So much we may all agree upon. But we wish to point out that whether the Ameer is or is not acting in hostility to England at the instigation of Russia, or encouraged by Russian promises, is not the whole question. The Ameer may or may not be a tool employed by Russia to harass, weaken, and humiliate England. But, even though it may be capable of demonstration that he is nothing of the kind, the fact remains that Russia has herself to answer for an independent act of hostility to England. The despatch of a mission to Cabul, the contrivances, whatever they may have been, by which she ensured its establishment there, are a complete breach of the pledges upon which the peaceful relations of the two Governments in that region were well understood to rest. The Russian Government has been allowed to carry its so-called civilizing mission in the East up to our very gates, on promises and pledges of the most unequivocal kind that no attempt would be made to disturb our own civilizing mission within those gates: by interference in Afghanistan, for instance. As we have already said, those engagements were made, not by one provincial governor to another; they were demanded by her Majesty's Government of the Czar's Government, and they were entered into because it was understood and acknowledged on *both* sides that Russia's interference in Afghanistan would be and must be regarded as a menace to the British Empire. If the Russian Government asserted that we had no ground for complaint as long as the operations of their generals and diplomatists fell short of certain territorial limits—fell short, specifically, of Afghanistan—they have always allowed that transgression beyond them might properly enough be taken as a blow aimed at England in the East. Well, put the conduct of the Ameer entirely out of the question, and that blow has been delivered. The Russians may set up an excuse for their doings at Cabul—such doings are never without excuse of some sort—but they cannot possibly deny, even if they care to do so, that the despatch of their mission to Cabul was a deliberate rupture of an understanding upon which peace between the two nations in the East was based. Equally with the conduct of the Ameer, and quite apart from it or from any implication in it, the Russian mission is a mark of hostility and an act of defiance. Equally with the conduct of the Ameer, it cannot be recalled; it cannot be undone; in any case much of its worst effects, so far as we are concerned, must remain, after any amount of mere explanation and apology. This being the case, we should like to know what course her Majesty's Government propose to take as to Russia, as well as to the Ameer. Thrashing the Afghans will be no remedy for the Russian injury and affront, which is a thing apart from the defiant insolence of an independent Eastern prince, even though for that too we have to thank the "great and friendly Power" of which the Czar is chief. Of course we know the difficulties into which the miserable weakness and credulity of our Government have led them, and how much they may be hampered, not only by electioneering considerations at home, but by the continuance and augmentation of their troubles abroad. We know how hard it must be to brag of peace with honour one day, and the next to plunge into demands for explanation of the Power they boasted of having "cowed." But it is plain that the conduct of Russia cannot be allowed to pass without explanation and remedy, unless we mean to proclaim that we are content to put up with any number of Khivan pledges, and are resigned to whatever course of action the exigencies of Russia may suggest in the East. It seems all the more necessary to take measures of this kind considering the language of the Russian press, which does *not* dissociate its Government from the

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action of the Ameer. One of the St. Petersburg papers tells us that "an alliance between Afghanistan and Russia is indispensable to SHERE ALI, who desires to feel secure as regards Russia in his war with England. Such an alliance by no means compromises the relations between Russia and England. Great Britain found it possible morally to support Turkey in her recent war against Russia;" and the suggestion is that Russia will find it morally possible to support Afghanistan in her impending war with England: as nobody can doubt. Indeed, it is avowed that "it would be an unnatural and thoroughly senseless piece of disinterestedness not to take advantage of such an occasion for the purpose of giving Eastern affairs a turn, and paralyzing the anti-Russian clauses introduced into the Berlin Treaty by Count ANDRASSY and Lord BEACONSFIELD." Another Russian paper says that "the situation in India removes every probability of Great Britain's interference with the results of the Berlin Conference"—meaning, whatever results may yet follow; and, considering the constitution of the British Cabinet, and the position it has maundered into, we are afraid there is much truth in the remark. And it is to be observed that precisely at this moment England is fast losing whatever influence she had at the Porte, while Russia is rapidly regaining a powerful position there. This may be regarded as certain; and it is precisely what might have been anticipated. If our Afghan troubles are to be passed over as too unimportant to demand consideration in Cabinet Council, the state of affairs in Constantinople will soon bring Ministers together, unless they have formed a resolution to let everything "slide" in a dignified way.

This Evening's News.

THE OVERLAND MAIL.

The Bombay mail has brought news to the 6th of September, but it is of little interest compared with that recently received by telegraph. The following items are from the *Bombay Gazette*:—

In the sitting of the Legislative Council at Simla on September 5, Sir Alexander Arbuthnot introduced the Vernacular Press Amendment Bill, the object of which is to repeal that portion of the Act which enables publishers of vernacular newspapers to withdraw themselves from its restrictive provisions by submitting their proofs to a Government official. The bill will be taken into consideration on the 26th of September, when Sir A. Arbuthnot will review the discussions which have taken place in India and England on the Act.

A portion of the Indian troops have already returned to Bombay from Cyprus. It is proposed that when the 9th Bombay Native Infantry arrive, a public welcome shall be given to them.

Sirdar Mahomed Sherif Khan, the brother of the Ameer of Cabul, who has for some years been a sort of State prisoner at Mussoorie, is about to start on a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is thought that the prospect of disturbances in Cabul may have something to do with his desire to get out of British India.

The murderer of Mr. Cooper, late political agent, Bhamo, was taken down to Rangoon last week, and stood his trial in the court of the recorder, when he was sentenced and hanged.

A considerable portion of the Indus Valley State Railway will probably have to be reconstructed, on account of the great damage caused by recent floods.

The *Madras Mail* gives circulation to a rumour that the Duke of Buckingham is to succeed Sir George Bowen as Governor of Victoria.

Post cards are to be introduced into India on the 1st of April next.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The Kuram valley, by which it is proposed to throw troops into Afghanistan, is probably the best of all the routes from the Punjaub, both on account of the easiness of the road and the abundance of water, fuel, grazing, and supplies procurable in it. The inhabitants, being all Shiah Mohammedans, bear no good will to their Afghan masters. In fact, Sir Herbert Edwardes was distinctly assured by them that whenever the British wished to take their country they were ready to help them. The occupation by the Indian Government of the Kuram and Khost Valleys has been suggested more than once, on account of the admirable position which it would afford. From the first Cabul is distant but nine marches; and the two passes to the north, Pewar and Shutargardan, leading across the Safed Koh range into the Cabul basin, are perfectly commanded by any one occupying the valley in force. The route by which the main body of the troops will advance on Candahar will apparently be the Bolan. But there is another route by which a large force could be more easily and rapidly despatched against Candahar—namely, the Shangar. In 1653 Dara-Shukoh, son of the Emperor Shah-i-Jahan, left Multan with an army of 104,000 men and a large equipment of stores and cannon, and advanced to Candahar by this route, which goes by Chotiali, Dogh, and Tal. Major Raverty describes the pass as broad and large, practicable for man and beast and also for light artillery; and he is of opinion that very little engineering would make it practicable for moderately heavy guns. The distance from Multan to Candahar by this route is 300 miles, whereas by the Bolan it is 350 miles from Candahar to Jacobabad only, which is much nearer the frontier than Multan.

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ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The Bombay correspondent of the *Standard* has telegraphed the text of the Viceroy's letters to the Ameer of Afghanistan. On the 14th of August the following letter was sent by the Viceroy from Simla :—

The authentic intelligence which I have lately received as to the course of recent events at Cabul and in the countries bordering on Afghanistan has rendered it necessary that I should communicate fully and without reserve with your Highness upon matters of importance which concern the interests of India and Afghanistan. For this reason I have considered it expedient to depute an especial and confidential Envoy of high rank, who is known to your Highness—his Excellency General Sir Neville Bowles Chamberlain. He will visit your Highness immediately, in order that he may converse personally with your Highness regarding these urgent affairs. It appears certain that they can best be arranged for the welfare and tranquillity of both States, and the preservation of friendship between the two Governments, by a full and frank statement of the present position. This letter is, therefore, sent in advance to your Highness by the hand of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, C.S.I., a faithful and honoured sirdar of my Government, who will explain all the necessary details, the time and manner of the Envoy's visit, and will ask that your Highness may be pleased to issue commands to your sirdars and all the other authorities of Afghanistan upon the route between Peshawur and Cabul, and will make, without delay, whatever arrangements may be necessary and proper for effectually securing to my Envoy, as the representative of a friendly Power, a due safe conduct and suitable accommodation according to his dignity, while passing with his retinue through the dominions of your Highness. I beg to express the high consideration which I entertain for your Highness, and to subscribe myself, &c.

Ten days later the second letter, dated August 23, was despatched. It was as follows :—

After the despatch from Simla of my letter, dated August 14, 1878, which the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan will deliver with this letter to your Highness, I received from Peshawur the melancholy news that your Highness has suffered a great affliction by the untimely death of Sirdar Abdulla Jan, the heir apparent to Cabul and its dependencies. I desire to express to your Highness personally the sincere regret which this intelligence has caused to me ; but life and death are in the hands of God, and resignation to His will is unavoidable. In consequence of this calamity I have directed my Envoy to postpone for a short time his departure, in order that your Highness may not be troubled by public business, however important or urgent, until the usual period of mourning has elapsed.

The same correspondent telegraphs the text of the letter sent by Sir Neville Chamberlain to the Ameer's commandant at the Fort of Ali Musjid—Faiz Muhammed Khan. After the usual compliments Sir Neville says :—

I write to inform you that, by the command of his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General, a friendly mission of British officers, with a suitable escort, is about to proceed to Cabul through the Khyber Pass, and an intimation of the despatch of this mission has been duly communicated to his Highness the Ameer by the hand of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan. I hear that an official from Cabul has recently visited at Ali Musjid. He has doubtless instructed you in accordance with his Highness the Ameer's commands. As, however, information has now been received that you have summoned from Peshawur the Khyber headmen with whom we are making arrangements for the safe conduct of the British mission through the Khyber Pass, I therefore write to inquire of you whether, in accordance with the instructions you have received, you are prepared to guarantee the safety of the British mission to Dhakka or not, and to request a clear reply to this inquiry, which may be speedily communicated to the bearer of this letter, as I cannot delay our departure from Peshawur. It is well known that the Khyber tribes are in receipt of allowances from the Cabul Government, and, like other independent tribes on this frontier, have relations also with the British Government. It may be well to let you know that when the present negotiations were opened with the Khyber tribes it was solely with the object of arranging with them for the safe conduct of the mission through the Khyber Pass in the same manner as was done with regard to the despatch of our agent Nawab Khan, and the tribes had been given to understand that the negotiations were in no way intended to prejudice their relations with the Ameer, as it is well known that the object of the mission was altogether of a friendly character to the Ameer and the people of Afghanistan. I trust that, in accordance with the instructions you have received from the Ameer, your reply to this letter will be satisfactory, and will contain the required assurances that the mission will be safely conducted to Dhakka. I expect to receive a reply not later than the 18th inst., so please understand that the matter is most urgent. At the same time it is my duty to inform you in a frank and friendly manner that if your answer be not what I trust it will be, or if you delay to send an early reply, I have no alternative but to make whatever arrangements may seem to me best for carrying out the instructions I have received from my Government.

With reference to the military preparations of the Indian Government the same correspondent says :—"There is considerable excitement here, as it is thought probable that if an invasion of Afghanistan is undertaken, a division will be sent up from Kurrachee, by the Indus, to join the forces which will operate by the Bholan Pass." He also states that orders have been at once issued to draw other bodies of troops, besides those mentioned yesterday, towards the frontier, with a view of early ulterior operations should the course of affairs render it necessary. It is, he adds, believed to be quite possible that Persia, acting under the advice of Russia, will take advantage of the confusion which will ensue upon our advance, to make a fresh attempt to capture Herat. The Allahabad correspondent of the same journal believes that General Chamberlain will have the chief command of any military operations that may take place.

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The *Times* correspondent at Calcutta says that war with Afghanistan is there believed to be inevitable. He states that the commandant of Ali Musjid Fort threatened Major Cavagnari, saying that save for his personal friendship he would shoot him on the spot. Other telegrams show that it is still considered uncertain in India whether the military preparations which are being made are intended as a demonstration to terrify the Ameer or for an actual invasion of Afghanistan. The Indian papers have published the two letters, dated August 14 and August 23, sent by the Viceroy to the Ameer, the first announcing that it had been decided to send a mission to Cabul, and asking for it a safe conduct and proper reception ; the second, offering condolences on the death of the Ameer's heir. To neither of these letters was any answer returned. The *Standard* publishes their text, together with that of the letter which Sir Neville Chamberlain addressed to the Afghan commandant at the Khyber Pass.

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"Globe" Sept. 26th

GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

The complication with Afghanistan will have one good effect if it directs public attention to the almost prohibitory charges levied on press messages to and from India. There is no abatement in favour of such telegrams, in spite of their public nature, compared with messages of a purely private character. Both descriptions are charged 4s. 6d. per word west of Chittagong, and there is an inland rate in India to be added to this amount. Some time back the Eastern Telegraph Company meditated a large reduction in favour of press messages, but as nothing more has been heard of the projected abatement, we imagine the recent amalgamation with the Government moiety of the Indo-European line has brought the scheme to naught. The public, no less than the press, are interested in this matter, for it is palpable that news from India must be of the briefest sort so long as the telegraph tariff remains at its present prohibitory level. Much worse is the case of the Anglo-Indian public, as their press is not in a position to afford a regular supply of even the shortest messages. Now and again some journal accepts the enormous cost of a long special telegram, but as a rule our fellow countrymen have to depend on the tender mercies of telegraphic agencies for early news from home. To all intents and purposes, therefore, the supply is a monopoly, and so it has been at this end of the wires connecting England with the East, except in the case of the *Times*, which has generally published a special telegram from India once a week. Should the present trouble with the cantankerous Court of Cabul develop into a war, the Government will have to look into the matter for some remedy, as the public may hold it partly to blame for having given up its control over the management of the Indo-European line without stipulating for a large abatement in favour of press messages. Good may thus come even out of the evil done by General Abramoff at Cabul, and if the English and Anglo-Indian publics are enabled to learn more of each other's doings by telegraph through his instrumentality, they may be disposed to pardon the intriguer on the score of his unconscious philanthropy.

THE RUSSIAN MISSION TO BOKHARA.

The *Turkestan Gazette* publishes the following in respect to the Russian mission to Bokhara:—

"Monsieur A. A. Weinberg, officer for special political missions, and now on a visit to the Ameer of Bokhara, to discuss matters relating to the movements of the active forces about the headquarters of the Amu Darya, has written from the city of Bokhara. From his letter we extract the following news:—Having hurt his foot on the way, he had to give up riding at Samarkand, from whence he travelled in a country cart as far as Chirakchi, to which place the Ameer had politely sent one of his own carriages. In the afternoon of the 21st May (2nd June) M. Weinberg reached Karshi, and on the day following, accompanied by Staff Captain Schlichten he had an interview with the Ameer, to whom he delivered a letter from the Governor-General of Turkestan, at the same time pronouncing some friendly sentiments. He informed the Ameer that his Excellency (Von Kauffmann) hoped for a sincerely friend-like attitude on the part of Bokhara in case the Russian forces now under marching orders should be directed to the Amu Darya; he reminded the Ameer of his friendship as tested during the Khivan expedition of 1873, and wound up by giving expression to Von Kauffmann's hopes that the Ameer would assist the Russian forces by way of voluntarily permitting his subjects to sell them bread, flour, and other provisions. Ameer Syad Muzafar who had appeared somewhat excited at the commencement of the interview, offered no remark while Weinberg was speaking. Having listened to the end, he replied to the effect that he was willingly ready to meet the wishes of the Governor-General, and that he would do all in his power to assist the Russian troops to the end of improving upon the good friendly relations now maintained between Russia and Bokhara. In reply to the Ameer's question as to 'how Russia intended to arrange her affairs with Cabul?' Mons. Weinberg deemed it necessary to reply openly (sincerely), that the Governor-General of Turkestan entertained no enmity whatever against Afghanistan, and that he (Von Kauffmann) contemplated sending an embassy to Sher Ali Khan on the arrival of which at Cabul the relations of Russia with that country would probably be cleared up in one way or other, that is, assume a friendly or hostile aspect. All would depend upon Ameer Ali's uprightness, frankness and good sense. The Russians plot nothing whatever (entertain no devices of any kind) against him. At the expiration of half an hour the interview came to an end, and when Mons. Weinberg rose to take leave, the Ameer asked him to come again on the following day, in order to discuss some further questions. With reference to Mons. N. A. Mayet's journey, the Ameer raised no objections, and declared himself willing to aid him. Merchant Ivanof has obtained the Ameer's permission to buy provisions in Bokhara, which are intended for the use of the Ameer Darya Corps." N. A. Mayef is the editor of the *Turkestan Gazette*, and holds the rank of a major in the Russian army. The two last numbers of the *Gazette* give no clue as to the direction and object of Mayef's journey, or the way in which it concerns the Ameer of Bokhara.

"Standard" Sept: 27th

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LONDON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27.

Our Correspondent at Bombay believes that no immediate advance will be made on Cabul by General CHAMBERLAIN, who must first negotiate with the independent hill tribes to secure their neutrality. No such hindrance, however, applies to the advance from Quetta upon Candahar, which may be expected as soon as sufficient troops have been collected. A Reuter's telegram from Simla reports that a serious outbreak has occurred at Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan.

The necessity for the adoption of vigorous measures in dealing with the Government of SHERE ALI is becoming more apparent every day. The effect upon public opinion in this country is all that could be desired. The action of the Government is approved with an exhibition of unanimity that has not been seen since the days of the Crimean War, and the more factious politicians of the Opposition can do no more than pity their countrymen for having to perform an obvious duty. Two or three days ago we were entreated to remember the fearful misfortunes we had brought upon ourselves by our former interference in Afghanistan, but now the instruction is that if retribution is slackened for a single hour we are irretrievably disgraced. "We simply cannot afford to delay;" we must strike at once, and strike heavily, and upon a certain line which is pointed out for the information of the Government of India, and the difficulties of which are carefully explained. We may say at once that the advice thus tendered will not be followed, for the simple reason that a better plan is already in course of adoption, by which the terrible risks of disaster will not be incurred. The opponents of the Government, seeing the strength and unanimity of the national feeling, do not venture to attack its policy openly; they attempt to flurry it and to stipulate for it the attainment of certain results within a certain period, with the generous intimation that if everything is not accomplished precisely within the period set down, a patriotic criticism will be compelled to denounce the failure. This method of treating a great national question from a small party point of view could but provoke a smile in ordinary times; but when the Empire is on the brink, perhaps, of the most terrible struggle in which we have been engaged since Waterloo, it is not easy to tolerate mere narrow partisanship. Still it must be admitted that the criticism of the Opposition, whilst ingeniously preparing every possible method of future embarrassment, is satisfactory so far that it does not dare to contest the necessity of exacting reparation by force of arms from the Ameer of CABUL. In the meantime the effect of English opinion upon foreign nations, and especially upon Russia, is fortunately not diminished. The resolution of this country to bring to an end the incessant menace of Afghan hostility is clear and unqualified, and is all the more impressive because of our sobriety and moderation of language. This Russia understands perfectly well, and it may be perceived already that she is solicitous to prove that she is not directly concerned in Afghanistan. Russian diplomacy may probably find that in playing the hazardous game of Central Asian politics it has missed a point, and given over the chances of ultimate victory to the hated English.

The language of the Russian newspapers, mingling insolence with apology, is apparently intended to cover a precipitate retreat behind a cloud of controversial dust. For us there is no need to attempt to penetrate this cloud. We know quite enough of the truth to be justified in taking any course we please—in holding Russia responsible for the audacity of SHERE ALI or in ignoring her complicity;—and whether we have to encounter her directly or not in Afghanistan it is not this country which need recoil from the struggle. Our armies now being massed upon the North-western frontier will easily overrun Afghanistan, and deal with the AMEER as the Imperial Government may determine. Russian assistance covertly conveyed will help him as little as it helped the Servians, and openly given it would lead to a war in Asia between England and Russia from which the Russians have far more to fear than we have. The insolence of the Russian newspapers cannot disguise this fact.

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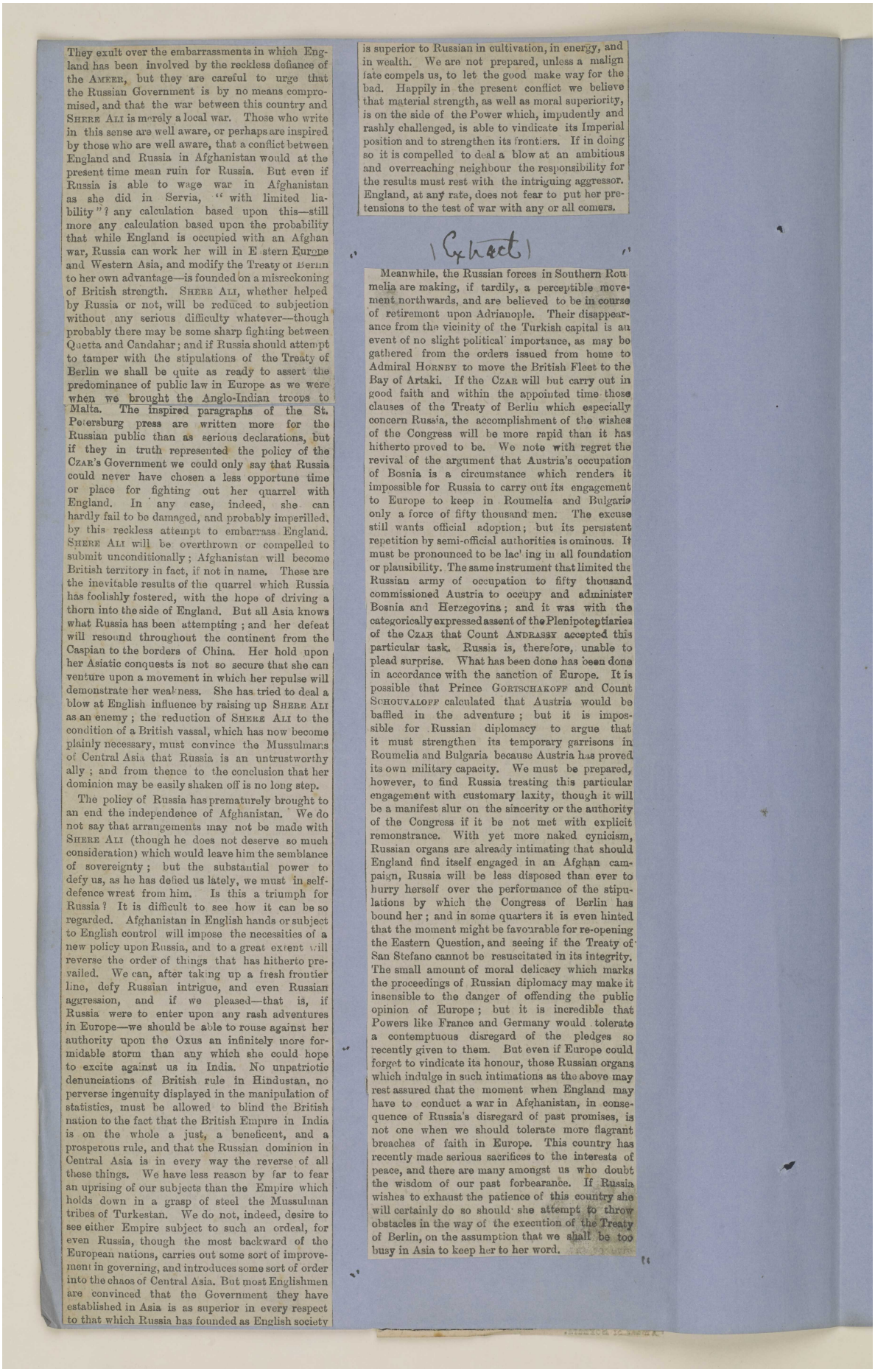

They exult over the embarrassments in which England has been involved by the reckless defiance of the AMEER, but they are careful to urge that the Russian Government is by no means compromised, and that the war between this country and SHERE ALI is merely a local war. Those who write in this sense are well aware, or perhaps are inspired by those who are well aware, that a conflict between England and Russia in Afghanistan would at the present time mean ruin for Russia. But even if Russia is able to wage war in Afghanistan as she did in Servia, "with limited liability"? any calculation based upon this—still more any calculation based upon the probability that while England is occupied with an Afghan war, Russia can work her will in Eastern Europe and Western Asia, and modify the Treaty of Berlin to her own advantage—is founded on a misreckoning of British strength. SHERE ALI, whether helped by Russia or not, will be reduced to subjection without any serious difficulty whatever—though probably there may be some sharp fighting between Quetta and Candahar; and if Russia should attempt to tamper with the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin we shall be quite as ready to assert the predominance of public law in Europe as we were when we brought the Anglo-Indian troops to Malta. The inspired paragraphs of the St. Petersburg press are written more for the Russian public than as serious declarations, but if they in truth represented the policy of the CZAR's Government we could only say that Russia could never have chosen a less opportune time or place for fighting out her quarrel with England. In any case, indeed, she can hardly fail to be damaged, and probably imperilled, by this reckless attempt to embarrass England. SHERE ALI will be overthrown or compelled to submit unconditionally; Afghanistan will become British territory in fact, if not in name. These are the inevitable results of the quarrel which Russia has foolishly fostered, with the hope of driving a thorn into the side of England. But all Asia knows what Russia has been attempting; and her defeat will resound throughout the continent from the Caspian to the borders of China. Her hold upon her Asiatic conquests is not so secure that she can venture upon a movement in which her repulse will demonstrate her weakness. She has tried to deal a blow at English influence by raising up SHERE ALI as an enemy; the reduction of SHERE ALI to the condition of a British vassal, which has now become plainly necessary, must convince the Mussulmans of Central Asia that Russia is an untrustworthy ally; and from thence to the conclusion that her dominion may be easily shaken off is no long step.

The policy of Russia has prematurely brought to an end the independence of Afghanistan. We do not say that arrangements may not be made with SHERE ALI (though he does not deserve so much consideration) which would leave him the semblance of sovereignty; but the substantial power to defy us, as he has defied us lately, we must in self-defence wrest from him. Is this a triumph for Russia? It is difficult to see how it can be so regarded. Afghanistan in English hands or subject to English control will impose the necessities of a new policy upon Russia, and to a great extent will reverse the order of things that has hitherto prevailed. We can, after taking up a fresh frontier line, defy Russian intrigue, and even Russian aggression, and if we pleased—that is, if Russia were to enter upon any rash adventures in Europe—we should be able to rouse against her authority upon the Oxus an infinitely more formidable storm than any which she could hope to excite against us in India. No unpatriotic denunciations of British rule in Hindustan, no perverse ingenuity displayed in the manipulation of statistics, must be allowed to blind the British nation to the fact that the British Empire in India is on the whole a just, a beneficent, and a prosperous rule, and that the Russian dominion in Central Asia is in every way the reverse of all these things. We have less reason by far to fear an uprising of our subjects than the Empire which holds down in a grasp of steel the Mussulman tribes of Turkestan. We do not, indeed, desire to see either Empire subject to such an ordeal, for even Russia, though the most backward of the European nations, carries out some sort of improvement in governing, and introduces some sort of order into the chaos of Central Asia. But most Englishmen are convinced that the Government they have established in Asia is as superior in every respect to that which Russia has founded as English society is superior to Russian in cultivation, in energy, and in wealth. We are not prepared, unless a malign fate compels us, to let the good make way for the bad. Happily in the present conflict we believe that material strength, as well as moral superiority, is on the side of the Power which, impudently and rashly challenged, is able to vindicate its Imperial position and to strengthen its frontiers. If in doing so it is compelled to deal a blow at an ambitious and overreaching neighbour the responsibility for the results must rest with the intriguing aggressor. England, at any rate, does not fear to put her pretensions to the test of war with any or all comers.

(Extract)

Meanwhile, the Russian forces in Southern Roumelia are making, if tardily, a perceptible movement northwards, and are believed to be in course of retirement upon Adrianople. Their disappearance from the vicinity of the Turkish capital is an event of no slight political importance, as may be gathered from the orders issued from home to Admiral HORNBY to move the British Fleet to the Bay of Artaki. If the CZAR will but carry out in good faith and within the appointed time those clauses of the Treaty of Berlin which especially concern Russia, the accomplishment of the wishes of the Congress will be more rapid than it has hitherto proved to be. We note with regret the revival of the argument that Austria's occupation of Bosnia is a circumstance which renders it impossible for Russia to carry out its engagement to Europe to keep in Roumelia and Bulgaria only a force of fifty thousand men. The excuse still wants official adoption; but its persistent repetition by semi-official authorities is ominous. It must be pronounced to be lac' ing in all foundation or plausibility. The same instrument that limited the Russian army of occupation to fifty thousand commissioned Austria to occupy and administer Bosnia and Herzegovina; and it was with the categorically expressed assent of the Plenipotentiaries of the CZAR that Count ANDRASSY accepted this particular task. Russia is, therefore, unable to plead surprise. What has been done has been done in accordance with the sanction of Europe. It is possible that Prince GORTSCHAKOFF and Count SCHOUVALOFF calculated that Austria would be baffled in the adventure; but it is impossible for Russian diplomacy to argue that it must strengthen its temporary garrisons in Roumelia and Bulgaria because Austria has proved its own military capacity. We must be prepared, however, to find Russia treating this particular engagement with customary laxity, though it will be a manifest slur on the sincerity or the authority of the Congress if it be not met with explicit remonstrance. With yet more naked cynicism, Russian organs are already intimating that should England find itself engaged in an Afghan campaign, Russia will be less disposed than ever to hurry herself over the performance of the stipulations by which the Congress of Berlin has bound her; and in some quarters it is even hinted that the moment might be favourable for re-opening the Eastern Question, and seeing if the Treaty of San Stefano cannot be resuscitated in its integrity. The small amount of moral delicacy which marks the proceedings of Russian diplomacy may make it insensible to the danger of offending the public opinion of Europe; but it is incredible that Powers like France and Germany would tolerate a contemptuous disregard of the pledges so recently given to them. But even if Europe could forget to vindicate its honour, those Russian organs which indulge in such intimations as the above may rest assured that the moment when England may have to conduct a war in Afghanistan, in consequence of Russia's disregard of past promises, is not one when we should tolerate more flagrant breaches of faith in Europe. This country has recently made serious sacrifices to the interests of peace, and there are many amongst us who doubt the wisdom of our past forbearance. If Russia wishes to exhaust the patience of this country she will certainly do so should she attempt to throw obstacles in the way of the execution of the Treaty of Berlin, on the assumption that we shall be too busy in Asia to keep her to her word.

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THE INDIAN CRISIS.

THE CONTEMPLATED OPERATIONS.

RISING ON THE PERSIAN FRONTIER.

(By Eastern Telegraph.)
(from our special correspondent.)
BOMBAY, Thursday.

It is believed that no immediate advance will take place on the part of the fifteen thousand men now assembling near Thull, under General Chamberlain. It is imperative that time should be given for negotiations with the hill tribes, who are independent of Cabul, but would throw their whole weight into the scale against us if we attempt to advance without having made arrangements with them for their neutrality.

No such consideration will militate to prevent an advance from Quetta upon Candahar. Large stores of provisions are already collected at Quetta, and an advance may be looked for in that direction as soon as sufficient troops are there collected. The Passes between Candahar and Quetta are, however, formidable, and Candahar itself naturally strong; the advance must, therefore, be made in considerable force.

(Reuter's Telegram.)
SIMLA, Sept. 26.

Notwithstanding the prompt military measures taken by the authorities it is believed that the Government intend to await the course of events, and to observe the attitude adopted by the Ameer Shere Ali, before undertaking the actual invasion of Afghanistan.

A serious outbreak has occurred in Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
PARIS, Thursday.

The *Débats*, the *République*, and the *Temps* continue to make the Afghan difficulty the theme of their remarks.

The *Débats*, quoting *The Standard*, states that its observations are particularly valuable as conveying the feelings which are common to all Englishmen, and which lead them to the opinion that Russia is behind the Ameer at Cabul. It adds: "The Russians have not, perhaps, sufficiently calculated to what degree public opinion is excited in England by these latter events. English pride has always been considerable, but it is now greater than ever. It is extremely sensitive, and the slightest appearance of offence is resented as a grave insult. But besides the question of *amour propre*, there is the question of interest. Afghanistan is now but a frontier between Russia and England, and the question is which of the two Powers shall in a given time command the political influences and the strategic positions which combine to make up that frontier." The *Débats* thinks it likely that England will rest content with inflicting condign punishment on Shere Ali and take possession of the Passes which command the entrance to the country, when she would in reality be mistress of the whole country. The *Débats* hopes Russia will not take part in the war, but evidently thinks that contingency possible.

The *République* regards the conflict between England and Russia for mastery in Central Asia inevitable. It forbears expressing an opinion, but thinks the Russian position very strong, that position, in its opinion, enabling them to reach with comparative ease the Gulf of Oman.

The *Temps* alone anticipates an amicable adjustment of the difficulty.

The *Bombay Gazette* remarks that at the close of the diplomatic negotiations of 1873, the main object of which was to fix the northern boundary of Afghanistan and thus set a limit to the Russian advance, it cannot be forgotten that after Prince Gortschakoff had volunteered a declaration that Russia considered Afghanistan beyond her own sphere of action, but would hold England responsible for keeping the Ameer in order and preventing Afghan raids across the Oxus, Mr. Gladstone got up in the House of Commons and said England would undertake no responsibility for the actions of the Ameer; and so the proposed bargain fell through, leaving Russia at liberty to take her own way in Central Asia. Last year, again, there were futile negotiations, in the course of which the Ameer asked for what Sir N. Chamberlain must now be empowered to offer him, a guarantee of the integrity of his dominions against Russia, coupled with a large subsidy. The grant of such terms will, of course, be now made conditional on the occupation by British troops of certain strategical points in Afghan territory; but the negotiations should be carried on in a perfectly friendly manner with the Ameer if he be inclined to listen to reason, and, should he prove recalcitrant, English troops should at once occupy his country, without setting up any pretender.

The *Times of India* contains the following:—We hear from Simla that the latest advices from Cabul, dated August 21st, state that the Ameer, after much persuasion from the Mustaphi, attended durbar again for the first time. All kinds of rumours are current, as appears from the following Simla telegram—"Reports are becoming more positive that Yakoob Khan has escaped to Ghuznee, where there is said to be some disturbance or rising. Russian movements in that direction appear to be unknown. Rumour says we shall force on the Mission whether the Ameer consents or not. Quiet preparations are being made to this end, and it is understood that we may move on Herat." With a view to eventualities, a contemporary makes the following suggestions:—"To secure a position which would really dominate Cabul, a force should be moved into the valley of the Kuram River without loss of time. The military advantage of an occupation of this post is notorious to all acquainted with the topography of the frontier. The valley is extensive, fertile, highly cultivated, and capable of supplying a large force. It is inhabited principally by the Turi tribe of the Shiah sect, who are extremely well disposed towards the British, hating their Suni rulers at Cabul. A station constructed within five or six marches only of our present frontier would be within eight or nine marches of Cabul itself, with a good road leading to the capital over the Shah Gurdun Pass, easy of approach from the Kuram side, but somewhat long and difficult on the Afghan side. Our own village of Thul would form a good post in connection with the advance to Kuram, being about 50 miles in rear, and Kohat would form a convenient base about 60 miles behind Thul. We should like to see this position occupied before the Mission to Cabul sets out. Its possession would form a very effectual 'material guarantee' for the honourable reception of the British Envoy by the Ameer, and would (without any hostile demonstration whatever, for the Turis and Bangush, another tribe in the valley, would rejoice in our advance) serve to convince the Afghans that civility to us is their best policy. This important point in our hands, the Mission, with an escort considerably larger than that already named, might advance by the Khyber secure in the good will of the Lass Afridis, who are far more ill-disposed towards the Ameer than towards ourselves, and secure also in the far more important matter of the respect ever accorded to visible and tangible strength and resolution. This is the method by which only England can now exert her influence in Afghanistan and the States of Central Asia."

The Simla Correspondent of the same journal, writing on August 20th, says:—"The chief topic of interest which is discussed here at present is the mission to Cabul and its members. The news of the Ameer having received the Russian Embassy, while admission to our representatives has all along been so rigorously opposed, has startled, as it well might do, our statesmen, not only here, but at home. It was thought for some time that the Ameer's dependence had been purchased by lavish gifts of money and arms, and that he could be relied on to form a kind of buffer to Russian conquest in the direction of our Indian Empire. Circumstances, however, arose which tended to expose the fallacy of this idea, and it was with the view of ascertaining the exact state of affairs between our Government and that of Cabul that the Peshawur Conference was held. The Ameer had no objection to receiving lakhs of rupees, or hundreds of rifles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, these being, in his view of the case, a somewhat negative sign of his vassalage, but when this Government naturally demanded a certain *quid pro quo* in the shape of residents at one or two places of importance in his territory, the Plenipotentiary discreetly became suddenly ill, necessiting the closing of the durbar. Thus it was seen that rather than accept our favours and renounce his independence the Ameer chose to do his utmost in keeping the Khyber shut against us. Probably it would have been better for him had he chosen the former alternative. Recent events have shown how thoroughly in earnest the scheming Russ is in his endeavours to become the paramount power in Central Asia, and Government is now quite alive to the necessity of a more intimate acquaintance with what goes on behind the Black Mountain. The Ameer, therefore, will find it somewhat less easy than before to put off the Government demands. It may be a little flattering to his pride to find both Russia and England anxious to win him over, but he will probably not be prepared to find that whether he likes it or not he will have no opportunity of gainsaying what is now to be demanded of him."

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THE PASSES OF THE SULEIMAN AND HINDOO KOOSH.

Through the mountain ranges that at present form the north-west frontier of India there exist innumerable passes of various degrees of practicability. The smaller of these mountain ranges, known as the Brahuik Mountains, lies just beyond the borders of Scinde, and divides the Belooch district of Kachhi from the metropolitan State of Khelat. Kachhi was conquered from the Nawabs of Scinde by Abdullah Khan, of Khelat, in 1730, and ever since that year has formed part of the State of Beloochistan. Through this range are several passes, notably the Bholan and Mula, but there are nine others which the natives make use of in passing from Kachhi to Sarawan and Jhalawan, and the crossing of which occupies seven days. The Nagau and Bhore Passes lead to the city of Khelat direct, and are, if feasible for camel traffic, the most advantageously situated of all the Brahuik Passes. The Mula and Bholan are formed by the action of the rivers, or rather torrents, of those names, and mark respectively the southern and northern limits of this mountain range. The Mula (Muloh), or Gandava Pass, begins at a place called Pir Chatta, nine miles distant from the town of Kotri, which is ten miles south west of Gandava. Between Pir Chatta and the next stage, Kuhan, the Mula river has to be crossed nine times. During the later stages of the journey the same stream has to be passed repeatedly, so tortuous is its course. The pass continues in a southerly direction as far as Narr, which is a cultivated spot where supplies could be obtained. At Narr a cross-road leads through the village of Gaz, to the Belooch town of Khozdar, but the Mula Pass turns north-west in the direction o Khelat. The top of the pass is reached at the village of Ang ra, where the altitude is 5250 feet, but it is only for a short distance that the height exceeds 4000 feet. The great ob ection to the Mula Pass is its length—102 miles—and the fact that it only leads to Khelat, 103 miles south of Quettah; for otherwise it is preferable, in a military sense, to the Bholan. The average rise or the whole distance is 45 feet in the mile. General Willshre returned by this pass after the capture of Khelat, and Mr. Masson had also travelled by it. At the present moment this pass is open, and continues so throughout the year; it is only in July and August dangerous from the floods that come during the wet season.

The Bholan Pass, of which we practically hold possession by our garrison at Quettah, and its support at Dadar, begins five miles to the north-west of the latter place. Its great advantage over the Mula is that it is only 60 miles in length, and that it leads straight to Quettah on the Afghan frontier. Its crest is 5800 feet above the sea, and its average ascent gives 90 feet to the mile. The great obstacle used to be from the Sir-i-Bholan torrent, but that was only active during a few weeks in the wet season. In the old days this pass used to be invested by the Marris and Khakas, Belooch tribes, but since our occupation of Quettah there has been complete tranquillity. In 1839 the army of Sir John Keane took six days to traverse it, and this must be held to have been capital marching when we consider the vast multitude of camp followers and the difficulties of transporting a siege train. A light column could perform the distance in three days. It is necessary to remember in computing these distances that these passes take one far into the Afghan territory, and not, like the northern passes, only into its outskirts. Quettah is very nearly in the same longitude as Khelat in the Ghilzie country, and considerably westward both of Cabul and Ghizni.

North of the Brahuik range, but 150 miles to the east of it, comes the Suleiman. That distance is the ill-defined border between Kachhi and the Afghan province of Siwistan, and is held by the Marris, Boogtees, and other tribes. The Looshurees and Loogarees are their neighbours, and acknowledge in some very vague sense their Afghan nationality. Through the Suleiman range proper there are numerous passes; the Vad or Pass from Dera Ghazi Khan; the Sari and Sounhra Passes from Lund; the Sangarh Pass from Taunsa; the Drug Pass from Jhok Bodo; the Burkoie and Vahowa Passes from Vahowa; the Shakau and Draband Passes from Dera Ismail Khan; the Gumal or Gomul from Tak or Tank; and the Dawar from Bunnoo. Of all of these passes we know little or nothing; but their principal drawback is that they are beyond the Indus, and out of the way of our two true points of passage at Attock and Sukhur. Our knowledge of the Gomul Pass is principally derived from General Chamberlain's Expedition against the Muhsoods in 1860, when the force under his command operated against those marauders in the very heart of the hill country. The most striking part of this campaign was the gallantry with which an original plan was carried out. The little army, 5000 strong, left its base of Tak, in the month of April, 1860, and pushing its way up the Zam stream passed on boldly and steadily for the Muhsood stronghold. The force was accompanied not only by mountain guns on mules, but also by ordinary field guns. Their village of Kot Shingee was occupied, and a surprise on our camp at Puloseen was repulsed, after some hard fighting, with heavy loss to the assailants, who left 130 dead upon the field. From Puloseen we marched on their capital of Kaneeghorum, which was occupied after a severe fight had taken place along the banks of the Zam. The Muhsood country surrounds the lofty pinnacle of Peerghul, and is very inaccessible to at ack. The lesson read them by the present Sir Neville Chamberlain was a severe one, although it had cost us many lives and no small sum of money; and ever since the Muhsoods have given us little trouble on a large scale, although petty acts of marauding continue. The Gomul Pass leads straight to Ghizni, and was the principal one used by Mahmoud o Ghizni in his numerous invasions of Hindostan; but in view of the hostility of the Muhsoods and other Waziris it may be held to be at present useless to us. To our mind the Draband Pass, from Dera Ismail Khan through the Shevranee country, is the most likely among the passes in this quarter to be of importance to us in any campaign. There are roads of some kind that lead due west into Afghanistan, and that would strike the Cabul road probably at Mukur, half-way between Khelat-i-Ghil e and Ghizni.

North of the Dawar Pass and Bunnoo the Waziri country makes an indenture into the Indian frontier similar to that farther north by the Afreedee tongue of land between Kohat and Peshawur, and 25 miles to the north of Bunnoo, with the Waziri territory intervening, lies the small place of Thull, on the banks of the Khurum river. Its importance is that from it there is a pass by that river to Cabul and Ghizni. Sir H. Lumsden's Mission entered Cabul by this road. So far as the fort of Mahomed Azim, 50 miles, the road is direct and fairly passable. From this place to Habib fort, and thence through the Paiwar Pass, the English Mission in 1857 worked its way by a devious route to Haidarkhel, a village on the Cabul road, a little to the south of Shaikhabad. But there is a shorter road to Cabul than this, which is available during the summer months at all events, and that is by the Shaturgardan Pass, north-west of the Paiwar, which debouches on the places named Dobandi and Zurgonsha, in the immediate vicinity of the capital. By this road the distance from Thull to Cabul is under 150 miles. In order to reach Ghizni, the road followed by the Lumsden Mission must be taken, turning off near the village of Kushi. It is unnecessary to say much of the Khyber, which has been often described, and which is the most northerly of these passes. There are various small passes north and south of the Khyber, which strike that pass to the rear of Ali Musjid, and which, if utilised, would isolate the garrison from all support. To make these available for our forces both the Momunds and the Afreedees must be propitiated. The travels of the Mollah have thrown considerable light on the Bajour district north of the Cabul river; from them it would seem to be quite possible to secure Lalpura, by an advance from our fort of Abazaie by the Inzan Pass. Lalpura is at the Afghan entrance to the Khyber, and a stronghold of the Momunds. It could only be seized with their approbation, but it is *apropos* to remember that, in 1839, we installed at this place a new ruler, Torabaz Khan, who remained faithful to us through good and ill fortune. The precedent might prove to be of practical importance.

Having described the chief passes that lead through the Suleiman and Safeid Kho, we may glance briefly at those farther west in Cabul itself. Between Quettah and Candahar there are two ranges of mountains, and the country to be traversed is far from being as easy as some would have us believe. The English army took eighteen days in marching the 150 miles that intervene, although their advance was unresisted. The country is admirably adapted for purposes of defence, and at Haidarsye, Hykulsye, and the Khojuck Pass a resolute soldier could easily retard the advance of an invading army. The Khojuck Pass through the Amran range is over 7000 feet. It would be very unwise on our part to attempt to minimise the difficulties of an invasion of Afghanistan by disregarding the natural difficulties mountain ranges have interposed. Once we are at Candahar the whole of Afghanistan south of the Hindoo Koosh is at our mercy, for between that city and Cabul there are no passes worthy of the name, although the position on the Maidan hills is very strong. In the direction of Herat there are several, but these need not be considered now, as Girishk and the Helmund are the limits of our proposed measures, unless events become developed in Persia and the Turcoman country. Of the northern passes through the Hindoo Koosh, the best known is that of Bamian, or Sighan. The altitude of this, on the

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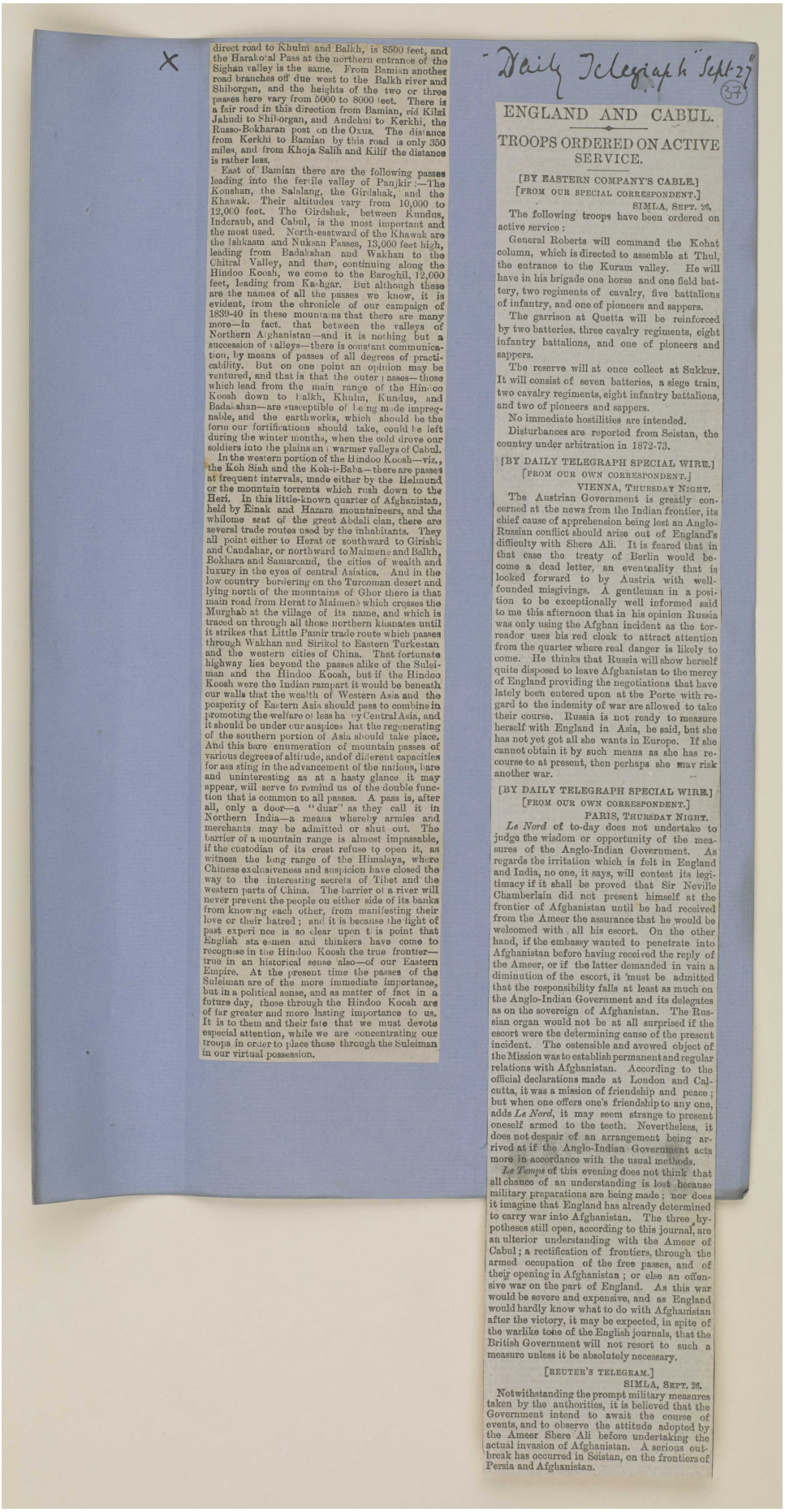

direct road to Khulm and Balkh, is 8500 feet, and the Haraka'al Pass at the northern entrance of the Sighan valley is the same. From Bamian another road branches off due west to the Balkh river and Shiborgan, and the heights of the two or three passes here vary from 5000 to 8000 feet. There is a fair road in this direction from Bamian, *viâ* Kilai Jahudi to Shiborgan, and Andchui to Kerkhi, the Russo-Bokharan post on the Oxus. The distance from Kerkhi to Bamian by this road is only 350 miles, and from Khoja Salih and Kilif the distance is rather less.

East of Bamian there are the following passes leading into the fertile valley of Panjkir:—The Koushan, the Salalang, the Girdshak, and the Khawak. Their altitudes vary from 10,000 to 12,000 feet. The Girdshak, between Kundus, Inderaub, and Cabul, is the most important and the most used. North-eastward of the Khawak are the Ishkasm and Nukan Passes, 13,000 feet high, leading from Badakshan and Wakhan to the Chitral Valley, and then, continuing along the Hindoo Koosh, we come to the Baroghil, 12,000 feet, leading from Kashgar. But although these are the names of all the passes we know, it is evident, from the chronicle of our campaign of 1839-40 in these mountains that there are many more—in fact, that between the valleys of Northern Afghanistan—and it is nothing but a succession of valleys—there is constant communication, by means of passes of all degrees of practicability. But on one point an opinion may be ventured, and that is that the outer passes—those which lead from the main range of the Hindoo Koosh down to Balkh, Khulm, Kundus, and Badakshan—are susceptible of being made impregnable, and the earthworks, which should be the form our fortifications should take, could be left during the winter months, when the cold drove our soldiers into the plains and warmer valleys of Cabul.

In the western portion of the Hindoo Koosh—viz., the Koh Siah and the Koh-i-Baba—there are passes at frequent intervals, made either by the Helmund or the mountain torrents which rush down to the Heri. In this little-known quarter of Afghanistan, held by Eimak and Hazara mountaineers, and the whilome seat of the great Abdali clan, there are several trade routes used by the inhabitants. They all point either to Herat or southward to Girishk and Candahar, or northward to Maimena and Balkh, Bokhara and Samarcand, the cities of wealth and luxury in the eyes of central Asiatics. And in the low country bordering on the Turcoman desert and lying north of the mountains of Ghor there is that main road from Herat to Maimena which crosses the Murghab at the village of its name, and which is traced on through all those northern khanates until it strikes that Little Pamir trade route which passes through Wakhan and Sirikol to Eastern Turkestan and the western cities of China. That fortunate highway lies beyond the passes alike of the Suleiman and the Hindoo Koosh, but if the Hindoo Koosh were the Indian rampart it would be beneath our walls that the wealth of Western Asia and the posperity of Eastern Asia should pass to combine in promoting the welfare of less happy Central Asia, and it should be under our auspices that the regenerating of the southern portion of Asia should take place. And this bare enumeration of mountain passes of various degrees of altitude, and of different capacities for assisting in the advancement of the nations, bare and uninteresting as at a hasty glance it may appear, will serve to remind us of the double function that is common to all passes. A pass is, after all, only a door—a "duar" as they call it in Northern India—a means whereby armies and merchants may be admitted or shut out. The barrier of a mountain range is almost impassable, if the custodian of its crest refuse to open it, as witness the long range of the Himalaya, where Chinese exclusiveness and suspicion have closed the way to the interesting secrets of Tibet and the western parts of China. The barrier of a river will never prevent the people on either side of its banks from knowing each other, from manifesting their love or their hatred; and it is because the light of past experience is so clear upon this point that English statesmen and thinkers have come to recognise in the Hindoo Koosh the true frontier—true in an historical sense also—of our Eastern Empire. At the present time the passes of the Suleiman are of the more immediate importance, but in a political sense, and as matter of fact in a future day, those through the Hindoo Koosh are of far greater and more lasting importance to us. It is to them and their fate that we must devote especial attention, while we are concentrating our troops in order to place those through the Suleiman in our virtual possession.

Daily Telegraph Sept 27 (37)

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

TROOPS ORDERED ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

[BY EASTERN COMPANY'S CABLE.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]
SIMLA, SEPT. 26.

The following troops have been ordered on active service:

General Roberts will command the Kohat column, which is directed to assemble at Thul, the entrance to the Kuram valley. He will have in his brigade one horse and one field battery, two regiments of cavalry, five battalions of infantry, and one of pioneers and sappers.

The garrison at Quetta will be reinforced by two batteries, three cavalry regiments, eight infantry battalions, and one of pioneers and sappers.

The reserve will at once collect at Sukkur. It will consist of seven batteries, a siege train, two cavalry regiments, eight infantry battalions, and two of pioneers and sappers.

No immediate hostilities are intended.

Disturbances are reported from Seistan, the country under arbitration in 1872-73.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]
VIENNA, THURSDAY NIGHT.

The Austrian Government is greatly concerned at the news from the Indian frontier, its chief cause of apprehension being lest an Anglo-Russian conflict should arise out of England's difficulty with Shere Ali. It is feared that in that case the treaty of Berlin would become a dead letter, an eventuality that is looked forward to by Austria with well-founded misgivings. A gentleman in a position to be exceptionally well informed said to me this afternoon that in his opinion Russia was only using the Afghan incident as the torreador uses his red cloak to attract attention from the quarter where real danger is likely to come. He thinks that Russia will show herself quite disposed to leave Afghanistan to the mercy of England providing the negotiations that have lately been entered upon at the Porte with regard to the indemity of war are allowed to take their course. Russia is not ready to measure herself with England in Asia, he said, but she has not yet got all she wants in Europe. If she cannot obtain it by such means as she has recourse to at present, then perhaps she may risk another war.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]
PARIS, THURSDAY NIGHT.

Le Nord of to-day does not undertake to judge the wisdom or opportunity of the measures of the Anglo-Indian Government. As regards the irritation which is felt in England and India, no one, it says, will contest its legitimacy if it shall be proved that Sir Neville Chamberlain did not present himself at the frontier of Afghanistan until he had received from the Ameer the assurance that he would be welcomed with all his escort. On the other hand, if the embassy wanted to penetrate into Afghanistan before having received the reply of the Ameer, or if the latter demanded in vain a diminution of the escort, it must be admitted that the responsibility falls at least as much on the Anglo-Indian Government and its delegates as on the sovereign of Afghanistan. The Russian organ would not be at all surprised if the escort were the determining cause of the present incident. The ostensible and avowed object of the Mission was to establish permanent and regular relations with Afghanistan. According to the official declarations made at London and Calcutta, it was a mission of friendship and peace; but when one offers one's friendship to any one, adds *Le Nord*, it may seem strange to present oneself armed to the teeth. Nevertheless, it does not despair of an arrangement being arrived at if the Anglo-Indian Government acts more in accordance with the usual methods.

Le Temps of this evening does not think that all chance of an understanding is lost because military preparations are being made; nor does it imagine that England has already determined to carry war into Afghanistan. The three hypotheses still open, according to this journal, are an ulterior understanding with the Ameer of Cabul; a rectification of frontiers, through the armed occupation of the free passes, and of their opening in Afghanistan; or else an offensive war on the part of England. As this war would be severe and expensive, and as England would hardly know what to do with Afghanistan after the victory, it may be expected, in spite of the warlike tone of the English journals, that the British Government will not resort to such a measure unless it be absolutely necessary.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]
SIMLA, SEPT. 26.

Notwithstanding the prompt military measures taken by the authorities, it is believed that the Government intend to await the course of events, and to observe the attitude adopted by the Ameer Shere Ali before undertaking the actual invasion of Afghanistan. A serious outbreak has occurred in Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan.

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LONDON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27.

Our special correspondent at Simla telegraphs the composition and distribution of the troops ordered for active service against the Ameer of Cabul.

It is stated, in a telegram of yesterday's date from Simla, that, notwithstanding the prompt military action taken by the Indian authorities, it is believed that the Government intend to await the course of events and to observe the attitude adopted by the Ameer before undertaking the actual invasion of Afghanistan. At Seistan, on the frontier of Persia and Afghanistan, a serious outbreak has occurred.

OUR Simla despatch this morning communicates precise details of the military force which has been ordered upon active service in consequence of the course pursued by the Ameer of Afghanistan. The column from Kohat, which will be concentrated at Thull, the entrance to the Kurrum Valley, is to comprise two regiments of cavalry and five of infantry, with one of pioneers and sappers, and two batteries of artillery. Our advanced station of Quettah is to be reinforced by two batteries of artillery and three regiments of cavalry, with eight of infantry and one of pioneers and sappers. Besides these, a reserve is to be immediately assembled at Sukkur upon the Indus, consisting of seven batteries, a train of siege guns, two regiments of sappers, two of horse, and eight battalions of foot. These details give us the numbers of a stronger force than any hitherto mentioned in Indian telegrams. There will be gathered some six thousand troops under General ROBERTS from Kohat at Thull; nine or ten thousand will be marched into and around Quettah; while the reserve at Sukkur represents another eight or nine thousand, besides heavy and light artillery. What proportion of these will be European troops is not stated, but the Bengal Army will probably furnish the command of General ROBERTS, and that of Bombay the contingents for the Scinde frontier and the Bolan. The Khyber Pass will, no doubt, be also closed—if not entered—by a sufficient British division; and the preparations all round are such, we think, as military judges will consider adequate for any present emergencies. General ROBERTS, in command at the important point of the Kurrum Valley, is an officer of the highest distinction and largest experience, having served actively from the time of the siege of Delhi, where he gained the Victoria Cross, through the Umbeyla and Looshaye expeditions and the Abyssinian war, and having been "mentioned" in despatches no fewer than twenty-three times. For the present, however, our Simla telegram states, no immediate hostilities are intended. It is probable that commanding positions will be quietly and swiftly taken up, and every preparation completed for decisive action, while notice of our movements is finding its way to the Ameer. Nevertheless there can be little room for parley or delay with the Afghan Prince, if it be true, as is reported, that the commandant of the fort at Ali Musjid actually told Major CAVAGNARI that his instructions warranted him in shooting down the British representative upon approach, and that but for old friendship between them he would have done so. Such a statement leaves little room for doubt as to the nature of the orders sent forward from Cabul by the Ameer's Master of the Horse. For whatever object, or with whatever hidden support, the debauched and cruel Ruler of Afghanistan had obviously made up his mind beyond all retractation to defy us; and this will be so clear to every inhabitant of India that it is absolutely necessary for no shadow of hesitation to be seen in our action. Considerations neither of diplomacy nor of physical difficulties ought to delay our instant answer to the insult which has been offered us, so far as regards the seizure of the passes, and the advance to Candahar. It may or may not be judged desirable to go beyond these measures before the winter—that is a matter of transport, commissariat, and political information—but the winter must certainly not arrive without all India plainly understanding that the gates of the Frontier will never again be shut in the face of her Majesty's representative at the whisper of a Russian agent in Cabul, and by the caprice of its barbarous Ruler.

The lingering spokesmen of that pro-Russian agitation which wrought so much mischief during the recent war couple their reluctant admissions that energetic action is necessary with accusations against Lord LYTTON's policy, which they pretend has been directed towards a rupture like that which has arisen. As to the totally unfounded charge thus made, our Simla Correspondent telegraphed yesterday that the Ameer had, with a rudeness of the gravest kind, left the courteous and repeated letters of the Viceroy unanswered: and the text of these communications, which has since been transmitted to this country, shows how studiously amicable was the language of Lord LYTTON. The interests of India and Afghanistan are spoken of in his Excellency's letter as identical; the causes of solicitude are stated with friendly frankness, and a safe-conduct for the British Mission is requested with almost excessive politeness, considering the dignity of the writer and the grave reasons for direct intercourse. This preliminary despatch was followed by a most kindly letter of condolence upon the demise of the Prince ABDOOLLAH JAN, deferring the Mission until the days of mourning should be expired; and whoever knows the etiquette of the East will be aware that to have received these *Khurreetas* from the Viceroy of INDIA and to have vouchsafed no word of reply was in itself an affront of the grossest character. It is evident from events, and from the fact that Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN's note to the Ameer's commandant was also treated with insulting silence, that this was a course deliberately adopted at Cabul; and the way in which the Russian journals seize upon the point inclines us to the belief that it formed an arranged item in the Russo-Afghan programme of quarrel. The *Nord* comes eagerly to the aid of the English organs which are assailing Lord LYTTON for not awaiting a reply, and for sending an armed escort with the British Envoy. "The Embassy," it says, "was to await SHERE ALI'S reply before proceeding towards Cabul. Has Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN done so? He had a large military following, considerably exceeding the customary and legitimate proportions of an escort. It is doubtful whether the Russian Mission, of which so much has been said during the past few weeks, went to Afghanistan surrounded by a military paraphernalia so unusual for an Embassy. It is not absolutely impossible that SHERE ALI, whilst showing a disposition to give the Viceroy of INDIA'S Envoy the best of receptions, should have begged him to leave behind a portion at least of the *corps d'armée* forming his escort. If such were the case it would be difficult to attribute all the fault to the Ameer." This—if the facts did not now utterly belie such arguments—might really have appeared in our own Russian press. The same Muscovite organ goes on to say that the Czar's agent was merely sent to Cabul to obtain those securities for peace which England would not give as regards the policy of Afghanistan towards Khokand and the border States. A day or two since the same paper offered a totally different explanation, frankly describing the mission of ABRAMOFF and the Oxus expeditions as hostile counter-strokes. But after Khiva, the Livadian pledges, and the advance from Adrianople, he who expects veracity from Russian sources would look for figs on thistles! The brutal frankness of the *Golos* and of the *St. Petersburg News* is far preferable to these equivocations. The former, alluding to Afghanistan and the troubles in the South-East, observes, "Probably no rational mind in Europe supposes that Russia ought not to take advantage of these complications as she may think fit." The latter remarks, "An alliance between Afghanistan and Russia is indispensable to SHERE ALI, who desires to feel secure as regards Russia in his war with England. Such an alliance need not compromise the relations between Russia and England. Great Britain found it possible morally to support Turkey in her recent war against Russia. It would be an unnatural and thoroughly senseless piece of disinterestedness not to take advantage of such an occasion for the purpose of giving Eastern affairs a turn, and paralysing the anti-Russian clauses introduced into the Berlin Treaty by Count ANDRASSY and Lord BEACONSFIELD." The *Novoe Vremya* takes the same complacent view of the situation, saying that, "In any case the situation of India removes every probability of Great Britain's interference with the results of the Berlin Conference."

Meanwhile our Simla telegram sheds incidental light on the further development of this long-planned diversion. Disturbances are reported, it states, in Seistan, the country under arbitration in 1872-73. What this would appear to point at is the old-established policy of Russia to set Persia moving whenever Afghanistan is

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in turmoil. The division of Seistan between the two countries, although carefully and conscientiously made by General GOLDSMID, left both the Shah and SHERE ALI discontented, and we had to buy the Ameer's consent to the award for the sake of peace. But it gave Persia all the productive plains of the district, while its considerable additions dissatisfied Cabul, and here therefore lies always to hand for Russia a means of mischief which may be used to coerce or to bribe SHERE ALI. She has another in the Afghan pretender, ABD-UR RAHMAN, who is as likely as not to make his appearance in Balkh, if the Afghan Prince hangs back at all from defying us; so that the materials for an "unofficial war" are plentiful, and the intention of waging it is certain, if, as these Muscovite journals are allowed to state, the St. Petersburg Government means to insist upon its right to maintain a Resident at Cabul, and friendly relations with SHERE ALI. Both are entirely incompatible with past Imperial pledges, and equally incompatible with the peace and security of our Indian Empire. Both must be forbidden and rendered impossible in future, either by the development of events—for assuredly there will remain no Russian agent in the Afghan capital if we occupy it—or by the enlargement of this frontier matter into that vaster question which lies behind it, and which must, sooner or later, find a solution—the question, that is, of Central Asia. There are many who will be of opinion that prudence, opportunity, and circumstances alike dictate the settlement of the larger problem now, while Russia is weakened by war and internal dangers, rather than hereafter, when she will have re-equipped her forces, and re-organised her shattered finance.

A FORMER MISSION TO CABUL.

That Thul, or Thal-biland-Khail, should have been selected as the rendezvous of a column which may have to advance into Cabul will not seem strange to those who remember the course taken by the Mission to Candahar in 1857. Entering the Afghan territory at this point, Lumsden's party advanced up the beautiful Kuram valley, and over the range beyond, till at the village of Shaikhabad they struck the military road that connects Ghuzni with the capital. On that occasion the escort required when passing from Kohat to Thul, through territory nominally British, was two guns, a troop of cavalry, and three companies of infantry. The Waziris, a numerous and very powerful tribe, had then only just come under British rule, and had not even felt the principles of orderly government. They are still one of the most lawless communities upon the Indian frontier, but the latest official report on their conduct announces that "their conduct is from year to year visibly improving." Nevertheless, they continue to enjoy by stealth their old tribal feuds, for the Mahsud and Darwesh Kheyl Waziris are still the best of enemies. Nor when in 1877 the Ameer of Cabul suddenly reinforced his garrisons in the Kuram valley and in Khost were there wanting turbulent spirits to anticipate the disturbance that might be pending by private hostilities. That action of the Ameer has never yet been explained, nor is it known why within the last year or so his Highness should have come to display so remarkable a partiality for this border tribe. The head men of the Waziris are now periodically summoned to Cabul, whence they return bearing handsome presents from Shere Ali Khan. Perhaps the astute hill men knew more than they chose to tell, but the appearance of General Roberts with his Snider rifles will, in a few days, explain to them that their secret was not so well kept after all. The Snider rifle is a thing of terror to the jezail-armed mountaineers, and save under exceptional circumstances they will not face that arm. But as the bulk of the tribe remain, to all appearance, friendly, there is no reason for referring further to this dislike. It is more pleasant to recall the fact that the one thing the Oriental free lance likes, next to easy plunder, is regular pay. Should a demonstration among the fortified villages that nestle in the orchards and cornfields of the Kuram valley be called for, the Waziris will be in great requisition as scouts and skirmishers, and even among these wild-cat races of the frontier the "Sirkar ka tulub"—Government pay—is proverbially punctual. For although they are essentially fighting men, the Waziris are penny wise, and while dreaded even by their rough neighbours for their ferocious bravery, they are envied for the source of wealth which they possess and cleverly keep to themselves in their famous breed of horses. It is distinguished by a peculiar curve and twist of the ear, and remarkable among the horses of India for its wiry, hardy frame and high temper. Tradition says that the Waziris stole the original progenitors of their studs from the royal stables of the Persian Nadir Shah when he invaded India, but the Waziris themselves assert that the conqueror bestowed the precious animals upon their ancestors in recognition of their brilliant horsemanship. And, indeed, Nadir Shah would have had some excuse had he done so, for these hill men excel on horseback. Among themselves they never shoe their steeds, but ride them barehoofed and often bare-backed up and down their dangerous hills as if they were veritable centaurs. So highly do they prize the exclusive possession of the breed that they will never sell a mare, but a market is held periodically at Thul for the sale of horses.

The Mission of 1857 made many strange experiences, which, as they may be in store for the other Mission that is preparing to-day, are full of present interest. Starting from Thul, they found themselves traversing a ravine-scored valley, covered with the fragrant "kuskuss," in which innumerable sounders of wild pig found pleasant covert. The escort, a cutthroat band of brigands, beguiled the journey by performing extraordinary feats of horsemanship in pursuit of the startled swine. Next day the river had to be forded, and as the current was then (in March) very rapid, the wild horsemen had plenty of opportunity to display their skill and courage in piloting the baggage of the strangers across. For twenty miles of difficult and rocky road no inhabitants or animal life, hardly any vegetation was encountered, but approaching Boghzai the travellers found a hamlet of good size, in which every male went fully armed, and it is thus literally true that while one man ploughs another stands on the watch rifle in hand. The Toris of Boghzai are all thieves, and when a male child is born, the baptismal ceremony consists in putting the infant burglar through a hole in a wall, while his relatives exhort him to be a thief "heart and hand," as his father and grandfather were before them. A marlingspike, used for breaking holes through the mud walls of neighbours' houses with larcenous intent, is a part of the regular furniture of a Tori house; it is looked upon as a household chattel, part of the regular outfit a young couple should set up in life with. From Boghzai to Saddah, thirteen miles, a succession of corn fields and orchards occupied the banks of the Kuram, but the loopholed huts peeping out among the fruit trees told their own strange tale of the life that was usual in this Arcadia. The next sixteen miles to Killa-i-Kuram (the fort of Kuram) lay through similar scenes, many of the villages having a compact fort-like appearance, and being armed with *chevaux de frise* of thorns along their walls. A few miles from the fort the path led through an extensive grove of splendid mulberry trees, plane trees of immense size and stately appearance, the remnants of a pleasure garden of the Emperor of Delhi, Shah Jahan.

When passing the fort the Mission was received with presented arms by five companies of a red-coated regiment, whilst a salute of twenty-one guns was fired from a brass battery, and then a band of original instruments struck up in honour of the strangers the British National Anthem! It was original also. The fort of Kuram is described as of large extent, possessing eight bastions, each surmounted by a round tower, and the whole surrounded with a moat crossed by drawbridges with covered ways. The scenery here is superb, and in the magnificent forests that clothe the hills large and small game, from tigers to pheasants, abound, while the river flowing below was found to be literally stocked with fine mahseer. Many English trees—the hawthorn, sycamore, oak, ash, horse-chestnut—grow here side by side with the cedar and olive, fig and mulberry. Here the Mission was halted for four days, not to enjoy the natural beauties of the spot, but to give time for certain murderous banditti, who had occupied the road with the object of intercepting the travellers, to move off. As they refused to do so the Mission had to alter its route so as to avoid the obstruction, and while they marched out by the alternative path, the red-coated regiment marched off in high glee to chastise the obstructives, the

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band playing out the warriors to scrimmage and plunder to the tune of "Rule Britannia." The remarkable *repertoire* of the musicians provoked inquiry, and it was then discovered that the leader of the band was a deserter from a native regiment at Peshawur, who had taken service with the chief of Kuram, but who had forgotten all his tunes except the two specified above, and a few bars of "The girl I left behind me." This was usually given at "tattoo."

From the fort the travellers advanced through the valley, here from eighteen to twenty miles in width, and crowded with orchards and cornfields, interspersed as usual with embattled villages, and, as usual also, inhabited by lawless villains. In the extensive groves of mulberries here met with silkworms are reared in such numbers that the silk forms a staple of the local trade. The next halt was at Habib Killa, picturesquely situated at the foot of the Sita Ram peak of the Sufaid Koh. Towards its base this superb mountain is densely covered with a growth of oak and olive, above which in a broad dark cincture run belts of pine and cedar, while over all springs up the great snow-capped peak. The village is otherwise remarkable as containing a large Hindu population, who engage in an extensive trade between the cities of India and Afghanistan. During the halt rumours got afloat that the Jaji tribe had mustered in force on the other side of the hill and meant mischief, much to the delight of the Toris on this side, who hoped that their hereditary foes might by creating a disturbance incur official wrath, and that they themselves might be able to step in, after the chastisement of the authorities had sufficiently weakened and cowed the Jajis, to inflict private vengeance upon them. Such far-seeing malignity would have been remarkable among other races, but the Jaji and Tori nourish so deadly a hatred of each other that no member of either tribe dares to cross the hill that separates them! The Mission, however, apprehended no danger, and, marching through the splendid Alpine scenery, were concerned only with the beauty of the landscape, when suddenly the ominous yell of a pipe, followed by the sounds of a drum—the war music of the Jajis—burst upon their ears. Immediately afterwards upon their sight burst a band of fifty men, brandishing wildly the formidable Afghan knives they carried and chanting a war song. As if to make a murderous attack upon the Mission, they leapt forward to within a few yards, but the escort dashed forward, interposing themselves between the uplifted weapons, and the Jajis quietly allowed the cavalcade to file by unmolested. The next instant two black bears, startled from their lair by the noise, came out upon the path, and one of the party fired. The bears were doomed in any case, for the escort soon cut them down with their swords; but the shot, misconstrued by the savage Jajis as a taunt, resulted in a camp follower who had lagged behind being hacked to pieces. Though the atrocious act was committed in full sight of the baggage escort, punishment was impossible, for the Jajis leapt away over and among the rocks with the speed of monkeys, and disappeared from sight as suddenly as they had come. Another illustration of the exceptional savagery of the tribe is afforded by the nature of their huts. These are square structures of stone and mud, erected on log platforms and profusely loopholed. The entrance is from beneath, by a trap-door and rope ladder, which is drawn up when the inmate is housed. When neighbouring families are at feud, they keep such a vigilant eye on their "shooting boxes" that not unfrequently they are shut up mutually for weeks together.

Towards the Mission they continued obstinately hostile, and at Ali Khail a tragedy seemed hourly imminent. The camp had been pitched in the midst of a Jaji village, and all day long knots of the wild-looking savages danced and yelled round their tents and escort, in the hope that the guards would be provoked into giving offence by the insults and taunts they never ceased to pour out upon them. On every eminence in the neighbourhood circles of Jajis were revolving wildly to the music of the pipes and drums, flourishing their knives and yelling in encouragement or response to each other. In the camp itself a more serious order of performance obtained, for there the Jajis, armed to the teeth, tramped in columns round and round the tents, chanting a strange sonorous war song. No breach of the peace occurred, however, and next morning the Mission prepared to continue its journey towards Rokian. All night ominous drums had been sounding, and it now appeared that they had been summoning the tribes to a general muster, and not without success, for an army of 5,000 Jajis, under the leadership of an Akundzada ("wiseborn," a term applied only to those most revered for piety or learning), had assembled to dispute the passage of the defiles. A council was held, and it was decided to send for succour to the Kuram Fort and to Cabul, but for the latter journey no one would volunteer. The short cut to the capital would have taken a swift horseman four days, while the population was eminently dangerous, and the mountain passes, from the heavy snow still lying, frequently impracticable. Negotiations were, therefore, opened, the Jajis receiving all overtures with fierce yells and frantic leapings, while a chosen body continued to intone their abominably impressive war chant. But eventually they calmed down. The spokesman of the Mission appealed to the savage maniacs' honour—their honour as Afghans, their honour as Afghan gentlemen—and the appeal was irresistible, for it is a remarkable psychological fact that these people, hardly human, know no oath so potent as that on their "honour." Fifty of them had thought nothing a few days before of setting upon a single unarmed and inoffensive load-carrier, of their own creed and race, and hacking him to pieces with their knives; but they let the Mission pass unscathed upon the argument that their "honour" required it. But though they did not murder the travellers, they cursed them as they defiled past, in a low, rolling murmur of imprecations. It was fortunate, perhaps, for them that they allowed honourable feelings to triumph, for a mile further on the Mission fell in with an Afghan chief of Ghilzais, who had at his call ten thousand cut-throats as bad as the Jajis, with whom they were, of course, at deadly feud. How hard, then, it must have seemed to the Jaji mind when, six weeks later, a Cabul army suddenly descended upon them, and, in punishment for their rude behaviour to the friends of the Ameer, billeted itself upon the villages of the honourable folk for three months, made the "wiseborn" person collect three thousand rupees as a fine, and carried away with it back to Cabul all their mules and cattle, and many of the Jaji youths and maidens. From Rokian to Hazra, through a noble game country, as the numerous horns of ibex and markhor testified, and so on by the "Defile of the Thousand Trees" to the outpost of Katta Sang, the boundary between the Jaji and Ghilzai territories. From here to Hazra or Ucha Murgha, forage and food were for the first time scarce, but the horses ate freely the wild wormwood which was growing in profusion on all sides, while an orchid with thick fleshy leaves, that was found in abundance among the wormwood, was eagerly sought for by the escort and camp followers as forming a favourite dish. Here, too, they encountered a company of nomads so simple in the world's ways that they refused money in exchange for fodder.

And thus, making new experiences as they went, the Mission passed on over "The Camel's Neck" into the valley of Logaa, where the stream sparkled with the bright hues of the porphyry, hornblende, and syenite that formed its bed, and the village of Khushi, or "All Delights," lies embosomed in green meadows and orchards. Thence to Hisarak, along a plateau bright with wild flowers, red and yellow tulips, and orchids of several kinds; and from there by a succession of corn crops and fruit groves for twenty miles—a district of extraordinary plenty and thickly populated—to Tangi Wardak, and down through the Tangi defile, to Haidar Khail—a village notorious, even in Afghanistan, for the audacity and skill of its robber folk. Next Swara, where the jerboa, "the two-footed mouse" of the Persians, was seen in abundance, but never caught; and then by the gorge of "The Lion's Mouth," and past the tomb of the Sultan Mahmud, to Ghuzni of fame in history. The fortress which was blown up by Lord Keane in 1842 had been rebuilt, a formidable-looking place with a citadel at the north angle in a commanding situation, and containing some four thousand houses. From Ghuzni the route lay across a dreary treeless expanse of plain to Yarghatti, notable for the number of the subterranean aqueducts by which the people irrigate their fields, and the number of bloody quarrels that arise on ques-

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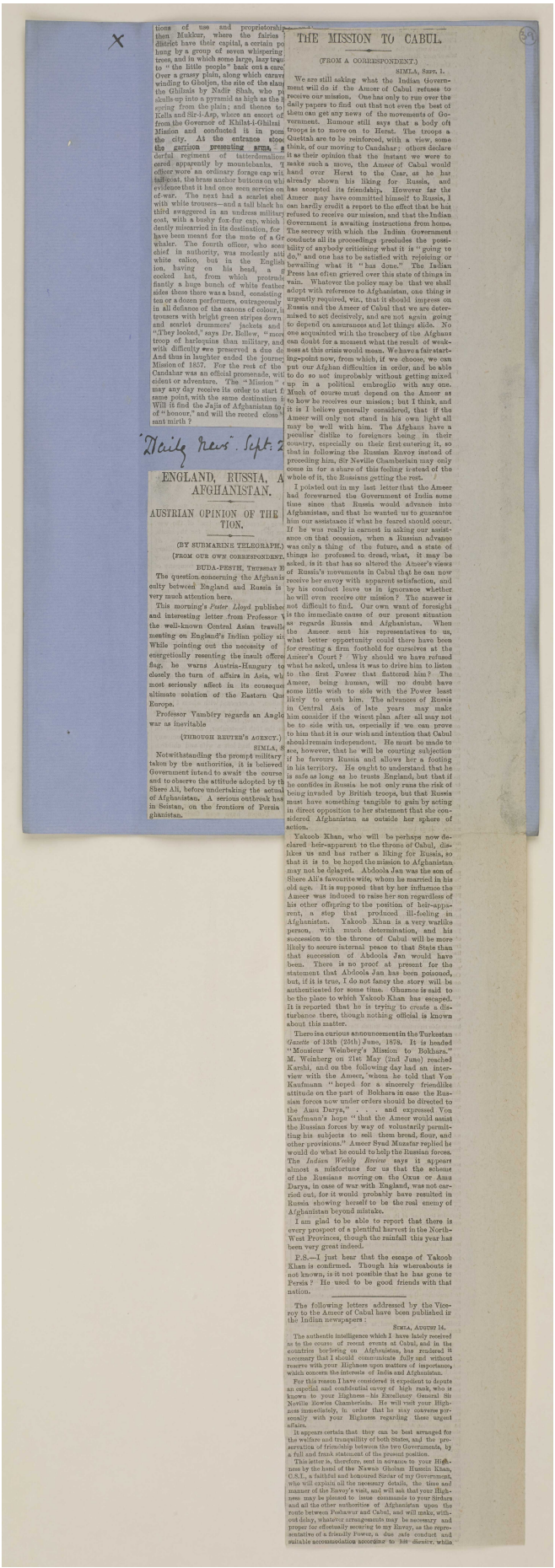

tions of use and proprietorship
then Mukkur, where the fairies
district have their capital, a certain po
hung by a group of seven whispering
trees, and in which some large, lazy trou
to "the little people" bask out a care
Over a grassy plain, along which carav
winding to Gholjen, the site of the clas
the Ghilzais by Nadir Shah, who p
skulls up into a pyramid as high as the
spring from the plain; and thence to
Kella and Sir-i-Asp, where an escort of
from the Governor of Khilat-i-Ghilzai
Mission and conducted it in pom
the city. At the entrance stoo
the garrison presenting arms
derful regiment of tatterdemalion
cered apparently by mountebanks,
officer wore an ordinary forage cap wi
full coat, the brass anchor buttons on wh
evidence that it had once seen service on
of-war. The next had a scarlet shel
with white trousers—and a tall black ha
third swaggered in an undress military
coat, with a bushy fox-fur cap, which
dently miscarried in its destination, for
have been meant for the mate of a Gr
whaler. The fourth officer, who seem
chief in authority, was modestly att
white calico, but in the English
ion, having on his head, a
cocked hat, from which protrud
finally a huge bunch of white feather
sides these there was a band, consisting
ten or a dozen performers, outrageously
in all defiance of the canons of colour, i
trousers with bright green stripes down
and scarlet drummers' jackets and
"They looked," says Dr. Bellew, "mos
troop of harlequins than military, and
with difficulty were preserved a due de
And thus in laughter ended the journey
Mission of 1857. For the rest of the
Candahar was an official promenade, wit
cident or adventure. The "Mission"
may any day receive its order to start f
same point, with the same destination
Will it find the Jams of Afghanistan fo
of "honour," and will the record close
sans mirth ?

Daily News. Sept. 2

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, A AFGHANISTAN.

AUSTRIAN OPINION OF THE TION.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BUDA-PESTH, TUESDAY E

The question concerning the Afghan P
culty between England and Russia is
very much attention here.

This morning's *Pester Lloyd* publishe
and interesting letter from Professor
the well-known Central Asian travell
meeting on England's Indian policy si
While pointing out the necessity of
energetically resenting the insult offere
flag, he warns Austria-Hungary to
closely the turn of affairs in Asia, wh
most seriously affect in its consequ
ultimate solution of the Eastern Qu
Europe.

Professor Vambéry regards an Anglo
war as inevitable

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

SIMLA, S

Notwithstanding the prompt military
taken by the authorities, it is believed
Government intend to await the course
and to observe the attitude adopted by th
Shere Ali, before undertaking the actua
of Afghanistan. A serious outbreak has
in Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia
ghanistan.

THE MISSION TO CABUL.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SEPT. 1.

We are still asking what the Indian Govern-
ment will do if the Ameer of Cabul refuses to
receive our mission. One has only to run over the
daily papers to find out that not even the best of
them can get any news of the movements of Go-
vernment. Rumour still says that a body of
troops is to move on to Herat. The troops a
Quetlah are to be reinforced, with a view, some
think, of our moving to Candahar; others declare
it as their opinion that the instant we were to
make such a move, the Ameer of Cabul would
hand over Herat to the Czar, as he has
already shown his liking for Russia, and
has accepted its friendship. However far the
Ameer may have committed himself to Russia, I
can hardly credit a report to the effect that he has
refused to receive our mission, and that the Indian
Government is awaiting instructions from home.
The secrecy with which the Indian Government
conducts all its proceedings precludes the possi-
bility of anybody criticising what it is "going to
do," and one has to be satisfied with rejoicing or
bewailing what it "has done." The Indian
Press has often grieved over this state of things in
vain. Whatever the policy may be that we shall
adopt with reference to Afghanistan, one thing is
urgently required, viz., that it should impress on
Russia and the Ameer of Cabul that we are deter-
mined to act decisively, and are not again going
to depend on assurances and let things slide. No
one acquainted with the treachery of the Afghans
can doubt for a moment what the result of weak-
ness at this crisis would mean. We have a fair start-
ing-point now, from which, if we choose, we can
put our Afghan difficulties in order, and be able
to do so not improbably without getting mixed
up in a political embroglio with any one.
Much of course must depend on the Ameer as
to how he receives our mission; but I think, and
it is I believe generally considered, that if the
Ameer will only not stand in his own light all
may be well with him. The Afghans have a
peculiar dislike to foreigners being in their
country, especially on their first entering it, so
that in following the Russian Envoy instead of
preceding him, Sir Neville Chamberlain may only
come in for a share of this feeling instead of the
whole of it, the Russians getting the rest.

I pointed out in my last letter that the Ameer
had forewarned the Government of India some
time since that Russia would advance into
Afghanistan, and that he wanted us to guarantee
him our assistance if what he feared should occur.
If he was really in earnest in asking our assist-
ance on that occasion, when a Russian advance
was only a thing of the future, and a state of
things he professed to dread, what, it may be
asked, is it that has so altered the Ameer's views
of Russia's movements in Cabul that he can now
receive her envoy with apparent satisfaction, and
by his conduct leave us in ignorance whether
he will even receive our mission? The answer is
not difficult to find. Our own want of foresight
is the immediate cause of our present situation
as regards Russia and Afghanistan. When
the Ameer sent his representatives to us,
what better opportunity could there have been
for creating a firm foothold for ourselves at the
Ameer's Court? Why should we have refused
what he asked, unless it was to drive him to listen
to the first Power that flattered him? The
Ameer, being human, will no doubt have
some little wish to side with the Power least
likely to crush him. The advances of Russia
in Central Asia of late years may make
him consider if the wisest plan after all may not
be to side with us, especially if we can prove
to him that it is our wish and intention that Cabul
should remain independent. He must be made to
see, however, that he will be courting subjection
if he favours Russia and allows her a footing
in his territory. He ought to understand that he
is safe as long as he trusts England, but that if
he confides in Russia he not only runs the risk of
being invaded by British troops, but that Russia
must have something tangible to gain by acting
in direct opposition to her statement that she con-
sidered Afghanistan as outside her sphere of
action.

Yakoob Khan, who will be perhaps now de-
clared heir-apparent to the throne of Cabul, dis-
likes us and has rather a liking for Russia, so
that it is to be hoped the mission to Afghanistan
may not be delayed. Abdoola Jan was the son of
Shere Ali's favourite wife, whom he married in his
old age. It is supposed that by her influence the
Ameer was induced to raise her son regardless of
his other offspring to the position of heir-appa-
rent, a step that produced ill-feeling in
Afghanistan. Yakoob Khan is a very warlike
person, with much determination, and his
succession to the throne of Cabul will be more
likely to secure internal peace to that State than
that succession of Abdoola Jan would have
been. There is no proof at present for the
statement that Abdoola Jan has been poisoned,
but, if it is true, I do not fancy the story will be
authenticated for some time. Ghuznee is said to
be the place to which Yakoob Khan has escaped.
It is reported that he is trying to create a dis-
turbance there, though nothing official is known
about this matter.

There is a curious announcement in the Turkestan
Gazette of 18th (30th) June, 1873. It is headed
"Monsieur Weinberg's Mission to Bokhara."
M. Weinberg on 21st May (2nd June) reached
Karshi, and on the following day had an inter-
view with the Ameer, "whom he told that Von
Kaufmann "hoped for a sincerely friendlike
attitude on the part of Bokhara in case the Rus-
sian forces now under orders should be directed to
the Amu Darya," . . . and expressed Von
Kaufmann's hope "that the Ameer would assist
the Russian forces by way of voluntarily permit-
ting his subjects to sell them bread, flour, and
other provisions." Ameer Syad Muzatar replied he
would do what he could to help the Russian forces.
The *Indian Weekly Review* says it appears
almost a misfortune for us that the scheme
of the Russians moving on the Oxus or Amu
Darya, in case of war with England, was not car-
ried out, for it would probably have resulted in
Russia showing herself to be the real enemy of
Afghanistan beyond mistake.

I am glad to be able to report that there is
every prospect of a plentiful harvest in the North-
West Provinces, though the rainfall this year has
been very great indeed.

P.S.—I just hear that the escape of Yakoob
Khan is confirmed. Though his whereabouts is
not known, is it not possible that he has gone to
Persia? He used to be good friends with that
nation.

The following letters addressed by the Vice-
roy to the Ameer of Cabul have been published in
the Indian newspapers:

SIMLA, AUGUST 14.

The authentic intelligence which I have lately received
as to the course of recent events at Cabul, and in the
countries bordering on Afghanistan, has rendered it
necessary that I should communicate fully and without
reserve with your Highness upon matters of importance,
which concern the interests of India and Afghanistan.

For this reason I have considered it expedient to depute
an especial and confidential envoy of high rank, who is
known to your Highness—his Excellency General Sir
Neville Bowles Chamberlain. He will visit your High-
ness immediately, in order that he may converse per-
sonally with your Highness regarding these urgent
affairs.

It appears certain that they can be best arranged for
the welfare and tranquillity of both States, and the pre-
servation of friendship between the two Governments, by
a full and frank statement of the present position.

This letter is, therefore, sent in advance to your High-
ness by the hand of the Nawab Ghulam Hussein Khan,
C.S.I., a faithful and honoured Sirdar of my Government,
who will explain all the necessary details, the time and
manner of the Envoy's visit, and will ask that your High-
ness may be pleased to issue commands to your Sirdars
and all the other authorities of Afghanistan upon the
route between Peshawur and Cabul, and will make, with-
out delay, whatever arrangements may be necessary and
proper for effectually securing to my Envoy, as the repre-
sentative of a friendly Power, a due safe conduct and
suitable accommodation according to his dignity, while

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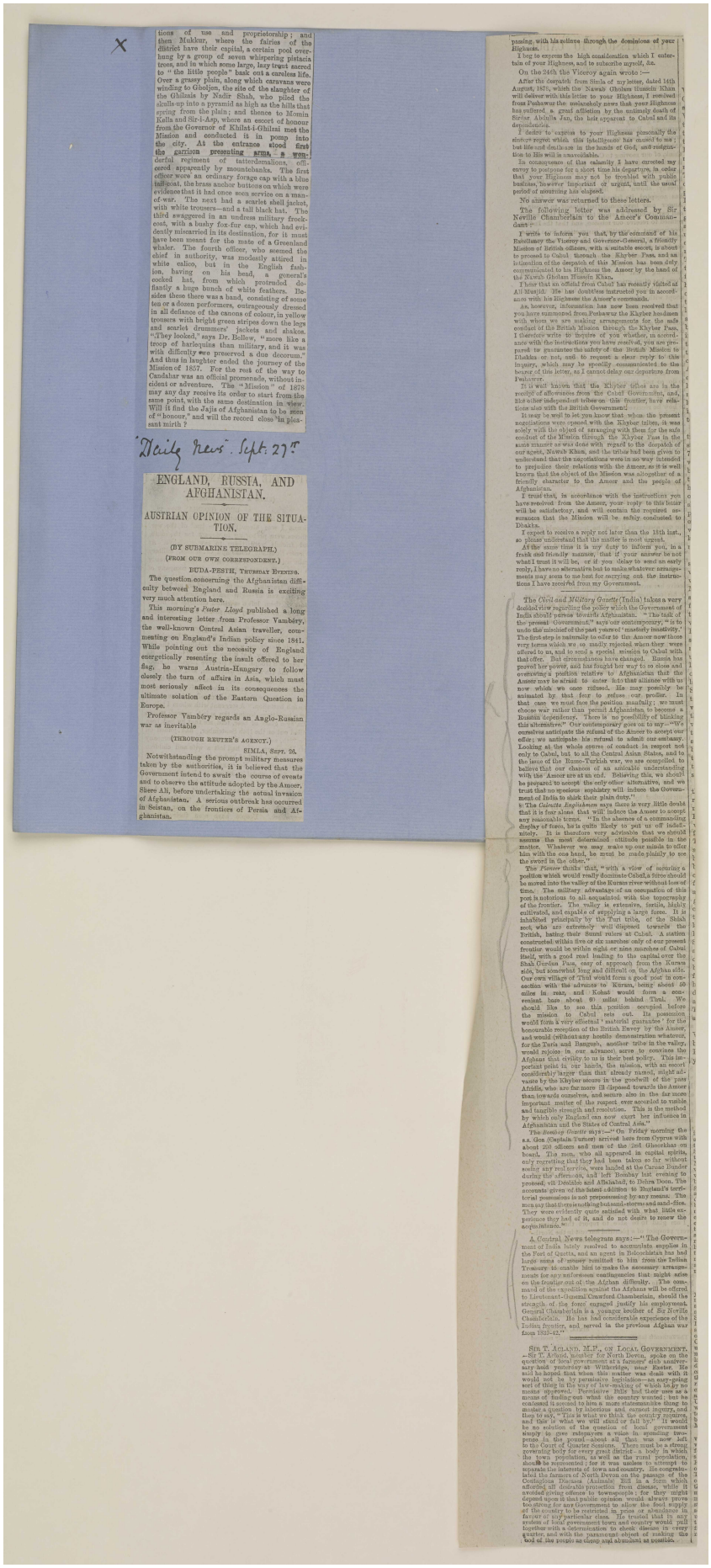

tions of use and proprietorship; and there Mukur, where the fairies of the district have their capital, a certain pool overhung by a group of seven whispering pistacia trees, and in which some large, lazy trout sacred to "the little people" bask out a careless life. Over a grassy plain, along which caravans were winding to Gholjan, the site of the slaughter of the Ghilzais by Nadir Shah, who piled the skulls up into a pyramid as high as the hills that spring from the plain; and thence to Momin Kella and Sir-i-Asp, where an escort of honour from the Governor of Khilat-i-Ghilzai met the Mission and conducted it in pomp into the city. At the entrance stood first the garrison presenting arms, a wonderful regiment of tatterdemalions, officered apparently by mountebanks. The first officer wore an ordinary forage cap with a blue infantry coat, the brass anchor buttons on which were evidence that it had once seen service on a man-of-war. The next had a scarlet shell jacket, with white trousers—and a tall black hat. The third swaggered in an undress military frock-coat, with a bushy fox-fur cap, which had evidently miscarried in its destination, for it must have been meant for the mate of a Greenland whaler. The fourth officer, who seemed the chief in authority, was modestly attired in white calico, but in the English fashion, having on his head, a general's cocked hat, from which protruded defiantly a huge bunch of white feathers. Besides these there was a band, consisting of some ten or a dozen performers, outrageously dressed in all defiance of the canons of colour, in yellow trousers with bright green stripes down the legs and scarlet drummers' jackets and shakos. "They looked," says Dr. Bellew, "more like a troop of harlequins than military, and it was with difficulty we preserved a due decorum." And thus in laughter ended the journey of the Mission of 1857. For the rest of the way to Candahar was an official promenade, without incident or adventure. The "Mission" of 1878 may any day receive its order to start from the same point, with the same destination in view. Will it find the Jajis of Afghanistan to be men of "honour," and will the record close "in pleasant mirth?

Daily News. Sept. 27th.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

AUSTRIAN OPINION OF THE SITUATION.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BUDA-PESTH, TUESDAY EVENING.

The question concerning the Afghanistan difficulty between England and Russia is exciting very much attention here.

This morning's *Pester Lloyd* published a long and interesting letter from Professor Vambéry, the well-known Central Asian traveller, commenting on England's Indian policy since 1841. While pointing out the necessity of England energetically resenting the insult offered to her flag, he warns Austria-Hungary to follow closely the turn of affairs in Asia, which must most seriously affect in its consequences the ultimate solution of the Eastern Question in Europe.

Professor Vambéry regards an Anglo-Russian war as inevitable

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

SIMLA, SEPT. 26.

Notwithstanding the prompt military measures taken by the authorities, it is believed that the Government intend to await the course of events and to observe the attitude adopted by the Ameer, Shere Ali, before undertaking the actual invasion of Afghanistan. A serious outbreak has occurred in Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan.

passing, with his retinue through the dominions of your Highness.

I beg to express the high consideration which I entertain of your Highness, and to subscribe myself, &c.

On the 24th the Viceroy again wrote:—

After the despatch from Simla of my letter, dated 14th August, 1877, which the Nawab Ghulam Hussein Khan will deliver with this letter to your Highness, I received from Peshawur the melancholy news that your Highness has suffered a great affliction by the untimely death of Sirdar Abdulla Jan, the late ameer at to Cabul and its dependencies.

I desire to express to your Highness personally the sincere regret which this intelligence has caused to me; but life and death are in the hands of God, and resignation to His will is unavoidable.

In consequence of this calamity I have directed my envoy to postpone for a short time his departure, in order that your Highness may not be troubled with public business, however important or urgent, until the usual period of mourning has elapsed.

No answer was returned to these letters.

The following letter was addressed by Sir Neville Chamberlain to the Ameer's Commissioners:—

I write to inform you that, by the command of his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General, a friendly Mission of British officers, with a suitable escort, is about to proceed to Cabul through the Khyber Pass, and an intimation of the despatch of this Mission has been duly communicated to his Highness the Ameer by the hand of the Nawab Ghulam Hussein Khan.

I hear that an official from Cabul has recently visited at Ali Masjid. He has doubtless instructed you in accordance with his Highness the Ameer's commands.

As, however, information has now been received that you have summoned from Peshawur the Khyber headmen with whom we are making arrangements for the safe conduct of the British Mission through the Khyber Pass, I therefore write to inquire of you whether, in accordance with the instructions you have received, you are prepared to guarantee the safety of the British Mission to Dhakka or not, and to request a clear reply to this inquiry, which may be speedily communicated to the bearer of this letter, as I cannot delay our departure from Peshawur.

It is well known that the Khyber tribes are in the receipt of allowances from the Cabul Government, and, like other independent tribes on this frontier, have relations also with the British Government.

It may be well to let you know that when the present negotiations were opened with the Khyber tribes, it was solely with the object of arranging with them for the safe conduct of the Mission through the Khyber Pass in the same manner as was done with regard to the despatch of our agent, Nawab Khan, and the tribes had been given to understand that the negotiations were in no way intended to prejudice their relations with the Ameer, as it is well known that the object of the Mission was altogether of a friendly character to the Ameer and the people of Afghanistan.

I trust that, in accordance with the instructions you have received from the Ameer, your reply to this letter will be satisfactory, and will contain the required assurances that the Mission will be safely conducted to Dhakka.

I expect to receive a reply not later than the 15th inst., so please understand that the matter is most urgent.

At the same time it is my duty to inform you, in a frank and friendly manner, that if your answer be not what I trust it will be, or if you delay to send an early reply, I have no alternative but to make whatever arrangements may seem to me best for carrying out the instructions I have received from my Government.

The *Civil and Military Gazette* (India) takes a very decided view regarding the policy which the Government of India should pursue towards Afghanistan. "The task of the present Government," says our contemporary, "is to undo the mischief of the past year," namely hostility. The first step is naturally to offer to the Ameer now those very terms which we so madly rejected when they were offered to us, and to send a special mission to Cabul with that offer. But circumstances have changed. Russia has proved her power, and has fought her way to so close and overawing a position relative to Afghanistan that the Ameer may be afraid to enter into that alliance with us now which we once refused. He may possibly be animated by that fear to refuse our proffer. In that case we must face the position manfully; we must choose war rather than permit Afghanistan to become a Russian dependency. There is no possibility of blinking this alternative." Our contemporary goes on to say:—"We ourselves anticipate the refusal of the Ameer to accept our offer; we anticipate his refusal to admit our embassy. Looking at the whole course of conduct in respect not only to Cabul, but to all the Central Asian States, and to the issue of the Russo-Turkish war, we are compelled to believe that our chance of an amicable understanding with the Ameer are at an end. Believing this, we should be prepared to accept the only other alternative, and we trust that no specious sophistry will induce the Government of India to shirk their plain duty."

The *Calcutta Englishman* says there is very little doubt that it is fear alone that will induce the Ameer to accept any reasonable terms. "In the absence of a commanding display of force, he is quite likely to 'put us off' indefinitely. It is therefore very advisable that we should assume the most determined attitude possible in the matter. Whatever we may make up our minds to offer him with the one hand, he must be made plainly to see the sword in the other."

The *Pioneer* thinks that, "with a view of securing a position which would really dominate Cabul, a force should be moved into the valley of the Kurum river without loss of time. The military advantage of an occupation of this post is notorious to all acquainted with the topography of the frontier. The valley is extensive, fertile, highly cultivated, and capable of supplying a large force. It is inhabited principally by the Turi tribe, of the Shiah sect, who are extremely well disposed towards the British, hating their Sunni rulers at Cabul. A nation constructed within five or six marches only of our present frontier would be within sight or nine marches of Cabul itself, with a good road leading to the capital over the Shah Gurdun Pass, easy of approach from the Kurum side, but somewhat long and difficult on the Afghan side. Our own village of Thul would form a good post in connection with the advance to Kurum, being about 50 miles in rear, and Kohat would form a convenient base, about 90 miles behind Thul. We should like to see this position occupied before the mission to Cabul sets out. Its possession would form a very effectual 'material guarantee' for the honourable reception of the British Envoy by the Ameer, and would (without any hostile demonstration whatever, for the Turis and Bangush, another tribe in the valley, would rejoice in our advance) serve to convince the Afghans that civility to us is their best policy. This important point in our hands, the mission, with an escort considerably larger than that already named, might advance by the Khyber secure in the goodwill of the pass Afridis, who are far more ill-disposed towards the Ameer than towards ourselves, and secure also in the far more important matter of the respect ever accorded to visible and tangible strength and resolution. This is the method by which only England can now exert her influence in Afghanistan and the States of Central Asia."

The Bombay Gazette says:—"On Friday morning the s.s. Cos (Captain Turner) arrived here from Cyprus with about 250 officers and men of the 2nd Ghoorkhas on board. The men, who all appeared in capital spirits, only regretting that they had been taken so far without seeing any real service, were landed at the Carnac Bunder during the afternoon, and left Bombay last evening to proceed, all Deolalee and Allahabad, to Dehra Doon. The accounts given of the latest addition to England's territorial possessions is not prepossessing by any means. The men say that the mountains are all sand-stone and sand-flies. They were evidently quite satisfied with what little experience they had of it, and do not desire to renew the acquaintance."

A Central News telegram says:—"The Government of India lately resolved to accumulate supplies in the Fort of Quetta, and an agent in Beloochistan has had large sums of money remitted to him from the Indian Treasury to enable him to make the necessary arrangements for any unforeseen contingencies that might arise on the frontier out of the Afghan difficulty. The command of the expedition against the Afghans will be offered to Lieutenant-General Crawford Chamberlain, should the strength of the force engaged justify his employment. General Chamberlain is a younger brother of Sir Neville Chamberlain. He has had considerable experience of the Indian frontier, and served in the previous Afghan war from 1839-42."

SIR T. ACLAND, M.P., ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—Sir T. Acland, member for North Devon, spoke on the question of local government at a farmers' club anniversary-held yesterday at Witheridge, near Exeter. He said he hoped that when this matter was dealt with it would not be by parliamentary legislation—an easy-going sort of thing in the way of law-making of which he by no means approved. Parliamentary Bills had their uses as a means of finding out what the country wanted; but he confessed it seemed to him a more statesmanlike thing to master a question by laborious and earnest inquiry, and then to say, "This is what we think the country requires, and this is what we will stand or fall by." It would be no solution of the question of local government simply to give ratepayers a voice in spending twopence in the pound—about all that was now left to the Court of Quarter Sessions. There must be a strong governing body for every great district—a body in which the town population, as well as the rural population, should be represented; for it was useless to attempt to separate the interests of town and country. He congratulated the farmers of North Devon on the passage of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill in a form which afforded all desirable protection from disease, while it avoided giving offence to townspeople; for they might depend upon it that public opinion would always prove too strong for any Government to allow the food supply of the country to be restricted in price or abundance in favour of any particular class. He trusted that in any system of local government town and country would pull together with a determination to check disease in every quarter, and with the paramount object of making the food of the people as cheap and abundant as possible.

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JUDGING from the publication in the Indian newspapers of his letters to SHERE ALI relative to Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission, it would seem that the Indian Viceroy is anxious to put in a favourable light the diplomatic action to which the AMEER'S insolence is a rejoinder. Unless we are to suppose that these documents have come to light through some such surreptitious agency as that which gave the SALISBURY-SCHOUVALOFF agreement to the world, we must presume that they have been published with Lord LYTTON'S permission. It is natural that Lord LYTTON and his advisers should wish to produce the impression that they are in no way to blame for the hostile attitude which the Afghan ruler has thought fit to adopt, and should endeavour to do this by making public a specimen of the manner in which they have approached him. The two letters which have been published, however, whether by design or by inadvertence, do not afford sufficient ground for an estimate of the wisdom or unwisdom of Lord LYTTON'S dealings with SHERE ALI. Taken by themselves, they cannot be said to err on the side of over-courtesy, even according to Western standards of polite address. When you propose to enter another man's house, it is customary to go through the form of asking permission. Lord LYTTON would seem to have observed no such ceremony in his communication to the AMEER. He simply intimated that from "authentic intelligence which he had lately received as to the "course of recent events at Cabul and in the "countries bordering on Afghanistan," it had become "necessary" for him to discuss with the AMEER "matters of importance which concern "the interests of India and Afghanistan." He did not affect to inquire whether the AMEER was willing to enter upon such a conference, but informed him, without further ceremony, that he had resolved to send an Envoy "immediately" to "converse personally with his Highness regarding "these urgent affairs," and requested him to make provision for the Envoy's "safe conduct and "suitable accommodation according to his "dignity." A letter so worded is not calculated to flatter the dignity of an Oriental potentate accustomed to a style from his nominal equals which in the West would denote subserviency. It is, in fact, such a missive as a landlord might address to a refractory tenant as his last word before resorting to legal proceedings. The subsequent communication, despatched on the news of the death of the AMEER'S son and designated heir, announcing that, important and urgent as was the business which Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was charged to transact, his visit would be delayed "for a short time," "till the "usual period of mourning had elapsed," was not couched in terms likely to soothe wounded susceptibilities.

It would be rash to say that the studiously abrupt and imperious tone of the VICEROY'S demand for a personal interview between his Envoy and the AMEER was not justifiable. It may have been the wisest tone to adopt in the circumstances. It is quite conceivable that our relations with the angry AMEER had reached such a point that a conciliatory tone would have been misinterpreted. Before we can form an opinion we must know more of the circumstances than has yet been vouchsafed to the English public. It may not be expedient to publish more at present, but till fuller revelations have been made the significance of this fragment cannot be appreciated. This much, at least, we know—that the statement by which the publication of Lord LYTTON'S letters has been accompanied, that "a most courteous and friendly letter" from the VICEROY to the AMEER in 1876 "has up to this "day remained totally unanswered," by no means represents all that has passed since 1876 affecting the relations between the Indian Government and that of Afghanistan. Sir LEWIS PELLY'S mission has intervened since that date, as well as the occupation of Quettah. The letter alluded to may have concerned that mission, but we should like to know something more about it than that it was projected "with a view of discussing and improving the relations between the British "Government and Afghanistan." The fact that Lord LYTTON'S letter was "courteous and "friendly" throws no light upon his frontier policy. It would be of more interest to know by what means he proposed to improve our relations with Afghanistan. The AMEER refused to treat with Sir LEWIS PELLY personally, but he sent an envoy to confer with him at Peshawur. What were the proposals which Sir LEWIS PELLY then communicated? Were they, as has been alleged in an apparently inspired communication from Calcutta, the same as those of which Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was the accredited bearer? And were they, as has been asserted by the same authority, to the effect that the AMEER should allow British troops to occupy certain points in his territory, and should admit a British Resident with a sufficient military guard to Cabul?

Answers to these questions would be more to the purpose than references to unreciprocated courtesies of an earlier date. The AMEER has made no secret of his grudge against the English ever since his Envoy failed to get what he wanted from Lord MAYO at Simla. The barring of the way to Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN is the most flagrant instance of this ill-will, but it is by no means the first. He has allowed no Englishman to enter his territory for five years. He refused to let Mr. FORSYTH'S party pass through Cabul on their way back from Kashgar. He even interfered temporarily with the passage of our native agents through his territories. SHERE ALI'S defiant jealousy has for some time been a known factor in Indian politics; the question has been how it was to be met? The policy of Lord LYTTON'S predecessor was to leave him alone till he should come to his senses, and recognise for himself that his true interest lay in cordial alliance with the English. The ground of that policy and the secret of its strength lay in the assumption that we had no desire to extend our present frontier, and that SHERE ALI or his successor on the Afghan throne would feel the necessity of cultivating friendly relations with us if he desired to avoid absorption by the advancing power of Russia. But since Lord LYTTON went to fill the Viceregal office this policy has been departed from. It is true it has been both officially and semi-officially denied that there has been any change in our frontier policy since Lord LYTTON'S appointment. When the Government were challenged last year to declare what was the meaning of the occupation of Quettah and Sir LEWIS PELLY'S negotiations at Peshawur, Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said that "he had always maintained the opinion "that the best way to prepare against any danger "to India was not to advance outside our own "frontier to meet it, but to strengthen ourselves "well in our borders." This went forth as the opinion of the Government. Lord GEORGE HAMILTON and Lord SALISBURY, in the House of Lords, were also understood to say that no change of policy had been determined upon, though their language was more ambiguous. The UNDER-SECRETARY, in particular, made use of a significant expression to the effect that the affairs of Afghanistan were now to be regarded more as Imperial than as Indian questions. The public were also in possession of a despatch of Lord LYTTON'S, in which he referred to a conversation which he had with Lord SALISBURY before quitting England, and stated that he had then agreed to treat Afghan affairs in accordance with a scheme of Imperial policy. The Imperial trumpet-note was industriously sounded by a certain section of the Government. There would of course have been no want of Imperial spirit in keeping within our own borders, if it was the wisest course; but has that policy been honestly adhered to by our romantic Imperialists? If the version given of Sir LEWIS PELLY'S mission is correct, the country has reason to complain that it has not only been kept in the dark, but that the answers of her MAJESTY'S Ministers last year were misleading. The inspired organs through which the Indian Government has been half-concealing and half-revealing its frontier policy endeavour to represent SHERE ALI'S refusal of our English Envoy as an isolated act of defiance. In forgetfulness of former communications and of official utterances, we are now told that this insult lifts Afghan affairs within the range of Imperial politics. They have been, by the avowal of the present VICEROY and the late Under-Secretary for India, within that range for some time, though the result is so far the reverse of satisfactory that it is considered judicious to conceal the fact.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 27th

(40)

OUR ATTITUDE ON THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

FOR many a day the newspapers have been melancholy reading; to-day they are most melancholy. No Englishman—not even the partisan whose thoughts do not always correspond with his words—can go through the various London prints this morning without feeling that his Government and his country are fast becoming a laughing-stock to everybody who is not an Englishman. And the worst of it is that it seems almost impossible to mend matters now, except in a comparatively unimportant particular. The ludicrous bounce of the ministerial press, the Who's-afraid swagger, the studied gratuitous assumption of Mr. Bob Acres' part in the face of a grinning world—this sort of thing might be avoided at any rate. The truth is that the country has been placed in a position of extreme difficulty, a difficulty at once painful, humiliating, and even ridiculous; and it can only be made more humiliating, more ridiculous, by an affectation of sublime serenity. Let us look at a few of the various news items, as they are sometimes called, which are telegraphed this morning. According to the reports from India, numerous additional regiments have been warned to prepare for active service; the Quetta garrison is to be strongly reinforced; here and there troops are to be concentrated, in one place as many as 15,000 men; everywhere formidable preparation. But "it is imperative that time should be given for negotiations with the hill tribes, who are independent of Cabul, but would throw their whole weight into the scale against us if we attempt to advance without having made arrangements with them for their neutrality." For, although the temper of the Ameer has been known for years, and though the intrigue of Russia at Cabul has been known for months, and though for weeks it has appeared most probable that the one and the other would combine to put upon us open insult and defiance, no arrangements with these hill tribes was attempted till yesterday. (Again, masterly inactivity of the most impressive order.) For this reason, and for others of an equally substantial character, "it is believed that no immediate advance will take place," says one report. Says another: "Notwithstanding the prompt military measures taken by the authorities, it is believed that the Government intend to await the course of events and to observe the attitude adopted by the Ameer." Says a third: "The Government will await for the present the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, adopting an attitude of armed expectation." Now, to await the possibility of a favourable outcome of events (in Mr. Micawber's time it used to be called waiting for something to turn up), meanwhile adopting an attitude of armed expectation, is only to maintain on the frontier after SHERE ALI has delivered his ultimatum in the most offensive way possible (to be sure, Major CAVAGNARI was not *actually* murdered) precisely the position we took up before the Ameer had come to a decision. Of course there are explanations of such a course as either judicious or necessary; though there are none that can take from it its unfortunate appearance of hesitation to accept a challenge till for the third time it is accompanied by a blow, or of inability, months after the blow was expected, to meet it promptly. Besides the circumstance that the hill tribes have yet to be won to our own side (if they are not already won to the other), it is alleged by some that winter is too near to allow of an invasion: though, according to others, there is time to move three weeks hence without danger of the snows. But supposing that the first-mentioned authorities are right, it remains that we are discovered in the folly of having allowed the matter to drag on till the Ameer could defy us with any amount of accompanying outrage—leaving the Viceroy of India for six months in the absurd position of holding forth one hand for an apology, while the other is applied to the bruises inflicted on his honour. Indeed, this is the attitude which he is recommended to adopt, as the one suggested by every consideration of prudence and dignity. All we can say is that we do not view it in that light. If this same attitude is adopted compulsorily, so much the worse for us that we have been reduced by our masterly inactivities to anything so ludicrous, humiliating, and perilous. If it is adopted voluntarily (and the ministerial organ assures us that "we can choose our own way with the certainty of following it at our will"), there is a kind of madness or of fatality about it for which the political inquirer should seek an explanation if he cannot find a cure.

If we ourselves had to look for the explanation, we should turn to the wretched position of our Government with regard to Russia and the whole Eastern Question. We should ask ourselves (supposing the attitude above described to be a voluntary one) whether our Government does not feel that "precipitation" in dealing with the Ameer might deprive them of a second opportunity of ensuring peace with honour by some secret arrangement with the Russian Court. That Russia is SHERE ALI's instigator and abettor nobody doubts. She has still her agent at

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Cabul, to operate as the exigencies or conveniences of her policy dictate. And elsewhere she has an unfinished programme to fulfil—a programme the success of which may be more or less affected by a continuance of ability to cozen or command her Majesty's Ministers. As a gentleman "in a position to be exceptionally well-informed" said to a newspaper correspondent who we happen to know is himself well-informed, Russia is using the Afghan incident to distract attention from another quarter: or rather, as we should put it, as a promising means of bullying the Government into a bargain for "concessions" in another quarter. This well-informed person thinks that Russia "will show herself quite disposed to leave Afghanistan to the mercy of England, providing the negotiations that have lately been entered upon at the Porte with regard to the war indemnity are allowed to take their course:" we should add, and provided that England makes no serious objection to some other things desired by the Czar—such as concession to his wishes as to the organization of Roumelia, the occupation of that province and of the autonomous Bulgaria, and so forth. In any case, masterly inaction before Afghanistan all through the winter will leave ample scope for some new "preliminary understanding" like that which, after dishonouring and crippling the country at Berlin, led immediately to this Afghan imbroglio. With due precaution, such a conspiracy might escape revelation this time; and our experience in the former case justifies the apprehension that our Government will have no difficulty in resorting to such a means of boasting once more that they have given us peace with honour, and that, thanks to their astounding vigour, the empire is *really* re-established on the topmost pinnacles of a glorious security.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, Sept. 26.—Three thousand five hundred troops are to be sent to reinforce the Quetta garrison, and a force of 4,000 men will be assembled at Thull, at the entrance of the Koorum Valley. A reserve force of 6,000 men will be concentrated at Sukkur.

Sept. 27.—Nawab Ghoolam Hussein Khan, the special envoy sent by the Viceroy to Cabul, has returned to Peshawur.

BOMBAY, Sept. 27.—Several papers designate Lieutenant-General Crawford Chamberlain as the Commander-in-Chief of the army for Afghanistan.

The news from India this morning is that no immediate hostilities against the Ameer of Afghanistan are to take place. The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* telegraphs that "the Government will await for the present the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, adopting an attitude of armed expectation." The Quettah garrison is to be strongly reinforced, and, according to a *Standard* telegram, an advance from Quettah upon Candahar may be expected as soon as sufficient troops have been collected. A serious outbreak is said to have occurred in Seistan, on the frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan. The news continues to be much discussed on the Continent. A Vienna despatch in the *Daily Telegraph* says that the Austrian Government is greatly concerned lest an Anglo-Russian conflict should result from the difficulty. M. Vambéry, writing in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, declares that the conflict between England and Russia, which he has for fourteen years been laughed at for predicting, is now imminent. It could have been avoided had English statesmen not been so obstinate and deaf to disinterested counsels. Sir Neville Chamberlain was sent too late. M. Vambéry also suspects Russia of designs on Kashgar, which in her hands would be a commercial and political blow for England.

The Khyber Pass is a mountain defile twenty-eight miles in length, in which there are few places where an army could find cover. In April, 1842, however, General Pollock, with a force which comprised only one European battalion, seven native battalions, three regiments of cavalry, and fourteen guns, succeeded in forcing his way through it, with but comparatively small losses, although the enemy had assembled in great numbers to oppose him, and had fortified with redoubts the heights which commanded not only the approaches to the entrance, but also the pass itself, the mouth of which they had barricaded by a strong breastwork of stones and bushes. The manner in which General Pollock achieved this difficult enterprise was so admirable that in the standard English work on minor tactics the attack is described in detail as an example of forcing a mountain defile defended at the entrance. Broadly speaking, the plan adopted for forcing the pass was first to clear the heights of the enemy and then advance against the entrance. Accordingly, the greater part of the attacking force was formed into two columns, one of which was to storm the heights on the right, the other those on the left; while the remaining troops were kept in reserve to advance against the centre of the enemy's position so soon as the attacks on his flanks should be sufficiently developed. Both right and left columns advanced simultaneously, the front of each covered by a line of skirmishers followed by supports. At first the enemy offered a determined resistance, but on both flanks the defenders were gradually forced up the hills and finally driven in at all points. As soon as the flanking columns had thus gained possession of the heights, the portion of the force kept in reserve advanced to the mouth of the pass and destroyed the barrier, which the enemy had abandoned on finding his position turned; and as the crowning parties on each side gained ground, so the central column proceeded, until, finally, driven back from height to height, the defender, seeing his positions in the pass thus successively out-flanked, abandoned any further opposition.

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"Times" Sept: 27th

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 26.

Numerous additional regiments have been warned to prepare for service.

There are serious disturbances in the province of Seistan.

The Quettah garrison will be strongly reinforced. Troops are to be concentrated at Thall, at the entrance to the Koorum Valley.

Negotiations are in progress with the Khiberie tribes.

The Government will await for the present the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, adopting an attitude of armed expectation.

PARIS, SEPT. 26.

The French Press, though acknowledging the gravity of the Afghanistan difficulty, does not as yet devote much attention to it. The *Temps* sees three courses open—an ulterior understanding with the Ameer, the occupation and annexation of the passes still open, and an offensive war. As to the last contingency, the struggle would be so costly, and England would be so embarrassed to know what to do with Afghanistan, that it would not be undertaken except in case of absolute necessity. The *Débats* trusts the quarrel will be confined to the Ameer and England, in which case the result will be the partial or total annexation of Afghanistan, for the blunders committed in former expeditions would be avoided. England will probably be satisfied with a severe chastisement of the Ameer and the occupation of the chief passes, in which case she would have no further cause of anxiety. The *République Française* discusses the strategy of an Anglo-Russian conflict in the East, which it regards as ultimately inevitable, though the present difficulty may not lead to it. The *Univers* thinks England will lose her *prestige* in India and run the risk of a general rising if she does not resent the affront; but it argues that to force the passes would be a very hazardous operation, and would have the appearance of a campaign against Russia. The *France* does not apprehend an Anglo-Russian war, but regards a localized war as inevitable. The *Liberté* holds England's right to punish the Ameer unquestionable, and does not believe Russia will intervene.

M. Vambéry, in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, declares that the conflict between England and Russia, which he has for 14 years been laughed at for predicting, is now imminent. It could have been avoided had English statesmen not been so obstinate and deaf to disinterested counsels. Sir N. Chamberlain was sent too late. M. Vambéry also suspects Russia of designs on Kashgar, which in her hands would be a commercial and political blow for England. He thinks it ridiculous to suppose that the ordering of a small force from Kuldja to the frontier station Scharkode can be designed merely to guard against the Chinese inroad.

LONDON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1878.

Our news from India this morning is of the same general tenour as our news of yesterday. The preparations for war are in full progress. Our troops are being concentrated at several points on the Afghan frontier; the garrison at Quettah will be strongly reinforced; and numerous regiments, in addition to those already on the move, have received orders to hold themselves ready for service. We have no precise information as yet as to the immediate intentions of the Indian Government. The belief seems to prevail that the actual invasion of Afghanistan will be put off until next spring. The Government, our Correspondent sends us word, will wait for the present the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, and will adopt meanwhile an attitude of armed expectation. But this is the course they would naturally have followed in any case. The question is for how long a time the expectant attitude is to be maintained. SHERE ALI, as our correspondent, Sir H. HAVELOCK, suggests, may have a short time allowed him within which he may submit and make reparation for the insult he has offered us. Or the limit of our patience may be fixed only by the military requirements of the case, and we may advance into Afghanistan as soon as our forces are in readiness. Some delay there must be. Time will be needed for bringing up our troops in sufficient numbers, and their first movements will, of course, be on Indian soil. If SHERE ALI is minded to submit, he will have an abundant opportunity for doing so before we can pass his frontier line. If he does not avail himself of this, there would seem no good reason for extending his time of penitence any longer than our own convenience may dictate. He must be well aware already of what he has to expect from us. His recent outrage was only the last and greatest of a long series of discourtesies. We can hardly venture to hope that he will suddenly change at the near view of what he must long have had before his eyes, or that he will turn aside at the prospect of consequences which he has been doing his utmost to bring about. If he does thus prove unexpectedly docile, he will be able to make his peace before hostile operations can begin on our part. The concentration of our troops is a threat, and this he may venture to disregard. We have more faith in the efficacy of the blow which will follow, and to delay this needlessly would be interpreted both by him and by others as a sign, not of moderation, but of conscious weakness. If we are to do anything before winter, no time must be lost; and it is satisfactory to know that up to this moment no time has been lost. If SHERE ALI wishes to avert war, the interval we are, in any case, compelled to grant him will be long enough in all reason. It would be mere folly to waste a single day in despatching more messages while our former messages remain unanswered, or in making inquiries as to his present disposition and waiting in expectation of bulletins announcing a favourable change. It must be a question for our military authorities whether it is possible to move on Afghanistan before winter. There are abundant reasons why, if possible, it should be done. Our impetuous correspondent, "BELOOCHEE," thinks, indeed, that we have waited too long already, and that an immediate advance of our troops from Peshawur was the only fitting reply to the gross insult put upon us at Ali Musjid. But if the retirement of our Mission was a mistake—and we by no means admit that it was—it would be a graver mistake still to delay our return in force one moment longer than we need. As long as we postpone our attack, we appear to be sitting down tamely under our wrongs. In six months' time the world, no doubt, will be undeceived; but it is a pity that the Asiatic world, at all events, should not, if possible, be undeceived a little sooner.

We see no room for doubt that the unfriendliness of SHERE ALI to England has been very largely the work of Russian agents. The savage temper of the AMEER has been wrought upon and his suspicions roused for the purpose, apparently, of creating an Afghan difficulty, and so distracting England from attention to Eastern affairs elsewhere. The design, if such it be, is not very likely to succeed. The credulous AMEER has far more reason to pray to be delivered from his friends than England has to be delivered from her foes. It is with no apprehension that we need look on the prospect of a breach with Afghanistan. Our relations with that country have been so exceedingly troublesome that we may rather welcome a crisis that promises to settle them definitively. If a choice of time had been offered us, we could scarcely have fixed on any which would have been more favourable than the present. A few more weeks before winter would have been the utmost we could have wished for, and we may perhaps find that we do not need even these. We have now the chance of making a final arrangement of our North-West frontier question, and we are not likely to let it pass. In whatever way our quarrel with the AMEER may be ended, whether it be by war or by his submission without war, the terms on which we shall insist must be such as will leave no Afghan difficulty for the future. We have to insure that our influence in Afghanistan shall be supreme. We cannot leave the country as a clear field for the arms or the diplomacy of Russia. There will be no two opinions in England as to the only course open to us. Our Afghan policy has never varied with the change of parties at home. It is fixed, indeed, by circumstances wholly independent of party. If we are to hold India, we must make ourselves safe with Afghanistan. That a crisis has arrived, and that our action has been altered in accordance with it during the present year, is a matter of mere accident. It is no new impulse that has led us to interfere more closely than before with the affairs of Afghanistan. It is the old impulse acting in a new way, and only so acting because a new cause of

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action has been introduced. Our notice to Russia that she must not meddle with Afghanistan was given long ago. We are compelled now to make sure that it will be attended to. The insult SHERE ALI has offered us is good proof that it is high time for us to be stirring. The need has come upon us whether we wished for it or not, and it has so come as to lead us naturally to the course most certain to secure the objects we have been aiming at, and which, perhaps, it would not in any case have been within our power to attain peaceably. Russia has been intending, of course, to play her own game. She has, we think, played our game without intending it. It is SHERE ALI, and not England, that has most reason to cry out. He has been treated as a cat's-paw to serve Russian purposes, and as he has consented to be so used he must not wonder if he finds his fingers somewhat severely burnt. Our quarrel, thus far, is with him, and with him only. We do not suppose Russia will intervene to save him from the punishment she has brought upon him. We shall be amply satisfied with excluding Russia from Afghanistan, and shall not care to follow up the question further, or hold her to account for conduct which is certainly not friendly, but which is not openly hostile. That she will succeed in diverting our attention from the Eastern Question and the Treaty of Berlin is not likely. She must make some more formidable diversion if she is to do this; nor are we the only European Power that she will find interested in keeping her to her pledged word. That she has formed the set purpose of creating this diversion we are not, however, willing to believe. The Treaty of Berlin is in process of being carried out with no more delay than must have been foreseen from the first, and with no more than the inevitable friction that must always attend the adjustment of irreconcilable aims. The endeavour of Russia to push forward into Afghanistan has been a breach of good faith, but it will be punished sufficiently by its failure. There will still be room left in the East for the legitimate expansion of Russia. Her civilizing mission, if we may so term it, has as yet been imperfectly fulfilled. We seek to oppose it so far only as to make sure that it shall not interfere with our own work in India. In its own sphere we wish it all success, but that sphere, we cannot suffer Russia to forget, does not include Afghanistan.

NEWS FROM INDIA.—The last overland mail brings Bombay papers to the 6th inst. Sir Neville Chamberlain was then at Simla, awaiting the Ameer's reply to the Viceroy's intimation of the coming Embassy. The *Times of India* says:—"Lord Lytton's letter to the Ameer is being conveyed by a native envoy, who reached Dakka on his way to Cabul on September 1, and was to leave again the same night at midnight for Jellalabad. He has been hospitably entertained by General Gholam Haidar, who gives him escort. We also hear from Simla that the latest advices from Cabul, dated August 21, state that the Ameer, after much persuasion from the Mustaphi, attended durbar again for the first time. All kinds of rumours are current, as appears from the following Simla telegram:—'Reports are becoming more positive that Yakoob Khan has escaped to Ghuznee, where there is said to be some disturbance or rising. Government accounts throw doubts on this, but no very early or accurate information regarding Cabul affairs seems to be received here at present. Russian movements in that direction appear to be unknown. Rumour says we shall force on the mission whether the Ameer consents or not. Quiet preparations are being made to this end, and it is understood that we may move on Herat.' With a view to eventualities, a contemporary makes the following suggestions:—'To secure a position which would really dominate Cabul, a force should be moved into the valley of the Koorum River without loss of time. The military advantage of an occupation of this post is notorious to all acquainted with the topography of the frontier. The valley is extensive, fertile, highly cultivated, and capable of supplying a large force. It is inhabited principally by the Turi tribe of the Shiah sect, who are extremely well disposed towards the British, hating their Sunni rulers at Cabul.'" The *Times of India* adds:—"The Indian troops are returning from Cyprus. Three or four transports have arrived during the week with the Goorkhas and the Madras regiment. The men all appear to be in excellent health and spirits, though much disappointed at not having had a brush with the Russians. They remain in Bombay but a few hours after arrival, as they are despatched to their various stations up country as soon as possible. From telegraphic advices from Cyprus, dated the 2d inst., we learn that the whole of the Indian Contingent, except the Engineers and Sappers, have embarked to return to India. Her Majesty's transport Simoom, with the 9th Regiment N.I., is expected to arrive about the 9th of September. The native who attacked Mr. Tyrell, C.S., a short time since while the latter was playing at lawn-tennis at Agra, has been tried and sentenced to transportation for life. The Committee of the Indian Association propose to convene a public meeting of the inhabitants of Calcutta on the 6th of September, with a view to thank Mr. Gladstone and those members of Parliament who voted with him in the debate on the Vernacular Press Act, and to take such steps as may be deemed necessary in the interests of the Vernacular Press. The committee has resolved to take advantage of the public meeting to appoint a standing committee, which shall watch the operation of the Act, and do what may be necessary to procure its ultimate repeal. We learn by telegraph from Simla that at yesterday's Viceregal Legislative Council meeting Sir Alexander Arbuthnot introduced the Vernacular Press Amendment Bill, the object of which is to repeal that portion of the Act which enables publishers of vernacular newspapers to withdraw themselves from its restrictive provisions by submitting their proofs to a Government official. The Bill will be taken into consideration on the 26th of September, when Sir A. Arbuthnot will review discussions which have taken place in India and England on the Act. Major Sandeman, Agent to the Governor-General for Beloochistan, left Dera Ghazi Khan on the 3d ultimo and proceeded *vid* the Khetran Valley and the Marri and Bugti Hills to Quetta, where he is expected to arrive about the beginning of September. Major Sandeman then goes to Mekran with a view to finally adjusting the last remaining dispute between his Highness the Khan of Khelat and his chiefs. All is quiet in Khelat now; and the fact that no hitch should have arisen in Major Sandeman's arrangements, although he has been more than six months absent from Khelat, is in itself sufficient evidence that the country has been satisfactorily settled. The Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces has written a report on the result of the experiment in colonization tried at Charwa in the Hoshangabad district. The experiment has ended in failure, which is chiefly ascribed to the repugnance with which the natives of India seem to regard inter-provincial emigration. Remarking on the report, the Secretary of State is of opinion that it will be impolitic to incur any further expenditure on schemes of this character. It is rumoured that the Duke of Buckingham will succeed Sir George Bowen as Governor of Victoria. Sir George Bowen's term of office will expire this autumn. It is understood in Madras that the Queen, on the eve of his Grace's departure for Madras, exacted a promise from the Duke that he would not remain more than three years in India. His three years will be up on the 23d of November next. The Kashmir authorities reckon that from 5,000 to 7,000 emigrants have left for British territory. Such emigration is not, however, looked on favourably by the Kashmir officials, who fear that the emigrants will not return. Those who have appeared in the Rawul Pindee, Jhelum, and Gujranwalla districts mostly belong to the classes which refuse to work, and prefer to steal or beg; and the relief works started for them in Rawul Pindee have had to be abandoned accordingly. Notwithstanding the partial failure of the rice crop in Kashmir, the maize is nearly ripe, and it is hoped that the distress will be very shortly considerably relieved. The abuses lately brought to light in connexion with the pilgrim traffic and quarantine arrangements in Egypt have been so serious as to call for remonstrance on the part of the Home Government with the Egyptian authorities. It seems that not only is the quarantine system a bad one, but corruption and cruelty are largely practised by the officials who are charged with the working of it. This was notably the case during the last pilgrimage season in the Red Sea, when the pilgrims were allowed to lie out in the filth and stagnant water of the streets of Jeddah and other Arabian ports during the heavy rain which fell in December, and bribes were freely taken by the quarantine officials to allow communication between the ship and the shore, and native craft to leave the various ports without restriction. At one time affairs became so bad that the pilgrims revolted both at the quarantine stations, where many escaped, and on board the ships, where they threatened the lives of the captains and crews. The Egyptian Government have therefore been warned that Her Majesty's Government can no longer permit a state of things which causes misery, crime, and disease, which inflicts needless hardship and losses upon legitimate trade, and which appears only to serve as a cloak for corruption and extortion; 'Another hard but quiet and modest worker,' says the *Hindoo Patriot*, 'has passed away from among us. Babu Thakoordas Chuckerbutty, a Head Assistant of the Home Secretariat, was formerly an Assistant in the Bengal Secretariat, and was subsequently taken to the Board of Revenue, from which office he was transferred to the Home Secretariat by Sir William Grey, who was very fond of him. In this office he was highly appreciated by the distinguished gentlemen who from time to time held the office of Home Secretary since his appointment. But Babu Thakoordas Chuckerbutty's usefulness lay in another sphere. From early life he interested himself in the cause of education. He was the first person who introduced the Glasgow training system into India. He established a school at Jonye, where this system was regularly taught, and under his intelligent supervision the institution rapidly rose to the position of a first-class school. The Jonye School has sent forth several clever young men, many of whom are now members of the bar. In Calcutta he originally founded the institution which now goes by the name of the Metropolitan Institution."

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In *The Times* of the 24th inst. I observed an article in which the Khoord Cabul Pass is mentioned as being the most formidable physical obstacle to a force marching from Jelalabad on the capital. The article goes on to say:—"There is, however, another pass a short distance to the south, so the defenders' attention might easily be distracted."

It appears to me that sufficient prominence has hardly been given to this latter pass, which seems to be an important one. When General Nott retired by the Khoord Cabul Pass, the 42d Bengal Native Infantry formed the rearguard. An Afghan, in expectation of a reward, informed the commanding officer that he could show him a road in all respects much better suited for the passage of an army than the Khoord Cabul Pass. The late Captain Mainwaring, of the 42d Bengal Native Infantry, was detached with 100 men to inspect the road in question. He found it presented no serious obstacles to the passage of troops, as it lay over the hills, and was not commanded by overhanging cliffs, and that with a little trouble it could easily be made passable for artillery. Starting from the town of Cabul towards the Khoord Cabul Pass, about 11 miles, the main road passed over marshy ground and across a small river which falls into the Cabul river.

The first camping ground was near the head of the Khoord Cabul Pass, and thence the road indicated by the Afghan branched off to the right (west) to the slope of a hill, then, turning south, joined the Khoord Cabul Pass at the second camping ground, 12 miles or so from the first. Thus the road in question forms an angle to the right (west) of the Khoord Cabul Pass. Captain Mainwaring traversed this road the whole way, from the point where it leaves the main road at the first camping ground to the second, where it rejoins the Khoord Cabul Pass. From this it would ap-

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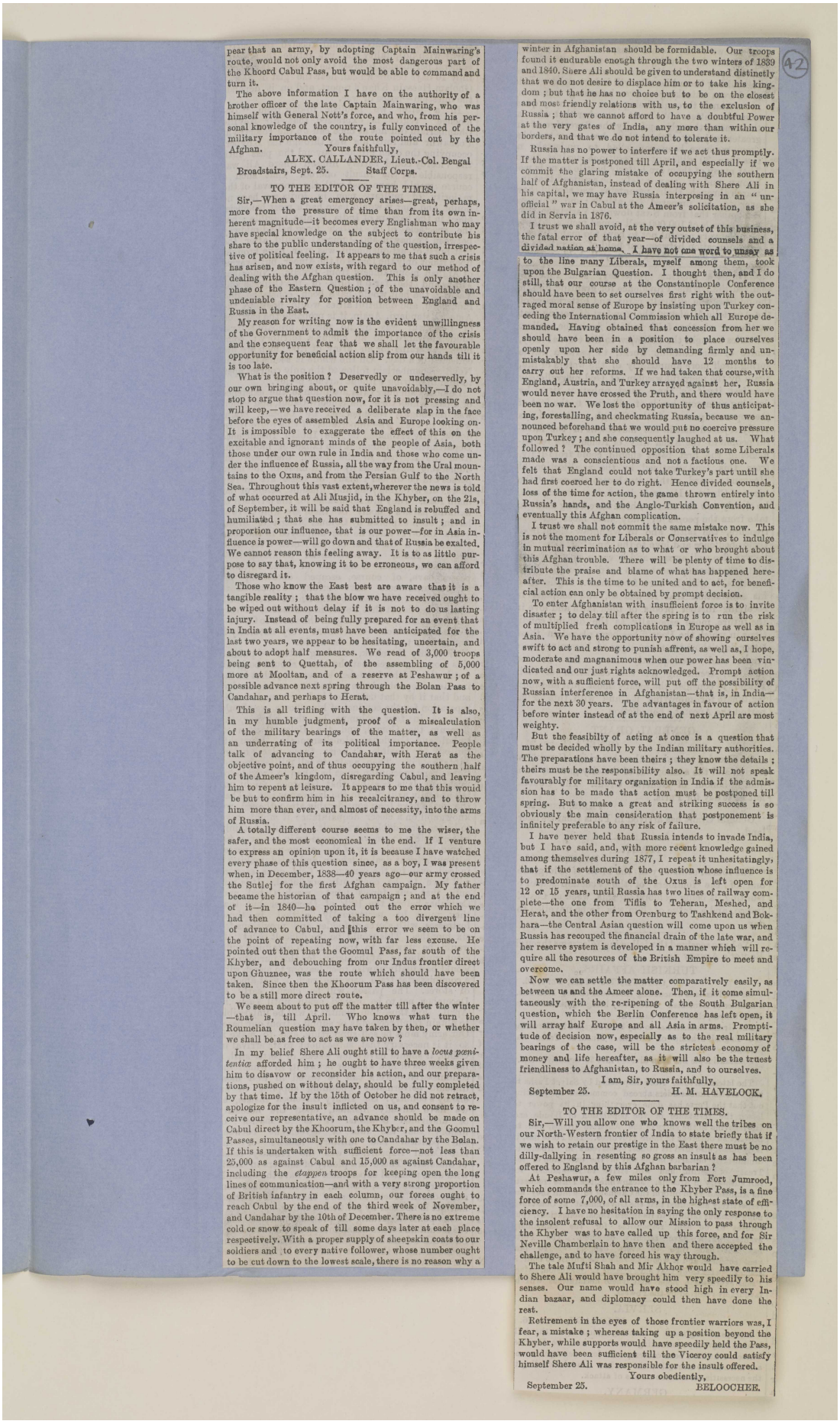

pear that an army, by adopting Captain Mainwaring's route, would not only avoid the most dangerous part of the Khoord Cabul Pass, but would be able to command and turn it.

The above information I have on the authority of a brother officer of the late Captain Mainwaring, who was himself with General Nott's force, and who, from his personal knowledge of the country, is fully convinced of the military importance of the route pointed out by the Afghan.

Yours faithfully,

ALEX. CALLANDER, Lieut.-Col. Bengal Staff Corps.

Broadstairs, Sept. 25.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—When a great emergency arises—great, perhaps, more from the pressure of time than from its own inherent magnitude—it becomes every Englishman who may have special knowledge on the subject to contribute his share to the public understanding of the question, irrespective of political feeling. It appears to me that such a crisis has arisen, and now exists, with regard to our method of dealing with the Afghan question. This is only another phase of the Eastern Question; of the unavoidable and undeniable rivalry for position between England and Russia in the East.

My reason for writing now is the evident unwillingness of the Government to admit the importance of the crisis and the consequent fear that we shall let the favourable opportunity for beneficial action slip from our hands till it is too late.

What is the position? Deservedly or undeservedly, by our own bringing about, or quite unavoidably,—I do not stop to argue that question now, for it is not pressing and will keep,—we have received a deliberate slap in the face before the eyes of assembled Asia and Europe looking on. It is impossible to exaggerate the effect of this on the excitable and ignorant minds of the people of Asia, both those under our own rule in India and those who come under the influence of Russia, all the way from the Ural mountains to the Oxus, and from the Persian Gulf to the North Sea. Throughout this vast extent, wherever the news is told of what occurred at Ali Musjid, in the Khyber, on the 21st, of September, it will be said that England is rebuffed and humiliated; that she has submitted to insult; and in proportion our influence, that is our power—for in Asia influence is power—will go down and that of Russia be exalted. We cannot reason this feeling away. It is to as little purpose to say that, knowing it to be erroneous, we can afford to disregard it.

Those who know the East best are aware that it is a tangible reality; that the blow we have received ought to be wiped out without delay if it is not to do us lasting injury. Instead of being fully prepared for an event that in India at all events, must have been anticipated for the last two years, we appear to be hesitating, uncertain, and about to adopt half measures. We read of 3,000 troops being sent to Quettah, of the assembling of 5,000 more at Mooltan, and of a reserve at Peshawur; of a possible advance next spring through the Bolan Pass to Candahar, and perhaps to Herat.

This is all trifling with the question. It is also, in my humble judgment, proof of a miscalculation of the military bearings of the matter, as well as an underrating of its political importance. People talk of advancing to Candahar, with Herat as the objective point, and of thus occupying the southern half of the Ameer's kingdom, disregarding Cabul, and leaving him to repent at leisure. It appears to me that this would be but to confirm him in his recalcitrancy, and to throw him more than ever, and almost of necessity, into the arms of Russia.

A totally different course seems to me the wiser, the safer, and the most economical in the end. If I venture to express an opinion upon it, it is because I have watched every phase of this question since, as a boy, I was present when, in December, 1838—40 years ago—our army crossed the Sutlej for the first Afghan campaign. My father became the historian of that campaign; and at the end of it—in 1840—he pointed out the error which we had then committed of taking a too divergent line of advance to Cabul, and this error we seem to be on the point of repeating now, with far less excuse. He pointed out then that the Goomul Pass, far south of the Khyber, and debouching from our Indus frontier direct upon Ghuznee, was the route which should have been taken. Since then the Khoorum Pass has been discovered to be a still more direct route.

We seem about to put off the matter till after the winter—that is, till April. Who knows what turn the Roumelian question may have taken by then, or whether we shall be as free to act as we are now?

In my belief Shere Ali ought still to have a *locus pœnitentiæ* afforded him; he ought to have three weeks given him to disavow or reconsider his action, and our preparations, pushed on without delay, should be fully completed by that time. If by the 15th of October he did not retract, apologize for the insult inflicted on us, and consent to receive our representative, an advance should be made on Cabul direct by the Khoorum, the Khyber, and the Goomul Passes, simultaneously with one to Candahar by the Bolan. If this is undertaken with sufficient force—not less than 25,000 as against Cabul and 15,000 as against Candahar, including the *etappen* troops for keeping open the long lines of communication—and with a very strong proportion of British infantry in each column, our forces ought to reach Cabul by the end of the third week of November, and Candahar by the 10th of December. There is no extreme cold or snow to speak of till some days later at each place respectively. With a proper supply of sheepskin coats to our soldiers and to every native follower, whose number ought to be cut down to the lowest scale, there is no reason why a winter in Afghanistan should be formidable. Our troops found it endurable enough through the two winters of 1839 and 1840. Shere Ali should be given to understand distinctly that we do not desire to displace him or to take his kingdom; but that he has no choice but to be on the closest and most friendly relations with us, to the exclusion of Russia; that we cannot afford to have a doubtful Power at the very gates of India, any more than within our borders, and that we do not intend to tolerate it.

Russia has no power to interfere if we act thus promptly. If the matter is postponed till April, and especially if we commit the glaring mistake of occupying the southern half of Afghanistan, instead of dealing with Shere Ali in his capital, we may have Russia interposing in an "unofficial" war in Cabul at the Ameer's solicitation, as she did in Servia in 1876.

I trust we shall avoid, at the very outset of this business, the fatal error of that year—of divided counsels and a divided nation at home. I have not one word to unsay as to the line many Liberals, myself among them, took upon the Bulgarian Question. I thought then, and I do still, that our course at the Constantinople Conference should have been to set ourselves first right with the outraged moral sense of Europe by insisting upon Turkey conceding the International Commission which all Europe demanded. Having obtained that concession from her we should have been in a position to place ourselves openly upon her side by demanding firmly and unmistakably that she should have 12 months to carry out her reforms. If we had taken that course, with England, Austria, and Turkey arrayed against her, Russia would never have crossed the Pruth, and there would have been no war. We lost the opportunity of thus anticipating, forestalling, and checkmating Russia, because we announced beforehand that we would put no coercive pressure upon Turkey; and she consequently laughed at us. What followed? The continued opposition that some Liberals made was a conscientious and not a factious one. We felt that England could not take Turkey's part until she had first coerced her to do right. Hence divided counsels, loss of the time for action, the game thrown entirely into Russia's hands, and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and eventually this Afghan complication.

I trust we shall not commit the same mistake now. This is not the moment for Liberals or Conservatives to indulge in mutual recrimination as to what or who brought about this Afghan trouble. There will be plenty of time to distribute the praise and blame of what has happened hereafter. This is the time to be united and to act, for beneficial action can only be obtained by prompt decision.

To enter Afghanistan with insufficient force is to invite disaster; to delay till after the spring is to run the risk of multiplied fresh complications in Europe as well as in Asia. We have the opportunity now of showing ourselves swift to act and strong to punish affront, as well as, I hope, moderate and magnanimous when our power has been vindicated and our just rights acknowledged. Prompt action now, with a sufficient force, will put off the possibility of Russian interference in Afghanistan—that is, in India—for the next 30 years. The advantages in favour of action before winter instead of at the end of next April are most weighty.

But the feasibilty of acting at once is a question that must be decided wholly by the Indian military authorities. The preparations have been theirs; they know the details; theirs must be the responsibility also. It will not speak favourably for military organization in India if the admission has to be made that action must be postponed till spring. But to make a great and striking success is so obviously the main consideration that postponement is infinitely preferable to any risk of failure.

I have never held that Russia intends to invade India, but I have said, and, with more recent knowledge gained among themselves during 1877, I repeat it unhesitatingly, that if the settlement of the question whose influence is to predominate south of the Oxus is left open for 12 or 15 years, until Russia has two lines of railway complete—the one from Tiflis to Teheran, Meshed, and Herat, and the other from Orenburg to Tashkend and Bokhara—the Central Asian question will come upon us when Russia has recouped the financial drain of the late war, and her reserve system is developed in a manner which will require all the resources of the British Empire to meet and overcome.

Now we can settle the matter comparatively easily, as between us and the Ameer alone. Then, if it come simultaneously with the re-ripening of the South Bulgarian question, which the Berlin Conference has left open, it will array half Europe and all Asia in arms. Promptitude of decision now, especially as to the real military bearings of the case, will be the strictest economy of money and life hereafter, as it will also be the truest friendliness to Afghanistan, to Russia, and to ourselves.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

H. M. HAVELOCK.

September 25.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Will you allow one who knows well the tribes on our North-Western frontier of India to state briefly that if we wish to retain our prestige in the East there must be no dilly-dallying in resenting so gross an insult as has been offered to England by this Afghan barbarian?

At Peshawur, a few miles only from Fort Jumrood, which commands the entrance to the Khyber Pass, is a fine force of some 7,000, of all arms, in the highest state of efficiency. I have no hesitation in saying the only response to the insolent refusal to allow our Mission to pass through the Khyber was to have called up this force, and for Sir Neville Chamberlain to have then and there accepted the challenge, and to have forced his way through.

The tale Mufti Shah and Mir Akhor would have carried to Shere Ali would have brought him very speedily to his senses. Our name would have stood high in every Indian bazaar, and diplomacy could then have done the rest.

Retirement in the eyes of those frontier warriors was, I fear, a mistake; whereas taking up a position beyond the Khyber, while supports would have speedily held the Pass, would have been sufficient till the Viceroy could satisfy himself Shere Ali was responsible for the insult offered.

Yours obediently,

BELOOCHEE.

September 25.

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AFGHAN ETHNOLOGY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In the present critical state of our political relations with Afghanistan, even the most fragmentary information relative to that country and its inhabitants is of interest. Perhaps, in the circumstances, I may be pardoned for quoting from the as yet unpublished sheets of a work by my father, Mr. Talboys Wheeler (now in Calcutta), a few words which have an ethnological bearing upon the question. Briefly, these are as follows :—

"To all appearance the Afghans are of Jewish origin ; not Jews of the orthodox type, the outcome of Jerusalem and the temple worship, but Jews of the old, turbulent, stiff-necked type, who revolted at Shechem against Rehoboam, and set up golden calves at Bethel and Dan. The Afghans claim to be descendants of Saul, the son of Kish. They are divided into tribes, clans, and families. They distribute conquered lands by lot, perform the ceremony of the scapegoat, and build shrines on high places. Their features are unmistakably Jewish ; but their language is not Hebrew, nor anything akin to Hebrew. It is conjectured that they are the descendants of the ten tribes, whom the King of Assyria carried away to the city of the Medes ; but the loss of all traces of the Hebrew language militates against this theory, and it is impossible to verify the identity. In modern times they are Mahomedans of the Sunni religion, and traditional foes of the Persians or Shiahs."

In a foot-note referring to the Jewish type of feature exhibited by the Afghan, my father remarks that this, to his mind, outweighs the evidence of language. He goes on to say that "the face of Shere Ali Khan, the present Ameer of Afghanistan, reveals, not only the Jewish features, but the melancholy mania that belongs to the character of Saul." Personally, I have never had the honour of seeing Shere Ali, but I possess what I believe few in this country besides myself possess, a very striking photograph of that "morose and uncompromising barbarian" (as your Calcutta Correspondent aptly described him in Monday's telegram), which is a speaking confirmation of my father's words. I may add that to me the expression in the photograph certainly appears rather "morose" than "melancholy."

In the fourth volume of his "History of India," Mr. Talboys Wheeler mentions the spirit of revenge in which the hereditary feuds of early Afghan history were carried on. He observes that this national characteristic is a proverb in India. "No man is said to be safe from the revenge of an elephant, a cobra, or an Afghan."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
OWEN EDLESTON WHEELER.

Witham, Essex, Sept. 25.

KAFIRISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—When quartered with my regiment at Peshawur, opposite the Khyber Pass, I remember the inhabitants of Kafiristan being a subject of conversation.

They were said to be a white race bordering on Afghanistan ; savage Christians, living among grand mountain ranges ; their women were beautiful, and the Afghans made frequent raids to carry off the girls for the harems of their chiefs. The Ameers of Kabul had, it was said, frequently tried to conquer these brave people, who, being Christians, are regarded as outcasts ; but they still held their valleys, though badly armed, and every now and then sent messages to the English for help.

No doubt some of your readers can enlighten us on this now very interesting subject. It is just possible that Christian soldiers raised in these valleys may yet garrison Kabul and Candahar under English officers.

Your obedient servant,
EDWARD PALLISER, late Captain 7th Hussars.
Army and Navy Club.

AFGHANISTAN.

The news we publish this morning from our Calcutta Correspondent shows that the Government of India are by no means inclined to rush blindly into the perils of an Afghan war, but are contenting themselves with warning a number of additional regiments for active service, with strengthening Quettah, and occupying all the salient points along the border. Such a policy is both dignified and prudent. Although we may be justified in assuming from the very imperfect *data* before us that the act of the Commandant at Fort Ali Musjid in thus wantonly insulting and threatening our envoy was the result of orders from the Ameer, yet it may be possible that the officer overstepped his instructions, or that Shere Ali, alarmed at the prompt measures taken for bringing him to reason, may offer ample apologies for the deed. At any rate, until the return of Nawab Gholam Hassain Khan, C.S.I., from Cabul, it would be impolitic to commence (even if it were possible to do so) any active operations. It will be remembered that this native officer left Peshawur late in August with a letter from the Viceroy to the Ameer announcing the intended despatch of the Mission. His arrival we heard of some time since, and it was stated he was most hospitably received. This is probable, for Gholam Hassain Khan, a near relative of the Nawab of Dera Ismail Khan, is an Afghan allied to the reigning house of Cabul. For many years he filled the important post of British Vakeel or Envoy at the Court of Afghanistan, so he is personally well known, not only to Shere Ali, but must also be on intimate terms with most of the Afghan Sirdars. Besides possessing much diplomatic experience, the Nawab is an old soldier, and served throughout the Mutiny as Native Commandant of Cureton's Horse, a regiment he raised from landowners in the Mooltan and Dera Ismail Khan district. For his long and loyal services Gholam Hassain Khan was given a grant of land near Bunnoo and made a Nawab and a Companion of the Star of India. He thus is bound to the British by no ordinary ties, and is well qualified to point out to the Ameer the danger he runs in provoking a conflict with a nation as powerful as we are. That he will use his earnest endeavours to bring about a peaceful solution of the difficulty is obvious, and until the Viceroy is in possession of the Nawab's report, which, probably, will elucidate much that now remains obscure, it would be unwise of the Government of India to do more than we learn they are doing. It appears strange that the Ameer should receive the native envoy with hospitality and yet refuse the British General permission to cross the border. It will be fully 10 days before we can hear the gist of Nawab Gholam Hassain Khan's report, and on it depends the question—peace or war.

In a letter we publish to-day from "Beloochee" regret is expressed that Sir Neville Chamberlain did not at once call up the reserves at Peshawur and force his way through the Khyber, occupying the open ground beyond the pass until the Viceroy could satisfy himself Shere Ali was responsible for the insult offered. That such a course would have met with the approval of the majority of military men in India we have no doubt, and that it would have had a most beneficial effect in the bazaars of India is also possible ; but the spectacle of a British force halted midway between Peshawur and Jumrood would, after the first burst of astonishment was over, have brought upon it not only the forces of the Ameer, but swarms of Afghan mountaineers from Bonair, Ningrahar Tirah, and the far-off hills of the Orukzae and Vaziri ; the halt would have been construed into indecision, and doubtful allies would flock to the Ameer's standard. Again, it is probable the garrison of Peshawur was by no means prepared for a sudden advance into an enemy's territory ; commissariat trains for an army of 7,000 men are not collected in a day. On the whole it seems that Sir Neville Chamberlain followed the only course open to him in retiring without further parley.

Colonel Callender calls attention to the existence of a pass which turns the Khoord Cabul, and which was thoroughly reconnoitred by Captain Mainwaring in 1842. The importance of this route is, no doubt, fully estimated by the Indian Intelligence Department. Throughout the range of mountains from the Khyber to the Bolan there are innumerable small paths by which most of the main passes can be turned ; many of these are merely short cuts avoiding long and difficult bends of the main road. They are invaluable for the advance of flanking parties ; many of them are well known, having been explored by Colonel Macgregor in the years 1870-72 when he was employed in the compilation of a Gazetteer of the North-West frontier of India, a confidential publication of inestimable value. Some few of these so-called passes have, of course, escaped detection, for the mountaineers have strong objections to showing their hill roads to English travellers. Still there is no doubt that we are in possession of very full information concerning all the roads to Cabul—information which Government very naturally is not anxious to publish to the world.

Sir Henry Havelock, in a long letter we publish this morning, urges that the Ameer should be given until the 15th of October to retract ; that in the interim troops should be pushed up to our border, and that if by that date he had not made ample reparation for the conduct of his officers, we should advance in four columns by the Khyber, the Koorum, the Gomul, and the Bolan Passes on Cabul and Candahar simultaneously. It might, indeed, be feasible to seize these places before winter sets in. Then, again, in all military operations every precaution must be taken to provide for mishaps. It is possible that Ghuznee might not fall as easily as it did in the last campaign. That the works have been considerably strengthened we know, and on a closer acquaintance it might prove to be too formidable for assault. It would certainly be impossible to move a siege-train, or even 40-pounders through any of the above-named passes without a great deal of labour and road making ; indeed, even for the passage of field guns, sappers will have to be constantly employed. It is not only that our forces must reach Cabul and Candahar before the 10th of December, but that they must be permanently settled in those fortresses, with stores of fodder and provisions for six months. This would be the difficult point. It would be unwise to speculate on obtaining sufficient supplies in Afghanistan for this purpose ; it would be equally unwise to endeavour to march with a commissariat train carrying such a vast amount of stores. The passes will be closed early in December, not to be opened again until early in April. For those four months it will be impossible to obtain reinforcements or supplies from our base. Our army must be self-supporting, and to make it

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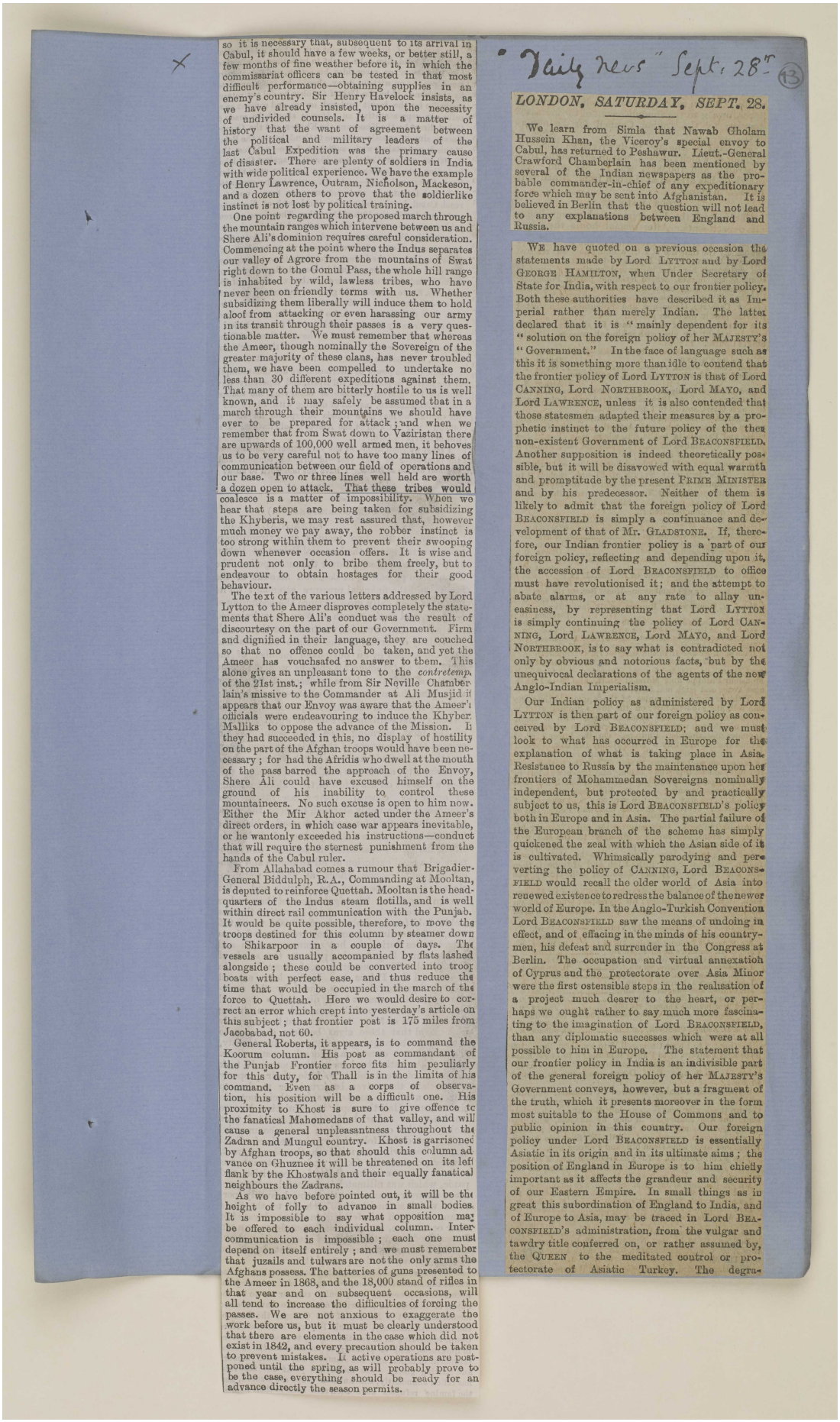

so it is necessary that, subsequent to its arrival in Cabul, it should have a few weeks, or better still, a few months of fine weather before it, in which the commissariat officers can be tested in that most difficult performance—obtaining supplies in an enemy's country. Sir Henry Havelock insists, as we have already insisted, upon the necessity of undivided counsels. It is a matter of history that the want of agreement between the political and military leaders of the last Cabul Expedition was the primary cause of disaster. There are plenty of soldiers in India with wide political experience. We have the example of Henry Lawrence, Outram, Nicholson, Mackeson, and a dozen others to prove that the soldierlike instinct is not lost by political training.

One point regarding the proposed march through the mountain ranges which intervene between us and Shere Ali's dominion requires careful consideration. Commencing at the point where the Indus separates our valley of Agrore from the mountains of Swat right down to the Gomul Pass, the whole hill range is inhabited by wild, lawless tribes, who have never been on friendly terms with us. Whether subsidizing them liberally will induce them to hold aloof from attacking or even harassing our army in its transit through their passes is a very questionable matter. We must remember that whereas the Ameer, though nominally the Sovereign of the greater majority of these clans, has never troubled them, we have been compelled to undertake no less than 30 different expeditions against them. That many of them are bitterly hostile to us is well known, and it may safely be assumed that in a march through their mountains we should have ever to be prepared for attack; and when we remember that from Swat down to Waziristan there are upwards of 100,000 well armed men, it behoves us to be very careful not to have too many lines of communication between our field of operations and our base. Two or three lines well held are worth a dozen open to attack. That these tribes would coalesce is a matter of impossibility. When we hear that steps are being taken for subsidizing the Khyberis, we may rest assured that, however much money we pay away, the robber instinct is too strong within them to prevent their swooping down whenever occasion offers. It is wise and prudent not only to bribe them freely, but to endeavour to obtain hostages for their good behaviour.

The text of the various letters addressed by Lord Lytton to the Ameer disproves completely the statements that Shere Ali's conduct was the result of discourtesy on the part of our Government. Firm and dignified in their language, they are couched so that no offence could be taken, and yet the Ameer has vouchsafed no answer to them. This alone gives an unpleasant tone to the *contretemps* of the 21st inst.; while from Sir Neville Chamberlain's missive to the Commander at Ali Musjid it appears that our Envoy was aware that the Ameer's officials were endeavouring to induce the Khyberi Mulliks to oppose the advance of the Mission. If they had succeeded in this, no display of hostility on the part of the Afghan troops would have been necessary; for had the Afridis who dwell at the mouth of the pass barred the approach of the Envoy, Shere Ali could have excused himself on the ground of his inability to control these mountaineers. No such excuse is open to him now. Either the Mir Akhor acted under the Ameer's direct orders, in which case war appears inevitable, or he wantonly exceeded his instructions—conduct that will require the sternest punishment from the hands of the Cabul ruler.

From Allahabad comes a rumour that Brigadier-General Biddulph, R.A., Commanding at Mooltan, is deputed to reinforce Quettah. Mooltan is the headquarters of the Indus steam flotilla, and is well within direct rail communication with the Punjab. It would be quite possible, therefore, to move the troops destined for this column by steamer down to Shikarpoor in a couple of days. The vessels are usually accompanied by flats lashed alongside; these could be converted into troop boats with perfect ease, and thus reduce the time that would be occupied in the march of the force to Quettah. Here we would desire to correct an error which crept into yesterday's article on this subject; that frontier post is 175 miles from Jacobabad, not 60.

General Roberts, it appears, is to command the Koorum column. His post as commandant of the Punjab Frontier force fits him peculiarly for this duty, for Thall is in the limits of his command. Even as a corps of observation, his position will be a difficult one. His proximity to Khost is sure to give offence to the fanatical Mahomedans of that valley, and will cause a general unpleasantness throughout the Zadran and Mungul country. Khost is garrisoned by Afghan troops, so that should this column advance on Ghuznee it will be threatened on its left flank by the Khostwals and their equally fanatical neighbours the Zadrans.

As we have before pointed out, it will be the height of folly to advance in small bodies. It is impossible to say what opposition may be offered to each individual column. Intercommunication is impossible; each one must depend on itself entirely; and we must remember that juzails and tulwars are not the only arms the Afghans possess. The batteries of guns presented to the Ameer in 1868, and the 18,000 stand of rifles in that year and on subsequent occasions, will all tend to increase the difficulties of forcing the passes. We are not anxious to exaggerate the work before us, but it must be clearly understood that there are elements in the case which did not exist in 1842, and every precaution should be taken to prevent mistakes. If active operations are postponed until the spring, as will probably prove to be the case, everything should be ready for an advance directly the season permits.

"Daily News" Sept. 28th (13)

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPT. 28.

We learn from Simla that Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, the Viceroy's special envoy to Cabul, has returned to Peshawur. Lieut.-General Crawford Chamberlain has been mentioned by several of the Indian newspapers as the probable commander-in-chief of any expeditionary force which may be sent into Afghanistan. It is believed in Berlin that the question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia.

WE have quoted on a previous occasion the statements made by Lord LYTTON and by Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, when Under Secretary of State for India, with respect to our frontier policy. Both these authorities have described it as Imperial rather than merely Indian. The latter declared that it is "mainly dependent for its "solution on the foreign policy of her MAJESTY'S "Government." In the face of language such as this it is something more than idle to contend that the frontier policy of Lord LYTTON is that of Lord CANNING, Lord NORTHBROOK, Lord MAYO, and Lord LAWRENCE, unless it is also contended that those statesmen adapted their measures by a prophetic instinct to the future policy of the then non-existent Government of Lord BEACONSFIELD. Another supposition is indeed theoretically possible, but it will be disavowed with equal warmth and promptitude by the present PRIME MINISTER and by his predecessor. Neither of them is likely to admit that the foreign policy of Lord BEACONSFIELD is simply a continuance and development of that of Mr. GLADSTONE. If, therefore, our Indian frontier policy is a part of our foreign policy, reflecting and depending upon it, the accession of Lord BEACONSFIELD to office must have revolutionised it; and the attempt to abate alarms, or at any rate to allay uneasiness, by representing that Lord LYTTON is simply continuing the policy of Lord CANNING, Lord LAWRENCE, Lord MAYO, and Lord NORTHBROOK, is to say what is contradicted not only by obvious and notorious facts, but by the unequivocal declarations of the agents of the new Anglo-Indian Imperialism.

Our Indian policy as administered by Lord LYTTON is then part of our foreign policy as conceived by Lord BEACONSFIELD; and we must look to what has occurred in Europe for the explanation of what is taking place in Asia. Resistance to Russia by the maintenance upon her frontiers of Mohammedan Sovereigns nominally independent, but protected by and practically subject to us, this is Lord BEACONSFIELD'S policy both in Europe and in Asia. The partial failure of the European branch of the scheme has simply quickened the zeal with which the Asian side of it is cultivated. Whimsically parodying and perverting the policy of CANNING, Lord BEACONSFIELD would recall the older world of Asia into renewed existence to redress the balance of the newer world of Europe. In the Anglo-Turkish Convention Lord BEACONSFIELD saw the means of undoing in effect, and of effacing in the minds of his countrymen, his defeat and surrender in the Congress at Berlin. The occupation and virtual annexation of Cyprus and the protectorate over Asia Minor were the first ostensible steps in the realisation of a project much dearer to the heart, or perhaps we ought rather to say much more fascinating to the imagination of Lord BEACONSFIELD, than any diplomatic successes which were at all possible to him in Europe. The statement that our frontier policy in India is an indivisible part of the general foreign policy of her MAJESTY'S Government conveys, however, but a fragment of the truth, which it presents moreover in the form most suitable to the House of Commons and to public opinion in this country. Our foreign policy under Lord BEACONSFIELD is essentially Asiatic in its origin and in its ultimate aims; the position of England in Europe is to him chiefly important as it affects the grandeur and security of our Eastern Empire. In small things as in great this subordination of England to India, and of Europe to Asia, may be traced in Lord BEACONSFIELD'S administration, from the vulgar and tawdry title conferred on, or rather assumed by, the QUEEN to the meditated control or protectorate of Asiatic Turkey. The degra-

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dation of patriotism is surely complete when men who used to feel pride in the name of England think it a grand thing instead to talk of our Empire, and when a bastard Imperialism in phrase and sentiment has become the watchword and sign of a party deeming itself to be in a special sense national. This change for the worse is largely due to the influence of a statesman to whom England is very little except as the accidental possessor of Asiatic provinces. This subordination of Europe to Asia and of England to India really, though it may be unconsciously, inspires the policy of Lord BEACONSFIELD. It might possibly have remained a mere toy of the imagination, a theme for literary paradox, if the alarmed pragmatism of Sir HENRY RAWLINSON had not encountered the fantastic visions of TANCRED. From this union of the fixed idea of a specialist with the wild day-dreams of a political projector, the Indian and Asiatic policy of Lord BEACONSFIELD seems to have been born. The first visionary sketch of it is to be found in the often quoted conversation of the Emir FAKREDEEN with the mooning and silly youth TANCRED, who seems to have been very properly chosen as the recipient of his confidence. But its practical application, its introduction into the sphere of real politics, must be sought for in a Memorandum drawn up by Sir HENRY RAWLINSON in 1868, and submitted through the Secretary of State for India to the authorities in Calcutta. In 1868 Mr. DISRAELI was Prime Minister, but he ceased to be so in December of that year. Mr. GLADSTONE'S Administration was not prone to ambitious and adventurous strokes of foreign policy, and Sir HENRY RAWLINSON'S Memorandum seems to have been in a state of suspended animation for more than five years. The return of Mr. DISRAELI to office in 1874 appears to have warmed it once more into life. In 1875 Sir HENRY RAWLINSON published the paper in his work on "England and Russia in the East." In it may be found the source and inspiration of a good deal that has occurred since, and of much mischief that threatens us in the future.

The Memorandum to which we refer consists of notes of a speech which Sir HENRY RAWLINSON had prepared for delivery in the House of Commons towards the end of June, 1868. Mr. FAWCETT, however, stood in the way with a motion on Irish education. Either Mr. FAWCETT was fatal to Sir HENRY RAWLINSON or Sir HENRY RAWLINSON was fatal to Mr. FAWCETT. There was a count-out to get rid of one or the other or both. It is a misfortune that Sir H. RAWLINSON'S motion was not discussed. In spite of the indisposition of Parliament and the country to face their Indian responsibilities, a thorough examination of Sir H. RAWLINSON'S project might have got rid of it. If Mr. FAWCETT unknowingly prevented its being brought on, this was his solitary disservice to India. Sir HENRY RAWLINSON advocates in his Memorandum, and he would of course have advocated in his speech, the establishment of what he calls a quasi-protectorate over Cabul. The time and manner of this assumption of authority he leaves to the Indian Government; but he considers that it is a position which we must inevitably occupy sooner or later, unless we are prepared to jeopardise our Indian Empire. We must also, he argues, establish a strong position for ourselves in Persia. English officers must be sent to drill the Persian troops. We should supply Persia, Sir H. RAWLINSON urges, with improved arms and artillery. We should aid the SHAH in creating and keeping up a naval force in the Persian Gulf. Our mission at Teheran should be reconstructed on a very liberal scale, and presents should be freely distributed. Persian nobles should be encouraged to send their sons for education to London. English capital should be encouraged to invest itself in Persia. These are Sir H. RAWLINSON'S suggestions, repeated, so far as is possible, in his own words. It is evident that if they were carried out we should exercise over Persia a quasi-protectorate as real, though Sir H. RAWLINSON does not call it by that name, as that which he recommends in the case of Afghanistan. We are already preparing under the Anglo-Turkish Convention to assume control over Asiatic Turkey. Sir HENRY RAWLINSON'S plans, supplementing the actual arrangements of the Government, would establish an English protectorate over the whole of Western Asia from the Mediterranean to the frontiers of our Indian Empire. Modifying a former opinion, he holds now with Lord LYTTON and with the former Under Secretary of State for India, that these questions should be determined by the Foreign Office. There can be little doubt that the policy set forth in Sir H. RAWLINSON'S Memorandum, and in the later writings which supplement and explain it, is the policy on which the Government are acting. It involves practically the extension of our Eastern Empire over Asiatic Turkey, Afghanistan, and Persia, the last of which countries is being approached by us at once from the east and the west. It is for the English people to determine whether they will be committed to so Quixotic an enterprise, the beginnings of which alone they are allowed to see.

THE STORY OF THE KOORD-CABUL.

No event in the history of British rule in Hindostan has assuredly left a deeper or more lasting impression upon the popular imagination than the disastrous retreat from the Afghan capital in the month of January, 1842; but the precise circumstances of that terrible episode in our military annals are nevertheless but imperfectly remembered. It is remarkable that even the locality of the destruction of General Elphinstone's army seemed but lately almost to be forgotten, it being customary, as we have recently observed, to speak of it as having occurred in the famous Khyber Pass, nstead of in the Koord-Cabul and some minor passes, which are more than a hundred miles distant. A brief sketch of the sorrowful story of the Koord-Cabul may therefore not be out of place at this time, when the position of affairs in the East renders it incumbent on us to consider the lesson which it teaches, distinguishing that which is accidental or due to the incapacity and lack of precaution of English commanders, from those difficulties which may, on the contrary, be said to be inherent in the problem of an invasion of the Afghan territory.

It is important to remember that, so far as the mere invasion was concerned, the plans of the British commanders had proved successful, even beyond the expectations of the most sanguine advocates of Lord Auckland's frontier policy. When we read with what comparative ease our troops penetrated through the terrible passes, took possession of the populous city of Candahar, captured Ghuznee, and finally installed our protégé Shah Soojah in the palace of the Ameers in the Afghan capital, it is difficult to conceive that the people thus cowed and overcome by a handful of strangers were that same race who in the days of Zemann Shah, scarcely a generation before, had been regarded by the races of Hindostan as destined to overthrow the British predominance, and had even awakened grave apprehensions in the mind of a commander so sagacious as the Duke of Wellington, then Lord Wellesley. Certainly nothing could be more contemptible than the Afghan resistance of 1839; nor did the passes, as we have lately pointed out, offer any serious obstacles, except such as were due to physical conditions and the difficulties of transport of provisions and *matériel* in a rugged and barren country. The route by the Bolan Pass was chosen in the first instance, as is well known, only by reason of the bad faith and unfriendly attitude of the Sikh ruler whose territory was destined soon afterwards to be subjugated and incorporated in the British dominions. But for this circumstance it is certain that our commanders would have advanced in the first instance by Peshawur and the Khyber Pass—the short and direct route to Cabul; nor can there be any question that the opposition which they had to expect there would have proved infinitely less formidable than the natural obstacles which wore out so many of our famished troops in the more difficult and tediously circuitous route they were condemned to traverse. For this reason it may safely be assumed that though we have now advanced to Quettah and may be said to be in peaceable possession of that very inlet into the Afghan territory by which we cautiously marched nearly forty years since, it is not by the Bolan Pass that any future invasion of Afghanistan is likely to be attempted. The simple truth is that the terrors of the passes of the Suliman mountain range have a more lively existence in the popular imagination than in

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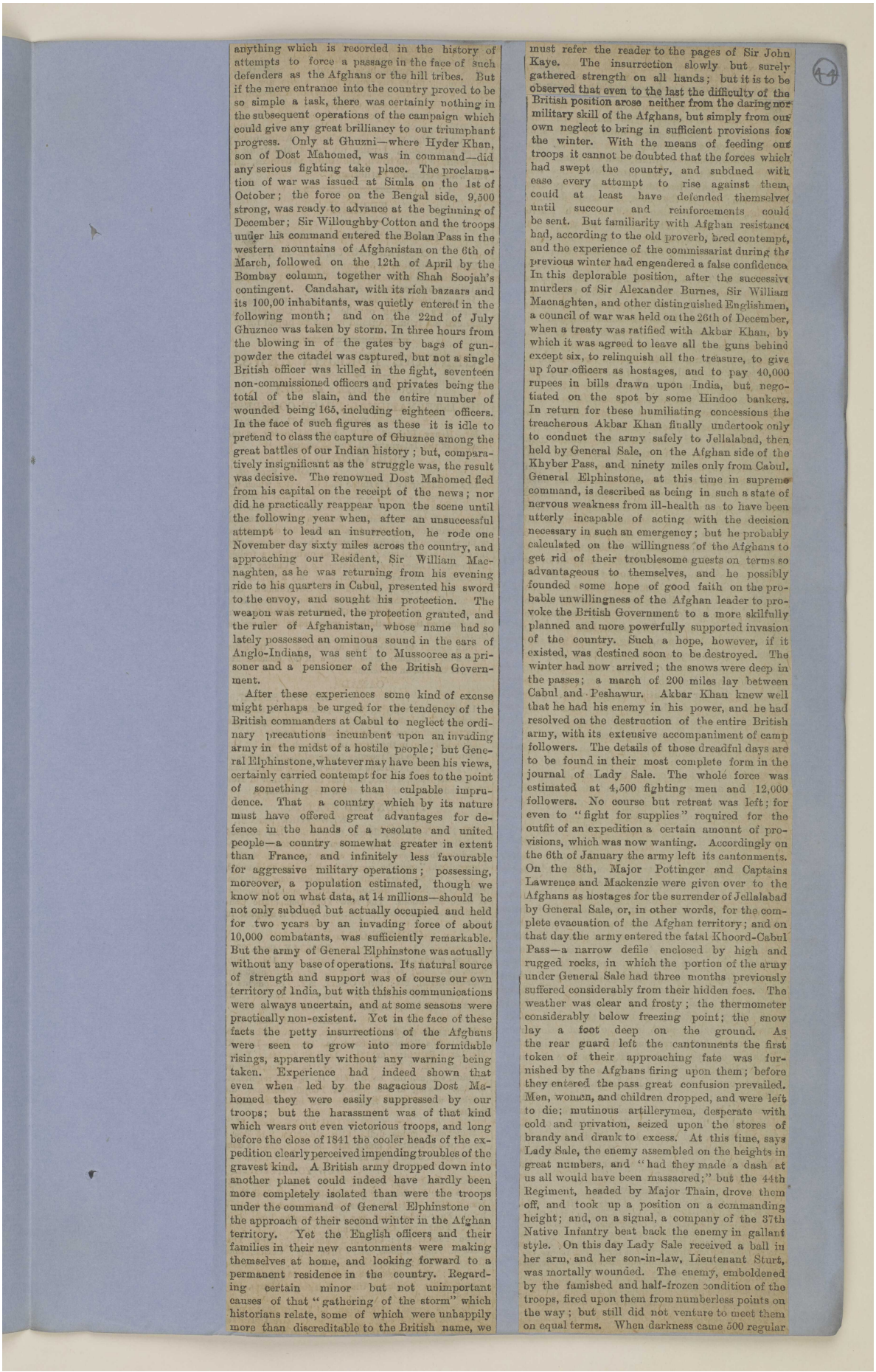

anything which is recorded in the history of attempts to force a passage in the face of such defenders as the Afghans or the hill tribes. But if the mere entrance into the country proved to be so simple a task, there was certainly nothing in the subsequent operations of the campaign which could give any great brilliancy to our triumphant progress. Only at Ghuzni—where Hyder Khan, son of Dost Mahomed, was in command—did any serious fighting take place. The proclamation of war was issued at Simla on the 1st of October; the force on the Bengal side, 9,500 strong, was ready to advance at the beginning of December; Sir Willoughby Cotton and the troops under his command entered the Bolan Pass in the western mountains of Afghanistan on the 6th of March, followed on the 12th of April by the Bombay column, together with Shah Soojah's contingent. Candahar, with its rich bazaars and its 100,00 inhabitants, was quietly entered in the following month; and on the 22nd of July Ghuznee was taken by storm. In three hours from the blowing in of the gates by bags of gunpowder the citadel was captured, but not a single British officer was killed in the fight, seventeen non-commissioned officers and privates being the total of the slain, and the entire number of wounded being 165, including eighteen officers. In the face of such figures as these it is idle to pretend to class the capture of Ghuznee among the great battles of our Indian history; but, comparatively insignificant as the struggle was, the result was decisive. The renowned Dost Mahomed fled from his capital on the receipt of the news; nor did he practically reappear upon the scene until the following year when, after an unsuccessful attempt to lead an insurrection, he rode one November day sixty miles across the country, and approaching our Resident, Sir William Macnaghten, as he was returning from his evening ride to his quarters in Cabul, presented his sword to the envoy, and sought his protection. The weapon was returned, the protection granted, and the ruler of Afghanistan, whose name had so lately possessed an ominous sound in the ears of Anglo-Indians, was sent to Mussooree as a prisoner and a pensioner of the British Government.

After these experiences some kind of excuse might perhaps be urged for the tendency of the British commanders at Cabul to neglect the ordinary precautions incumbent upon an invading army in the midst of a hostile people; but General Elphinstone, whatever may have been his views, certainly carried contempt for his foes to the point of something more than culpable imprudence. That a country which by its nature must have offered great advantages for defence in the hands of a resolute and united people—a country somewhat greater in extent than France, and infinitely less favourable for aggressive military operations; possessing, moreover, a population estimated, though we know not on what data, at 14 millions—should be not only subdued but actually occupied and held for two years by an invading force of about 10,000 combatants, was sufficiently remarkable. But the army of General Elphinstone was actually without any base of operations. Its natural source of strength and support was of course our own territory of India, but with this his communications were always uncertain, and at some seasons were practically non-existent. Yet in the face of these facts the petty insurrections of the Afghans were seen to grow into more formidable risings, apparently without any warning being taken. Experience had indeed shown that even when led by the sagacious Dost Mahomed they were easily suppressed by our troops; but the harassment was of that kind which wears out even victorious troops, and long before the close of 1841 the cooler heads of the expedition clearly perceived impending troubles of the gravest kind. A British army dropped down into another planet could indeed have hardly been more completely isolated than were the troops under the command of General Elphinstone on the approach of their second winter in the Afghan territory. Yet the English officers and their families in their new cantonments were making themselves at home, and looking forward to a permanent residence in the country. Regarding certain minor but not unimportant causes of that "gathering of the storm" which historians relate, some of which were unhappily more than discreditable to the British name, we must refer the reader to the pages of Sir John Kaye. The insurrection slowly but surely gathered strength on all hands; but it is to be observed that even to the last the difficulty of the British position arose neither from the daring nor military skill of the Afghans, but simply from our own neglect to bring in sufficient provisions for the winter. With the means of feeding our troops it cannot be doubted that the forces which had swept the country, and subdued with ease every attempt to rise against them, could at least have defended themselves until succour and reinforcements could be sent. But familiarity with Afghan resistance had, according to the old proverb, bred contempt, and the experience of the commissariat during the previous winter had engendered a false confidence. In this deplorable position, after the successive murders of Sir Alexander Burnes, Sir William Macnaghten, and other distinguished Englishmen, a council of war was held on the 26th of December, when a treaty was ratified with Akbar Khan, by which it was agreed to leave all the guns behind except six, to relinquish all the treasure, to give up four officers as hostages, and to pay 40,000 rupees in bills drawn upon India, but negotiated on the spot by some Hindoo bankers. In return for these humiliating concessions the treacherous Akbar Khan finally undertook only to conduct the army safely to Jellalabad, then held by General Sale, on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass, and ninety miles only from Cabul. General Elphinstone, at this time in supreme command, is described as being in such a state of nervous weakness from ill-health as to have been utterly incapable of acting with the decision necessary in such an emergency; but he probably calculated on the willingness of the Afghans to get rid of their troublesome guests on terms so advantageous to themselves, and he possibly founded some hope of good faith on the probable unwillingness of the Afghan leader to provoke the British Government to a more skilfully planned and more powerfully supported invasion of the country. Such a hope, however, if it existed, was destined soon to be destroyed. The winter had now arrived; the snows were deep in the passes; a march of 200 miles lay between Cabul and Peshawur. Akbar Khan knew well that he had his enemy in his power, and he had resolved on the destruction of the entire British army, with its extensive accompaniment of camp followers. The details of those dreadful days are to be found in their most complete form in the journal of Lady Sale. The whole force was estimated at 4,500 fighting men and 12,000 followers. No course but retreat was left; for even to "fight for supplies" required for the outfit of an expedition a certain amount of provisions, which was now wanting. Accordingly on the 6th of January the army left its cantonments. On the 8th, Major Pottinger and Captains Lawrence and Mackenzie were given over to the Afghans as hostages for the surrender of Jellalabad by General Sale, or, in other words, for the complete evacuation of the Afghan territory; and on that day the army entered the fatal Khoord-Cabul Pass—a narrow defile enclosed by high and rugged rocks, in which the portion of the army under General Sale had three months previously suffered considerably from their hidden foes. The weather was clear and frosty; the thermometer considerably below freezing point; the snow lay a foot deep on the ground. As the rear guard left the cantonments the first token of their approaching fate was furnished by the Afghans firing upon them; before they entered the pass great confusion prevailed. Men, women, and children dropped, and were left to die; mutinous artillerymen, desperate with cold and privation, seized upon the stores of brandy and drank to excess. At this time, says Lady Sale, the enemy assembled on the heights in great numbers, and "had they made a dash at us all would have been massacred;" but the 44th Regiment, headed by Major Thain, drove them off, and took up a position on a commanding height; and, on a signal, a company of the 37th Native Infantry beat back the enemy in gallant style. On this day Lady Sale received a ball in her arm, and her son-in-law, Lieutenant Sturt, was mortally wounded. The enemy, emboldened by the famished and half-frozen condition of the troops, fired upon them from numberless points on the way; but still did not venture to meet them on equal terms. When darkness came 500 regular

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troops and 2,500 camp followers had fallen. Only three camel-loads of ammunition were now left; and many of the soldiers, armed with the almost useless "brown Bess," had not a single cartridge in their pouches. Numbers perished that night from the frost. At daylight three-fourths of the fighting men pushed on without waiting for orders, accompanied by the camp followers. More than half were frost-bitten and wounded, however, and scarcely able to put a foot to the ground. It was on this day (9th of January) that the married officers, with their wives and children, were given up to Akbar Khan. Again the miserable army, greatly thinned in numbers, halted for the night; and again the bitter blasts of winter did their work upon their wasted frames. At daylight there was the usual rush to the front of a mixed rabble of camp followers, Sepoys and Europeans, in one huge mass. Hundreds of poor wretches, unable to seize any animal for themselves, or, if they had, despoiled by stronger hands, were left to die or be despatched by the enemy on the road. Meanwhile, the snows fell, and the drifts increased in depth; but the Afghans still hovered about the rear, and attacked chiefly the hindmost of the retreating mass. The Sepoys were their especial mark, and every man of the native infantry had perished. On arriving at a turn in the road in the Tunghee Tareekee, or the Dark Pass, the Afghans waxing bolder, several hundreds had rushed down from the rocks and hills and cut to pieces the last remnant of their number. About this time, Akbar Khan, presenting himself with a small body of horse, pleaded his inability to restrain the Ghilzyes with his small force, but offered to protect the surviving officers if they would give up their weapons. This insidious proposal was declined. That night the remnant numbered only 4,000 people of all descriptions—all else, men, women, and children, with the exception of the few prisoners, had fallen by the matchlocks of the Afghans, or been left on the ground to be despatched by the knives of their relentless foe. Their only chance of safety now lay in the determination, weak and famished as they were, to march all night, and if possible to get through the Jugdaluh Pass the next morning before the enemy would probably have obtained an intimation of their approach. Jugdaluk was distant twenty-four miles! the pass was about two miles long, very narrow, and commanded on both sides by high and precipitous hills. The night was fine and moonlight, and for a time the harassment they had suffered became feebler and more desultory; but the treacherous Akbar with his horsemen reappeared on the scene. For 30 hours they had been oppressed by hunger, but still more by thirst, as the enemy, who planted himself near any running stream, in the sure expectation of their being driven to approach it, knew but too well. At Jugdaluh the force had dwindled to 150 men of the 44th, 16 dismounted horse artillerymen, and 25 of the 5th cavalry. On the 12th, near the close of the day, the enemy commenced a furious attack on all sides, with the intention of making an end of their work of destruction; but the survivors, though perishing with cold and hunger, stood to their posts, and bravely repelled their assailants. During this conflict Captain Souter, of the 44th, anxious to save the colours of his regiment, tore one of them from its staff, and folding it round his person, concealed it with his sheep-skin pelisse; and Lieutenant Cumberland did the same. General Elphinstone and Brigadier Shelton, the two seniors in command, having fallen into the hands of the enemy, the march was resumed, the wounded, in spite of their heartrending entreaties, being of necessity abandoned to their fate. They proceeded, says Lady Sale (who, herself a prisoner at this time, had collected these particulars from survivors) "until they came to a gorge, with low steep hills on either side, between which the road passed, about two miles from Jugdaluh. Here two barriers had been thrown across the road, constructed of bushes and branches of trees. The road, which had been flooded, was a mass of ice, and the snow on the hills very deep. The enemy, who had waited for them in great force at this spot, rushed upon the column, knife in hand. The camp followers and wounded men fell back upon the handful of troops for protection; thus rendering them powerless, and causing the greatest confusion; whilst the men, in small detached parties, were maintaining conflicts with fearful odds against them. The disorder of the troops was increased by a part of them, the few remaining horsemen, galloping through and over the infantry in hopes of securing their own retreat to Jellalabad. The men, maddened at being ridden over, fired on them; and it is said that some officers were fired at; but that rests on doubtful testimony. When the firing slackened, and the slashing of knives and bayonets had in some measure ceased, the men moved on slowly, and on arriving at the top of the gorge were able to ascertain the fearful extent of the loss they had sustained in men and officers. Of the latter Brigadier Anquetil and above twenty others were missing." Even after this more than one desperate conflict took place, in which the Afghans suffered more than their indomitable enemy. On the 13th, when day dawned, says the same authority, the remnant "of the column moved towards Gundamuk; but as the day dawned the enemy's numbers increased, and unfortunately daylight soon exposed to them how very few fighting men the column contained. The force now consisted of twenty officers, of whom Major Griffiths was the senior, fifty men of the 44th, six of the horse artillery, and four or five Sipahees. Amongst the whole there were but twenty muskets; 300 camp-followers still continued with them. Being now assailed by an increased force, they were compelled to quit the road, and take up a position on a hill adjoining. Some Afghan horsemen, being observed at a short distance, were beckoned to. On their approach there was a cessation of firing; terms were proposed by Capt. Hay, to allow the force to proceed without further hostilities to Jellalabad. Many Afghans ascended the hill where our troops awaited the issue of the expected conference; and exchanges of friendly words passed between both parties. This lasted upwards of an hour; but hostilities were renewed by the Afghans, who snatched at the firearms of the men and officers. This they, of course, resisted, and drove them off the hill; but the majority of the enemy, who occupied the adjoining hills commanding our position, commenced a galling fire upon us. Several times they attempted to dislodge our men from the hill, and were repulsed; until, our ammunition being expended, and our fighting men reduced to about thirty, the enemy made a rush, which in our weak state we were unable to cope with. They bore our men down knife in hand, and slaughtered all the party except Capt. Souter and seven or eight men of the 44th and artillery. This officer thinks that this unusual act of forbearance towards him originated in the strange dress he wore; his poshteen, having opened during the last struggle, exposed to view the colour he had wrapped round his body, and they probably thought they had secured a valuable prize in some great bahadur, for whom a large ransom might be obtained." Eighteen officers and about fifty men were slain in the final struggle which took place at Sundamuk. All was now over, Dr. Brydon, alone escaping notice by some miraculous chance, made his way in miserable plight to General Sale's quarters in Jellalabad. The story of the captivity of the few survivors, and of the turn of the tide when Generals Pollock, Nott, and Sale advanced to their relief, belongs to another chapter in the history of the Afghan War.

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"Standard" Sept: 28th

THE INDIAN CRISIS.

THE BRITISH EXPEDITION.

THE STAFF APPOINTMENTS.

VIEWS OF THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

(By Eastern Telegraph.)
(From our special correspondent.)
BOMBAY, Friday.

The following is the *personnel* of the staff for the expeditionary army as at present decided.

The Column concentrating at Peshawar, fifteen thousand strong, will be commanded by General Crawford Trotter Chamberlain, C.S.I., at present Commander of the Oude Division. He is brother of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and distinguished himself much in the last Afghan war.

The garrison of Quetta is being reinforced by three thousand troops, British and native; four thousand troops are assembling at Thull; the reserve of six thousand men will be collected at Mooltan early in October.

General Roberts commands the column at Kohat. Colonels Cobbe and Tytler will each command a brigade of infantry. Colonel Clough will have the cavalry brigade. The head-quarter staff will consist of Major Galbraith, 85th Foot, Assistant Adjutant General; Major Collett, Assistant Quartermaster General; Colonel Perkins, Chief Engineer. Lieutenants Spratt and Childers will be the Field Engineers of the Force; Captain Wynnefield will be Telegraph Officer; and Lord William Beresford one of the Aides de Camp.

General Biddulph will command the Quetta column, having as his brigadiers Colonel Appleyard and Colonel Nuttall, of the Bombay army, with probably Colonel Fane, of the Staff Corps, in command of the cavalry brigade. Major Wolseley will be Assistant Adjutant General, Captain R. G. Stewart, Assistant Quartermaster General; Colonel Hitchens, Chief Engineer and Captain Bisset Aide de Camp.

General Stewart commands the reserve column, and Colonel Baxter and Colonel Hughes will be brigadiers of the infantry. Colonel A. Hills is appointed Assistant Adjutant General, and Captain E. F. Chapman Assistant Quartermaster General.

The following troops, in addition to those before detailed, have been ordered up to Kohat:—F Battery A Brigade, and 11th Battery 9th Brigade, under Colonel Alfred Lindsay, and the 8th Battery 4th Brigade, and the 3d Peshawur Mountain Battery, under Colonel Le Mesurier. The 5th Company of Sappers, and the 32d Pioneers are ordered to march at once to Quetta. The A Battery B Brigade, G Battery 4th Brigade, and the 5th, 9th, and 11th Batteries 11th Brigade, will join the reserve at Mooltan. A garrison battery from Madras and one from Bombay, with a siege train, will probably be despatched to Sukhur. A telegram from Rawul Pindee states that the troops are all ready to march, but are awaiting carriage, which is not expected to be ready for some days.

From Lahore I hear it is understood that the Viceroy will pass the winter there, instead of going down to Calcutta.

In Baroda and the native States well affected to us public opinion is strongly in favour of an immediate occupation of Afghanistan and the prompt punishment of the Ameer.

A telegram from Simla says that in official circles it is considered that no advance upon Cabul will take place until the spring.

The news has arrived from Peshawur that Nawab Goolam Hussain has returned in safety from Cabul. His report as to the state of public feeling there is anxiously looked for. Reports have been received of a very serious outbreak in the Seistan district, on the Persian frontier. The rising is said to be a protest against the line of frontier as settled by the arbitration of 1872-1873.

Rumours are current upon the frontier that there is a rising among the Ghiljie tribes. This, if true, will greatly facilitate our operations, and will paralyse the Afghan preparations for the defence of Candahar.

General Crawford Trotter Chamberlain joined the Bengal army on the eve of the first Afghan war, in which he bore a distinguished part. He was present at the assault on Ghizni, for which he received the medal, and also at the siege of Candahar, and took part in the numerous actions which were fought outside its walls. He was also through the Punjaub war, serving at Chillianwallah and Goojerat. He was at Mooltan during the mutiny, and there disarmed the 62d and 69th Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry. He commanded later on the force acting against the Googairee rebels, and was besieged in the Serai of Checkawutnee for four days by the mutineers. For these services he received the brevet rank of Lieutenant Colonel and the thanks of Government. He is generally considered one of the most promising officers of the Bengal army.

(By Great Northern Telegraph.)
(From our own correspondent.)
ST. PETERSBURG, Friday.

The Afghan question is hardly discussed here in general conversation, and has evidently no hold on St. Petersburg society. The London Correspondent of the *Novoe Vremya* of the 26th telegraphs that Lord Salisbury has addressed a Note to the St. Petersburg Cabinet requesting an explanation of the objects of the Russian Embassy to the Ameer of Cabul, and in conclusion the British Government desires to know what position Russia intends assuming regarding Afghanistan. The *Golos* of the 27th says—"These rumours, though probably correct, need confirmation, since English diplomacy has long been accustomed to put these indiscreet sort of questions, violating all ordinarily accepted diplomatic traditions. We are not initiated in the mysteries of Russian politics, but are not wrong in believing that the answer of our Government to Lord Salisbury will be as follows. The noble Marquis will probably be informed, firstly, that the St. Petersburg Cabinet does not consider itself bound to explain, to whomsoever it may be, its aims when sending missions to any foreign potentate, European or Asiatic; secondly, that in war between England and Afghanistan Russia intends observing just such a strict neutrality as England observed in the war between Russia and Turkey. We shall not be behind England in strictly adhering to the laws and rules of international right; but shall not go a step further in that direction." Then follows a long tirade about the Stafford House Committee, British officers in the Turkish service, the conduct of General Kemball, as examples of England's idea of strict neutrality. The Moscow news of the 26th considers war with Afghan will be undertaken by Britain to keep up its *prestige*—a French word synonymous with inflated glory and hollow strength. It is not the first time the English have been misled by that word.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(From our own correspondent.)
ROME, Friday.

The affront that has been offered to England in Afghanistan is the subject of much discussion here. It is openly attributed to Russian influence.

The *Opinione* says it would not be surprised if after all the affair came to nothing at present, as England cannot desire to engage in war, and it would be impolitic of Russia to hurry on a conflict of which she must indirectly bear the consequences.

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The *Liberta* believes that there is little hope of averting a breach between Russia and England.

The *Riforma* writes in the same sense, adding that the Anglo-Russian question in India is destined to assume enormous proportions, and that only one thing may be prophesied with certainty, namely, that the Ameer of Cabul will be crushed between the two Powers.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)

VIENNA, Friday.

The *Free Press*, writing again on the difficulty between England and Afghanistan, says that even as a conqueror England promotes liberty, whilst Russia only seeks for more power in order to increase the millions of unhappy beings whom a merciless discipline drills in the notion that the highest aim of existence consists in reaping the honour of saying "*Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutant.*"

(Reuter's Telegrams.)

SIMLA, Sept. 27.

Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, the Special Envoy sent by the Viceroy to Cabul, has returned to Peshawur.

BOMBAY, Sept. 27.

Several papers designate Lieut. General Crawford Chamberlain as the Commander in Chief of the Army for Afghanistan.

BERLIN, Sept. 27.

Lord Augustus Loftus, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in passing through Germany on his return to the Russian capital, had an interview with Prince Gortschakoff.

It is believed that the Afghanistan question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia.

The military preparations which have been promptly undertaken by the Indian Government for the exaction of due reparation from Sheer Ali for the insult offered to this country by his abrupt refusal to receive the Chamberlain Mission are becoming daily more developed, as our telegrams from India published this morning inform us. The country will perceive in these vigorous measures not only a determination on the part of the Indian Government to cope at once with the danger that arises from the declared indifference, or rather hostility, of the Afghan ruler towards us and India; but also a proof that the long-pending difficulties with his State, which may be said to have gone on accumulating during the fifteen years that have elapsed since the death of Dost Mahomed, had compelled the Indian Council to arrive at the conclusion that to bring Sheer Ali to a just appreciation of his position and his relations towards ourselves was a task that could not be achieved by diplomatic means alone. In estimating the present state of affairs full prominence should be given to the fact that Sheer Ali's ill-will to this country has not sprung into existence in a day. Long before the Umbala Durbar he showed his true mind towards us by acts of equivocation in his dealings with Persia, and even with Russia, if half was true that was said of his doings at Herat when expelled from Candahar in 1867. And even that Durbar did not allay the restless promptings of his mind. He accepted his subsidy, and he treasured up the presents in money and in arms that were showered upon him; but his friendly sentiments towards us never impelled him to relax the stringent check he maintained on all intercourse between his country and Hindostan. The Seistan frontier decision, by which Sheer Ali obtained a considerable strip of territory, the refusal to permit the Forsyth Mission to return from Kashgar through his dominions, his intrigues with the mountain tribes and with the late Akhond of Swat, and finally his resentment at our arrangements with Khelat, all mark stages in the devious policy he has for years pursued, which have now culminated in the outrage committed upon a British officer in the Khyber Pass.

These facts were patent to all men, and the Government, with special means at their disposal for ascertaining the true significance of the conduct of the ruler beyond their frontier, evidently arrived at the conclusion that Sheer Ali's attitude was dictated by a persistent policy of hostility, quite as much as by the more personal impulses of vanity and ambition. The Indian Council, knowing these things, sanctioned precautionary steps being taken before the departure of the English Envoy, and of the wisdom of those precautions there can now be little doubt. The Indian Government could not have authorised these measures unless it had realised the necessity for them, and now that their foresight is confirmed by the action of Sheer Ali it may be assumed that the policy which was sketched when hopes were still indulged in of an amicable arrangement of the difficulty will not only be persisted in, but will be worked out with firmness and resolution. The military preparations which have been for many weeks in progress could not have reached such an advanced stage as they are happily at the present moment if the possibility of such steps becoming necessary had not been recognised by our Indian statesmen. The principal command of the expeditionary force which is concentrating at Peshawur is placed in the hands of Lieutenant General Crawford Chamberlain, a brother of our intended Envoy. This officer has had considerable experience in Afghan warfare, and his reminiscences of our previous occupation of the country will serve him in good stead. The column which he is about to lead will probably number fifteen thousand men, consisting, for the most part, of those troops which were to have formed the camp of exercise at Hassan Abdal, and which are now awaiting at Rawul Pindee the means of transport to begin their advance. The object before this column is to concentrate at Peshawur, and then to hold the mouth of the Khyber in force. Its primary object will be to effect an understanding with the Afreedees and Momunds. The movements of this, the largest of the three columns, will be deliberate, and we shall not, in our firm resolve to exact prompt and complete redress from Cabul, court a preliminary repulse by a premature attack on the Khyber.

The second column, under the command of General Roberts, lately commanding at Peshawur, and the former Quartermaster General to the Army, is concentrating at the position of Kohat before it advances on the village of Thull. The garrison of Kohat has been reinforced by six thousand men under General Roberts, who has brought those troops from Peshawur through the Kohat Pass, and among these it will be noticed that artillery occupy a prominent place. Three whole batteries of field artillery and Colonel Le Mesurier's mountain battery have been directed on Kohat, whence they will march on Thull, where four thousand men have already arrived. This column will at once proceed to occupy the Khurum Valley, and thus secure a dominant position on the very threshold of the Afghan State. The movements of this column are of the most immediate interest, although it is generally understood that, once the Khurum Valley has been occupied, our forces will not, for the present at least, advance farther from their base at Thull. The movements of the third column are more speculative, but it is clear from our telegrams that a large force is collecting at Mooltan, under the command of General Biddulph, and that a reserve is in course of formation under General Stewart. Other troops appear to have received instructions to combine with this force from Bombay and Madras, and it is even said that from the former a siege train is also expected. These will probably be sent by sea to Kurrachee, thence to Sukhur, where another detachment is being collected. In the meanwhile the garrison at Quettah has been strengthened by three thousand men, probably drawn from the troops at Dadar and Jacobabad. That reinforcement will serve to make Quettah impregnable even in the unlikely contingency of the Afghans attempting to surprise it; and when General Biddulph arrives with the column at present at Mooltan he will find himself with at least ten thousand men available for a forward movement. So far as the preparations go, the details of which have been so carefully worked out, there can be nothing but complete satisfaction at them. They represent the preliminary stages of a plan for effectually coercing Sheer Ali, and whatever supporters he may have, in which it is impossible to discover a flaw. The whole defence of Cabul seems likely to be paralysed before the triple demonstration that is taking place upon its frontier. It is not so satisfactory to perceive that there are still advocates for half-measures, persons who have sanctioned these advanced preparations, yet who hesitate to carry them out to their only logical conclusion. Having by our promptitude secured the great advantages of menacing Cabul from three points of vantage, are we, in the probable event of Sheer Ali persisting in his defiance, to remain

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inactive during the three months that yet remain available for carrying on hostilities in Afghanistan? The best reply would seem to be furnished by our telegrams from India. The Indian nation demands with one voice that SHERE ALI should make ample reparation for the insult he has offered India as well as England, and the VICEROY has proved that he thoroughly endorses that view. We should become the laughing-stock of India as well as of Asia if we permitted timidity to keep us stationed throughout the coming winter in a state of inglorious inactivity upon the frontiers of Cabul. The position would be worse than dangerous; it would be positively ridiculous.

FROM QUETTA TO CANDAHAR.

Situated in a plain of striking fertility lies Candahar, the city of Alexander, and the capital of the southern portion of Afghanistan. The walls which surround the modern city are rectangular in shape, but the inhabited portion of the town, which spreads all around in various directions, is so variable in form that the configuration of the city is not so clear as the definition "rectangular" would imply. Cemeteries to the north, gardens to the west and east, and thickly-peopled suburbs to the south give Candahar an appearance of size greater than is warranted by its actual population, although that cannot be computed at less than 60,000 people. Candahar is situated close to the Urgend river, a branch of the Helmund; and its position on the great road between India and Eastern Afghanistan on the one side, and Persia and Western Afghanistan on the other, is so peculiarly advantageous that it has at all times been admitted to be the most important city of Eastern Cabul. The Persians have always aspired to possess it, and their attempts on Herat, intended in the first place to secure that city, have always had the ulterior object of acquiring Candahar as well. Persia, it should be remembered, persists in considering Afghanistan as far as Ghizni as a Persian province. Yet, although Candahar is part and portion of the Afghan State, it is no mere provincial city; it aspires to the rank of a capital. It has a history of its own, closely wound up in Afghan eyes with the destiny of Cabul, yet in the eyes of the ardent Candahari of distinct interest and importance.

It would be idle to trace back the tale which gives to Candahar an origin as famous and as remote as those other cities which bear the name of the great Macedonian conqueror, nor can it be expected that within the space of an article intended to inform Englishmen of the present value and importance of this Afghan city its remote historical claims can be fully investigated. We may pass over the centuries that preceded the appearance of Nadir Shah, and commence our description with the arrival of that conqueror beneath the walls of this city in 1735. In that year Afghanistan was a country broken up into various parts, and its condition precisely resembled that now existing among the independent and rival clans of the Indian and Cashmerian borders. The three great clans were the two branches of the Abdali—viz., the Sudosye and the Barucksye, and the Populsye. The last of these was supreme in Candahar, and Khans of this clan ruled there when Nadir Shah assailed it. Their power was by no means insignificant, and they had carried the terror of their name into the Belooch country beyond Quetta, and into the Ghiljie country as far as Khelat-i-Ghiljie. They had, moreover, waged successful war with the Abdali clan in the country beyond Girishk, and in Zemindewar, and in 1735 the young Sudosye chief, Ahmed Khan, was a hostage in their possession, the token at once of Abdali discomfiture and Populsye pride and triumph. But although the rulers of Candahar were strong among a divided nation, their power was as nothing in the face of the great host, so ably led, of Nadir Shah. They had held aloof when Herat and Ferrah were wrested from their kinsmen; and now, having abstained from the duty of arresting Persian pretensions on the threshold of their country, what chance had they when the Turcoman conqueror crossed the Helmund fresh from the conquest of the western provinces? They had none, and they yielded. The Candahar Khans, chiefs of the great Populsye clan, sank from their high estate, and became merged among the rest of those Afghan followers of the Persian Prince who contributed so much to his Indian triumphs. On the surrender of Candahar the Belooch feudatories of that city proved refractory, and on one occasion worsted the Persian army. But Nadir Shah hastened to the point of danger, and routed the army of the Khan of Khelat, who, true to his engagments, had declared war against the invader of Candahar.

During the remainder of the life of Nadir, Candahar remained in his possession as the principal city of Cabul, and on his death it was there that Ahmed Khan first declared his independence of the new ruler of Teheran. From the accession of Ahmed to power down to the fall of Mahmoud before the Barucksye insurrection, Candahar remained one of the brightest spots in the possession of the Duranis; but Populsye disaffection, and dreams of regaining their lost position, formed an unknown factor in the condition of Cabul. There is no information on the point of what the Populsyes did to assist the Barucksye cause, or what to overthrow the Sudosye. They disappeared from the scene when Candahar fell into the hands of the Persian Sovereign, and they only appeared once more for a brief space during the Afghan wars forty years ago. When Dost Mahomed's brother, Kohundil Khan, received Candahar as his appanage, in the year 1820, Populsye vigour seemed to have finally departed, and during the nineteen years he ruled, until we appeared before Candahar, he, so far as we know, was undisturbed in his Government. The Populsyes had concentrated their antipathies upon the Sudosyes, and in the triumph of the Burucksyes had acquiesced, as proud men will often acquiesce, in a compromise. Their hostility was principally directed against Ahmed Khan's descendants, and in them they refused to recognise a lawful ruler. But when Futti Khan's brothers acquired the State the Populsye clan, which had withdrawn towards Girishk and Zemindewar, became more contented, and proved staunch to the Afghan national cause when Shah Thu'a strove to regain his heritage. Since then Candahar has in the main adhered to the side that received general support in the country, and only for a short time passed out of its allegiance to Shere Ali in 1867, when he fled to Herat. Since then Candahar has been the second city of the kingdom, and its Governor has generally been one of Shere Ali's sons, either Yakoob Khan or Ibrahim. The city is garrisoned by a division of the regular army which the Ameer has created since 1869, and, so far as we know, the Candahari have no cause to be discontented with their present form of Government. Shere Ali has always had a partiality for them, and they have enjoyed whatever prosperity it was in his power to confer.

At the present time it is opportune to remember that the Khojuck Pass is nominally open all the year round, but that during the months of January and February it is liable to being blocked by the snow that often collects there. When General England was sent forward in March, 1842, to relieve Nott—who, by the way, had taken the precaution in December, 1841, to lay in stores for five months—he suffered himself to be influenced by a show of defence at Hykulsye, so far as to retreat upon Quetta; but it is satisfactory to be able to point out that there is an alternative pass which effectually turns the Khojuck, and which will enable us to maintain communication throughout the winter between Quetta and Candahar if necessary. This alternative road lies west of the Khojuck, passing through the villages of Shadizai, Gulislan, and Shintazai to Kohi and Candahar. By this way, even if the Khojuck Pass should be closed, communications might be maintained throughout the winter with Candahar. It is wise to suppose, however, that our advance on Candahar will be opposed, and we should prepare to encounter in this quarter the most severe opposition an Afghan Ameer and army are capable of offering. Troubles in the Ghiljie country, of which there are rumours, at the bottom of which Yakoob Khan may safely be considered to be, if he has escaped, as reported, from confinement, must result in the temporary collapse of Shere Ali's power in Southern Afghanistan; and of that collapse we must be close at hand to take advantage. It is most satisfactory to know that we can send a column to Candahar at any moment, and maintain it there in force, and with plentiful supplies during the depth of winter. There is reason for saying that Government has in its possession geographical information of an unknown portion of Eastern Cabul, which will enable troops to be forwarded to Quetta from the Punjab more rapidly than at present. The opinion is becoming general that the Suleiman range is an inefficient frontier line, and the practical proof of this will be seen in the fact that, in the event of a great war, it will be found that there are many more passes feasible for a large army than the three or four generally accepted. The roads traversed by Shah Jehan and other Indian kings can be traversed by English soldiers and generals, as may yet be demonstrated.

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"Globe" Sept: 28th

SATURDAY EVENING,
SEPTEMBER 28.

THE PROJECTED RUSSO-TURKISH TREATY.

The project for a Russo-Turkish Treaty which comes to hand to-day from Constantinople contains matter of the utmost importance to the future peace of Europe. If the Berlin Treaty is not to become a nullity, this insidious scheme for giving Russia a hold on Turkey should be rejected by the Powers, whether the Porte is willing to sign it or not. The fundamental principle of the Berlin Treaty was that Russia should be deprived of any further pretext for harassing Turkey, and with this end in view the plenipotentiaries created a new State north of the Balkans, thus widening the distance between the Russian and Turkish frontiers. Even those who were most opposed to this wrenching away of a most important province from the Ottoman Empire could not but acknowledge that the policy on which it was based had a good deal to recommend it from a European point of view. But for this consideration there would have been a much louder outcry in England, and, perhaps, even in Austria, against this part of the Treaty. The transfer of Bessarabia to Russia aroused, it will be remembered, a vehement opposition in this country, although Great Britain had little sympathy to spare for the despoiled State in that instance. The underlying reason for the excitement was the fact that the annexation brought the Russian frontier somewhat further to the south, and therefore nearer to Turkey. But the Treaty, on the whole, appeared to erect a very substantial barrier between the two Powers, and Europe recognised its wisdom, provided always that its governing conditions were faithfully carried out by all the signatory Powers. There were some sceptics, certainly, who believed that no treaty which was ever framed could bind Russia one moment longer than she found convenient. But even these looked forward with some confidence to a prolonged period of rest, imagining that Russia would at all events adhere to her solemn engagements for some years to come. The expectation was justified by collateral circumstances, and by none more than the exhausted state of the Muscovite Empire, with its bankrupt exchequer, its decimated army, its untilled fields, and the perilous discontent which is seething among the masses. Yet, although the Berlin Treaty is just two months old, this restless Power is seen to be again desperately intriguing to win back the prestige and profit of which she was deprived by the Congress.

The projected Russo-Turkish Treaty should be viewed in connection with recent events in Afghanistan in order to appreciate its full importance. Since the outrageous insult offered to the Indian Government by SHERE ALI became known the Russian Press has openly declared that the object of General ABRAMOFF'S mission was to so embarrass the hands of England in the East as to hinder her from helping to give effect to those clauses of the Berlin Treaty which are inimical to Russia. Probably something of this sort was the real design of that mischievous Embassy, but the St. Petersburg Cabinet will be very much out of its reckoning if it imagines that Great Britain has not sufficient strength to deal with the Afghan despot simultaneously with conserving her vital interests in Eastern Europe. However, Muscovite diplomacy is wont to accept great risks in carrying out its objects, and we were prepared to believe that General ABRAMOFF was sent to cultivate the friendship of SHERE ALI for the purpose of drawing off our force in that direction. Whatever doubt may have been entertained on that point will be removed by this project for a Treaty between Russia and Turkey. Were Europe to permit such a covenant to come into existence, the clauses of the Berlin Treaty which Russia chooses to consider inimical to her interests might as well have been omitted. The proposed arrangement would allow the St. Petersburg Government innumerable opportunities for bringing pressure to bear upon the Porte. One clause specifies that the Russian troops shall retire from Ottoman territory at the expiration of the term fixed by the Congress, but "in an order which will be determined by special convention to be hereafter concluded." What need for "a special convention," except to give an occasion for wrangling? Turkey need not concern herself about the order of the Russians' going, so long as they go at the date fixed for their departure. And it clearly rests with the CZAR to determine the order of march, provided the evacuation be completed within the specified term. The next clause declares that "the Turkish authorities shall not, after the retirement of the Russians, treat with severity (*sévir contre*) the inhabitants who may be supposed to have compromised themselves.' It is easy to see what a fine handle this condition would supply to the St. Petersburg Government to make mischief with. If the Mahomedan inhabitants were to avenge themselves here and there for the recent atrocities committed by the Bulgarians, Russia would probably declare that the Turkish authorities were concerned in the business, and we should see the Porte threatened with exemplary punishment unless it at once set its house in order. The succeeding clause follows in the same groove by enacting that "a general amnesty will be granted to all Bulgarians and others who are, justly or unjustly, supposed to have shown sympathy with and given assistance to the Russians." Let us imagine that after the Muscovite exodus some Bulgarian is brought to trial and condemned to death for direct complicity in the murders and other foul doings south of the Balkans. What would be easier than for the CZAR to declare that this was a direct breach of the Treaty, inasmuch as the man had at one time shown sympathy with the Russians? If one tithe of the terrible revelations recently published be true, there must have been very strong ties of sympathy between the Bulgarian assassins and violators and the Cossacks. This amnesty would, therefore, compel the Porte to condone these abominable outrages, and allow the villanous perpetrators to escape scot free, under penalty of incurring the wrath of Russia.

Another point deserving close attention is that no date is specified for the payment of the indemnity of 300,000,000 roubles (not francs, as stated in the *Times*). For many years to come the Ottoman exchequer will scarcely be in a position to make any payments on this account, for every farthing must be required to restore order and develop the resources of the Empire. But it will always remain open to Russia to demand her pound of flesh to the very last ounce, and if it be not forthcoming, who shall guarantee that she would not seek to carve it for herself from as near as might be to the heart of her unfortunate debtor? All through the projected Treaty the same design may be seen running, namely, to again give Russia that hold upon Turkey which it was the object of the Congress to remove for ever. So transparent is this purpose, and so little likely does its realisation seem in defiance of the wish of Europe, that we are inclined to think the audacious project must have been cast on the waters as a test of public feeling. It is a common practice of Russian diplomacy to ask a great deal more than it is prepared to accept, and perhaps this may be another instance of such haggling. Unfortunately, the Court of St. Petersburg generally keeps its first demands in mind long after they have been rejected, and brings them forward again at a fitting opportunity. Thus, in the projected Treaty we see a good deal of the essence of the San Stefano arrangement, and even if it be ever so much modified before ratification, Russia will not readily give up her purpose of keeping a more or less firm clutch upon Turkey.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, September 26.

Three thousand five hundred troops are to be sent to reinforce the Quettah garrison, and a force of 4,000 men will be assembled at Thall, at the entrance of the Khoorum Valley. A reserve force of 6,000 men will be concentrated at Sukkur.

BOMBAY, September 27.

Several papers designate Lieutenant-General Crawford Chamberlain as the commander-in-chief of the army for Afghanistan.

RETURN OF THE VICEROY'S ENVOY.

SIMLA, September 27.

Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, the special Envoy sent by the Viceroy to Cabul, has returned to Peshawur.

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INTERVIEW BETWEEN LORD A. LOFTUS AND PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF.

BERLIN, September 27.

Lord Augustus Loftus, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in passing through this city, had an interview with Prince Gortschakoff. It is believed that the Afghanistan question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia.

EVACUATION OF TCHATALDJA.

CONSTANTINOPLE, September 27.

The Russian troops have evacuated Tchataldja. The Sultan has ordered Safvet Pasha, the Grand Vizier, to find some important post to be conferred upon Kheredine Pasha, ex-Prime Minister of the Bey of Tunis.

Sir Henry Layard has sent a contribution in money and a supply of provisions to the distressed Rhodope refugees.

THE OCCUPATION OF BOSNIA.

BELGRADE, September 26.

The Austrians are erecting extensive entrenchments on the heights near Semlin, and it is expected that a considerable force will be concentrated in that town.

Details of the capture of Novi Breka, received yesterday, state that the town was not burnt by the Austrian bombardment, but that the suburbs, which principally belonged to foreign merchants, were delivered up to plunder during 24 hours. The loss is estimated at upwards of £40,000.

THE BRITISH EXPEDITION.

The Bombay correspondent of the *Standard* telegraphs that the following is the *personnel* of the staff for the expeditionary army as at present decided:—The column concentrating at Peshawur, 15,000 strong, will be commanded by General Crawford Trotter Chamberlain, C.S.I., at present Commander of the Oude Division. He is brother of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and distinguished himself much in the last Afghan war. The garrison of Quettah is being reinforced by 3,000 troops, British and native; 4,000 troops are assembling at Thull; the reserve of 6,000 men will be collected at Mooltan early in October. General Roberts commands the column at Kohat. Colonels Cobbe and Tytler will each command a brigade of infantry. Colonel Clough will have the cavalry brigade. The head-quarter staff will consist of Major Galbraith, 85th Foot, Assistant Adjutant-General; Major Collett, Assistant Quarter-master-General; Colonel Perkins, Chief Engineer. Lieutenants Spratt and Childers will be the Field Engineers of the Force; Captain Wynnefield will be Telegraph Officer; and Lord William Beresford one of the Aides-de-Camp General Biddulph will command the Quettah column, having as his brigadiers Colonel Appleyard and Colonel Nuttall, of the Bombay army, with probably Colonel Fane, of the Staff Corps, in command of the cavalry brigade. Major Wolseley will be Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain R. G. Stewart Assistant Quarter-master-General, Colonel Hitchens Chief Engineer, and Captain Bisset Aide-de-Camp. Colonel Stewart commands the reserve column, and Colonel Baxter and Colonel Hughes will be brigadiers of the infantry. Colonel A. Hills is appointed Assistant Adjutant-General, and Captain E. F. Chapman, Assistant Quartermaster-General. The following troops, in addition to those before detailed, have been ordered up to Kohat:—F Battery A Brigade, and 11th Battery 9th Brigade, under Colonel Alfred Lindsay, and 8th Battery 4th Brigade, and the 3rd Peshawur Mountain Battery, under Colonel Le Mesurier. The 5th Company of Sappers and the 32nd Pioneers are ordered to march at once to Quettah. The A Battery B Brigade, G Battery 4th Brigade, and the 5th, 9th, and 11th Batteries 11th Brigade, will join the reserve at Mooltan. A garrison battery from Madras and one from Bombay, with a siege train, will probably be despatched to Sukhur. A telegram from Rawul Pindee states that the troops are all ready to march, but are awaiting carriage, which is not expected to be ready for some days. At Lahore it is understood that the Viceroy will pass the winter there, instead of going down to Calcutta. In Baroda and the native States well affected to us public opinion is strongly in favour of an immediate occupation of Afghanistan and the prompt punishment of the Ameer. A telegram from Simla says that in official circles it is considered that no advance upon Cabul will take place until the spring.

THE AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.

The *Saturday Review* says:—"Lord Northbrook avoided as far as possible all interference in Afghan affairs; but the steady and rapid advance of Russian conquest, coinciding with the antagonism between England and Russia in European politics, caused much uneasiness to Indian soldiers and statesmen. The occupation of Quettah, which was intended as a counter-move, has greatly aggravated the hostile feelings of the Ameer, though he may now perhaps find that he would have done well to profit by the warning. By inviting a Russian Envoy to his capital Shere Ali offered a defiance to the Indian Government, which has now been emphatically renewed. The approach of winter will perhaps render impossible an immediate advance on Cabul, though troops are being concentrated at different points on the frontier, and Quettah will be at once strongly reinforced. There is little ground for hoping that the necessity of war can be avoided. There would be no advantage in negotiating with Russia, which will gladly witness the expenditure of English resources in a struggle that will entail no sacrifice on herself. There is little satisfaction in the exposure of the shallowness of numerous politicians who have incessantly asserted that the progress of Russia in Central Asia threatened no danger to England or to India. Lord Beaconsfield himself lately repeated the common form that there was room in Asia for England and Russia; nor, indeed, could the proposition be disputed, if both Powers were permanently contented with their respective shares. Of two rival neighbours, the more aggressive contends at great advantage. England had no wish to meet Russia in the North; but the desire of abstention was not reciprocal. To the truism that it would be difficult or impossible for a Russian army to invade India, it has always been replied that the danger was not of invasion, but of offensive alliance with native States. The Russians themselves have fully appreciated their opportunities of annoyance; and it is admitted that their despatch of a mission to Cabul was intended as a hostile measure when war seemed imminent in Europe. The Russian Envoy not only retains his position after the conclusion of peace, but he has probably dictated the answer which was returned to Sir Neville Chamberlain's application for a free passage and safe conduct. If there had been no Russian conquest of Central Asia, it would not have been necessary to choose between unprofitable war and inglorious peace."

The *Examiner* observes that "if we are to keep India at all, we must be prepared to fight for its possession in case of need. With such an empire as we hold in the East, *Nemo me impune lacesset* must of necessity be our motto. That this should be so may be a reason against our holding India; but granted—as the vast majority of English are prepared to grant—that the retention of our Imperial power is at once our duty and our interest, and it follows, as a logical deduction, that we must keep by the sword what we have won by the sword. No hesitation, however, as to the imperative duty of maintaining our Imperial position is involved in the assertion that a war with Afghanistan is a calamity to be avoided except under the pressure of absolute necessity. In the first place, it is a war in which success can only be achieved at a very heavy sacrifice of blood and treasure; in the second, a successful war must entail the virtual annexation of the Afghan territory; and, in the third place, such an annexation must inevitably bring us at no distant period into direct collision with Russia. For all these reasons, it has long been a maxim of our Indian policy to avoid giving any cause of offence to the Afghan kingdom. . . . After what has occurred we have no choice except to bring the Ameer to reason, and the process of bringing him to reason must almost of necessity involve a war with Afghanistan and the annexation of Afghan territory. Yet this is just what all the highest Indian authorities have always cautioned us to avoid doing."

The *Spectator* remarks that "we can now less than ever afford to receive a check or find ourselves brought to a stand by some improvised Plevna in the Hills. If we lose a battle, India will be in flame behind us from end to end. Evidence obtained during the Mutiny showed clearly that the Sepoys had gravely considered the propriety of joining Dost Mahommed and conquering India, and this time we have roused the deadly suspicions of the Princes. Instead of quietly limiting the force of each noble, or, if possible, coercing them in detail, the Government has flourished magnificently about 'our policy,' has warned all the world through the *Times* that the feudatory armies are doomed, and has even specified those which it thinks most dangerous. If there is a disaster, the Princes will try whether their honour and their armies cannot alike be saved. The evidence taken after the Mutiny also revealed the strength of the sympathy which exists between the Mohamedans of Bengal Proper, shown by Sir G. Campbell to number twenty millions, and the rulers of Afghanistan, or the pious brigands of the Hills, and they hear now of every event day by day. We must advance, therefore, with every prince listening in full armour, with the Mahratta people boiling with excitement, and with every Mussulman in Bengal craning to catch the signal. All that is no matter, for we have faced it all before; but all that makes it indispensable that we should win, and a war in which we must win will be a great and expensive war. The numbers must be ample, the reserves profuse. There must be no deficiency of commissariat or cartage, no risk run of a break in communications for ten days, no hesitation in guarding railways, no forgetting that along the Nerbudda and on the Deccan plateau we must be ready to strike, and strike hard. It must be remembered that the army, when its work is done, will not return, but must garrison the 'Douranne Empire' against a disaffected people, and against possible assault from the petty empire, Persia, which will then be feverish with suspicion, and from the great empire, Russia, which will then be feverish with delight that Great Britain has voluntarily ceased to be impregnable and inaccessible. Russia thenceforward can strike home at will, can drag our armies, when she chooses, 8,000 miles, to fight amid roadless hills, with two hundred millions of possible rebels watching them behind."

The *Statist* says:—"The hostility of Russia in this matter is unmistakable. Granting that she was justified, when war seemed imminent, to prepare to strike her foe where most vulnerable, the justification ceased with the danger. She was under a standing engagement not to interfere in Afghanistan, and in good faith ought to have observed that engagement as soon as she found that hostilities would be averted. Now the Salisbury-Schouvaloff convention practically averted the danger of a conflict, and it was agreed upon before the meeting of the Congress, that is, between three and four months ago. Even if we concede that the carrying out of the convention was not certain, all pending disputes were settled by the Treaty of Berlin, and it was signed on the 13th of July, two and a half months since. Clearly,

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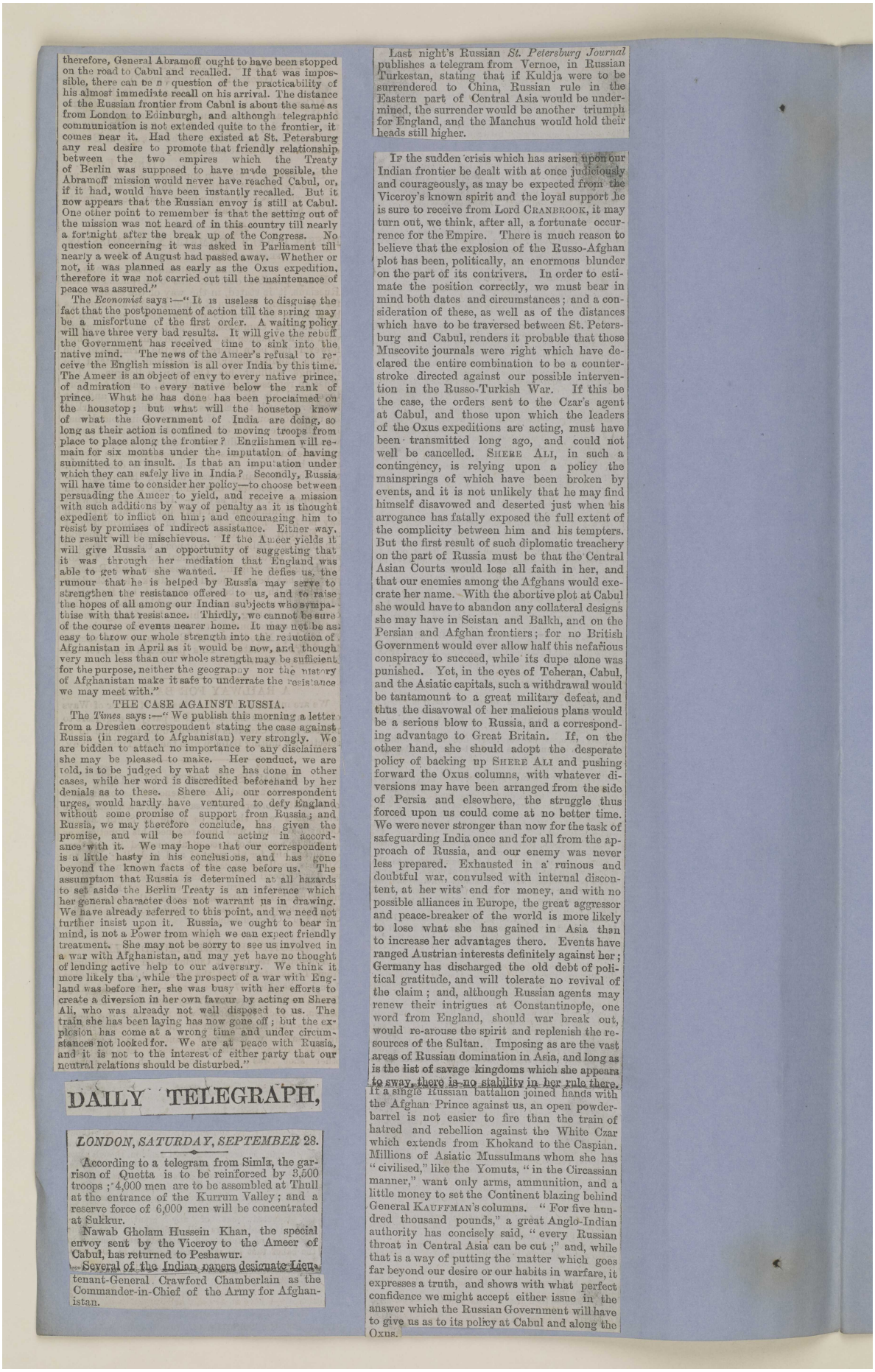

therefore, General Abramoff ought to have been stopped on the road to Cabul and recalled. If that was impossible, there can be no question of the practicability of his almost immediate recall on his arrival. The distance of the Russian frontier from Cabul is about the same as from London to Edinburgh, and although telegraphic communication is not extended quite to the frontier, it comes near it. Had there existed at St. Petersburg any real desire to promote that friendly relationship between the two empires which the Treaty of Berlin was supposed to have made possible, the Abramoff mission would never have reached Cabul, or, if it had, would have been instantly recalled. But it now appears that the Russian envoy is still at Cabul. One other point to remember is that the setting out of the mission was not heard of in this country till nearly a fortnight after the break up of the Congress. No question concerning it was asked in Parliament till nearly a week of August had passed away. Whether or not, it was planned as early as the Oxus expedition, therefore it was not carried out till the maintenance of peace was assured."

The *Economist* says:—"It is useless to disguise the fact that the postponement of action till the spring may be a misfortune of the first order. A waiting policy will have three very bad results. It will give the rebuff the Government has received time to sink into the native mind. The news of the Ameer's refusal to receive the English mission is all over India by this time. The Ameer is an object of envy to every native prince, of admiration to every native below the rank of prince. What he has done has been proclaimed on the housetop; but what will the housetop know of what the Government of India are doing, so long as their action is confined to moving troops from place to place along the frontier? Englishmen will remain for six months under the imputation of having submitted to an insult. Is that an imputation under which they can safely live in India? Secondly, Russia will have time to consider her policy—to choose between persuading the Ameer to yield, and receive a mission with such additions by way of penalty as it is thought expedient to inflict on him; and encouraging him to resist by promises of indirect assistance. Either way, the result will be mischievous. If the Ameer yields it will give Russia an opportunity of suggesting that it was through her mediation that England was able to get what she wanted. If he defies us, the rumour that he is helped by Russia may serve to strengthen the resistance offered to us, and to raise the hopes of all among our Indian subjects who sympathise with that resistance. Thirdly, we cannot be sure of the course of events nearer home. It may not be as easy to throw our whole strength into the reduction of Afghanistan in April as it would be now, and though very much less than our whole strength may be sufficient for the purpose, neither the geography nor the history of Afghanistan make it safe to underrate the resistance we may meet with."

THE CASE AGAINST RUSSIA.

The *Times* says:—"We publish this morning a letter from a Dresden correspondent stating the case against Russia (in regard to Afghanistan) very strongly. We are bidden to attach no importance to any disclaimers she may be pleased to make. Her conduct, we are told, is to be judged by what she has done in other cases, while her word is discredited beforehand by her denials as to these. Shere Ali, our correspondent urges, would hardly have ventured to defy England without some promise of support from Russia; and Russia, we may therefore conclude, has given the promise, and will be found acting in accordance with it. We may hope that our correspondent is a little hasty in his conclusions, and has gone beyond the known facts of the case before us. The assumption that Russia is determined at all hazards to set aside the Berlin Treaty is an inference which her general character does not warrant us in drawing. We have already referred to this point, and we need not further insist upon it. Russia, we ought to bear in mind, is not a Power from which we can expect friendly treatment. She may not be sorry to see us involved in a war with Afghanistan, and may yet have no thought of lending active help to our adversary. We think it more likely that, while the prospect of a war with England was before her, she was busy with her efforts to create a diversion in her own favour by acting on Shere Ali, who was already not well disposed to us. The train she has been laying has now gone off; but the explosion has come at a wrong time and under circumstances not looked for. We are at peace with Russia, and it is not to the interest of either party that our neutral relations should be disturbed."

DAILY TELEGRAPH,

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28.

According to a telegram from Simla, the garrison of Quetta is to be reinforced by 3,500 troops; 4,000 men are to be assembled at Thull at the entrance of the Kurrum Valley; and a reserve force of 6,000 men will be concentrated at Sukkur.

Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, the special envoy sent by the Viceroy to the Ameer of Cabul, has returned to Peshawur.

Several of the Indian papers designate Lieutenant-General Crawford Chamberlain as the Commander-in-Chief of the Army for Afghanistan.

Last night's Russian *St. Petersburg Journal* publishes a telegram from Vernoe, in Russian Turkestan, stating that if Kuldja were to be surrendered to China, Russian rule in the Eastern part of Central Asia would be undermined, the surrender would be another triumph for England, and the Manchus would hold their heads still higher.

If the sudden crisis which has arisen upon our Indian frontier be dealt with at once judiciously and courageously, as may be expected from the Viceroy's known spirit and the loyal support he is sure to receive from Lord CRANBROOK, it may turn out, we think, after all, a fortunate occurrence for the Empire. There is much reason to believe that the explosion of the Russo-Afghan plot has been, politically, an enormous blunder on the part of its contrivers. In order to estimate the position correctly, we must bear in mind both dates and circumstances; and a consideration of these, as well as of the distances which have to be traversed between St. Petersburg and Cabul, renders it probable that those Muscovite journals were right which have declared the entire combination to be a counter-stroke directed against our possible intervention in the Russo-Turkish War. If this be the case, the orders sent to the Czar's agent at Cabul, and those upon which the leaders of the Oxus expeditions are acting, must have been transmitted long ago, and could not well be cancelled. SHERE ALI, in such a contingency, is relying upon a policy the mainsprings of which have been broken by events, and it is not unlikely that he may find himself disavowed and deserted just when his arrogance has fatally exposed the full extent of the complicity between him and his tempters. But the first result of such diplomatic treachery on the part of Russia must be that the Central Asian Courts would lose all faith in her, and that our enemies among the Afghans would execrate her name. With the abortive plot at Cabul she would have to abandon any collateral designs she may have in Seistan and Balkh, and on the Persian and Afghan frontiers; for no British Government would ever allow half this nefarious conspiracy to succeed, while its dupe alone was punished. Yet, in the eyes of Teheran, Cabul, and the Asiatic capitals, such a withdrawal would be tantamount to a great military defeat, and thus the disavowal of her malicious plans would be a serious blow to Russia, and a corresponding advantage to Great Britain. If, on the other hand, she should adopt the desperate policy of backing up SHERE ALI and pushing forward the Oxus columns, with whatever diversions may have been arranged from the side of Persia and elsewhere, the struggle thus forced upon us could come at no better time. We were never stronger than now for the task of safeguarding India once and for all from the approach of Russia, and our enemy was never less prepared. Exhausted in a ruinous and doubtful war, convulsed with internal discontent, at her wits' end for money, and with no possible alliances in Europe, the great aggressor and peace-breaker of the world is more likely to lose what she has gained in Asia than to increase her advantages there. Events have ranged Austrian interests definitely against her; Germany has discharged the old debt of political gratitude, and will tolerate no revival of the claim; and, although Russian agents may renew their intrigues at Constantinople, one word from England, should war break out, would re-arouse the spirit and replenish the resources of the Sultan. Imposing as are the vast areas of Russian domination in Asia, and long as is the list of savage kingdoms which she appears to sway, there is no stability in her rule there. If a single Russian battalion joined hands with the Afghan Prince against us, an open powder-barrel is not easier to fire than the train of hatred and rebellion against the White Czar which extends from Khokand to the Caspian. Millions of Asiatic Mussulmans whom she has "civilised," like the Yomuts, "in the Circassian manner," want only arms, ammunition, and a little money to set the Continent blazing behind General KAUFFMAN'S columns. "For five hundred thousand pounds," a great Anglo-Indian authority has concisely said, "every Russian throat in Central Asia can be cut;" and, while that is a way of putting the matter which goes far beyond our desire or our habits in warfare, it expresses a truth, and shows with what perfect confidence we might accept either issue in the answer which the Russian Government will have to give us as to its policy at Cabul and along the Oxus.

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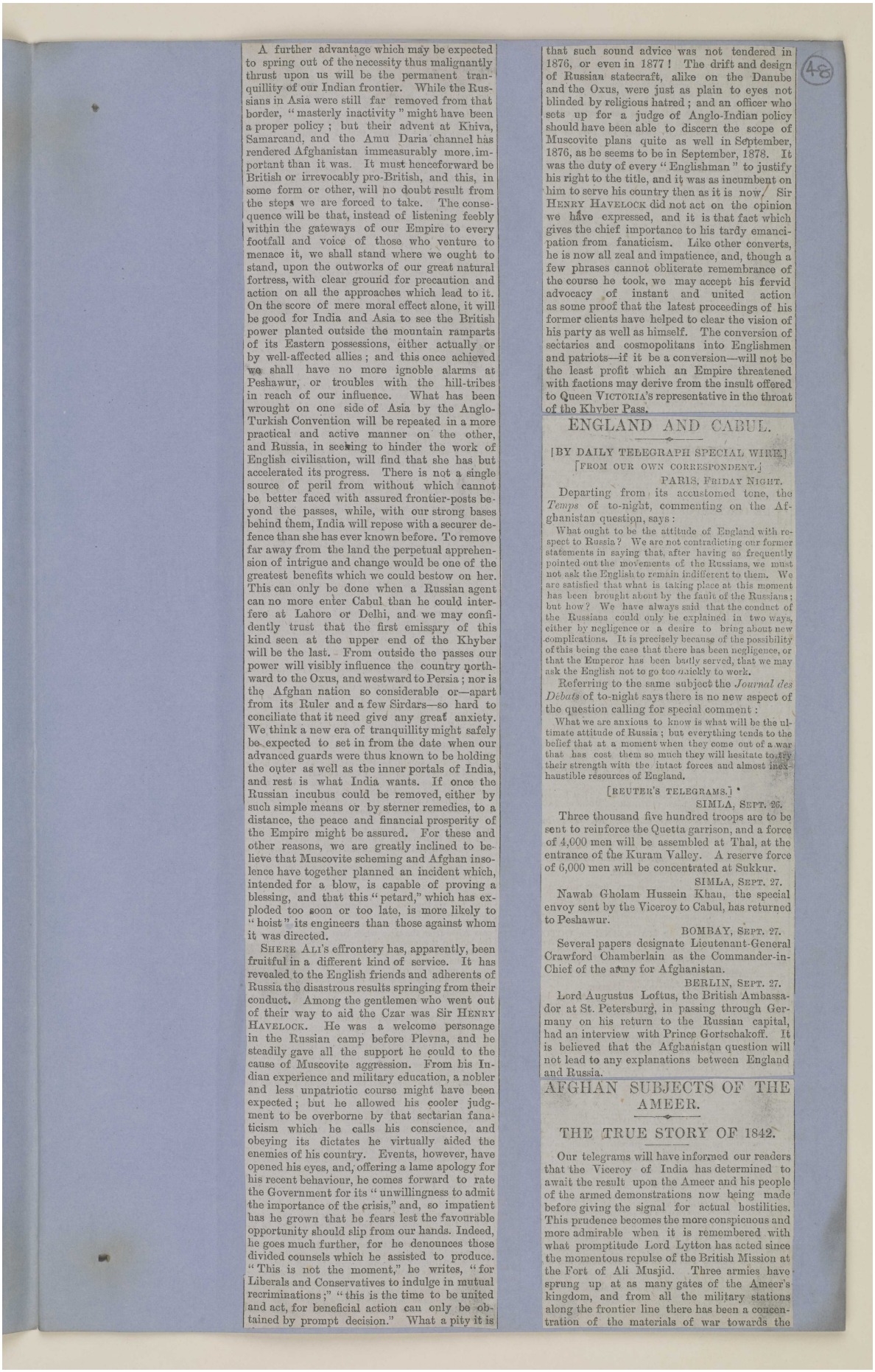

A further advantage which may be expected to spring out of the necessity thus malignantly thrust upon us will be the permanent tranquillity of our Indian frontier. While the Russians in Asia were still far removed from that border, "masterly inactivity" might have been a proper policy; but their advent at Khiva, Samarcand, and the Amu Daria channel has rendered Afghanistan immeasurably more important than it was. It must henceforward be British or irrevocably pro-British, and this, in some form or other, will no doubt result from the steps we are forced to take. The consequence will be that, instead of listening feebly within the gateways of our Empire to every footfall and voice of those who venture to menace it, we shall stand where we ought to stand, upon the outworks of our great natural fortress, with clear ground for precaution and action on all the approaches which lead to it. On the score of mere moral effect alone, it will be good for India and Asia to see the British power planted outside the mountain ramparts of its Eastern possessions, either actually or by well-affected allies; and this once achieved we shall have no more ignoble alarms at Peshawur, or troubles with the hill-tribes in reach of our influence. What has been wrought on one side of Asia by the Anglo-Turkish Convention will be repeated in a more practical and active manner on the other, and Russia, in seeking to hinder the work of English civilisation, will find that she has but accelerated its progress. There is not a single source of peril from without which cannot be better faced with assured frontier-posts beyond the passes, while, with our strong bases behind them, India will repose with a securer defence than she has ever known before. To remove far away from the land the perpetual apprehension of intrigue and change would be one of the greatest benefits which we could bestow on her. This can only be done when a Russian agent can no more enter Cabul than he could interfere at Lahore or Delhi, and we may confidently trust that the first emissary of this kind seen at the upper end of the Khyber will be the last. From outside the passes our power will visibly influence the country northward to the Oxus, and westward to Persia; nor is the Afghan nation so considerable or—apart from its Ruler and a few Sirdars—so hard to conciliate that it need give any great anxiety. We think a new era of tranquillity might safely be expected to set in from the date when our advanced guards were thus known to be holding the outer as well as the inner portals of India, and rest is what India wants. If once the Russian incubus could be removed, either by such simple means or by sterner remedies, to a distance, the peace and financial prosperity of the Empire might be assured. For these and other reasons, we are greatly inclined to believe that Muscovite scheming and Afghan insolence have together planned an incident which, intended for a blow, is capable of proving a blessing, and that this "petard," which has exploded too soon or too late, is more likely to "hoist" its engineers than those against whom it was directed.

SHERE ALI'S effrontery has, apparently, been fruitful in a different kind of service. It has revealed to the English friends and adherents of Russia the disastrous results springing from their conduct. Among the gentlemen who went out of their way to aid the Czar was Sir HENRY HAVELOCK. He was a welcome personage in the Russian camp before Plevna, and he steadily gave all the support he could to the cause of Muscovite aggression. From his Indian experience and military education, a nobler and less unpatriotic course might have been expected; but he allowed his cooler judgment to be overborne by that sectarian fanaticism which he calls his conscience, and obeying its dictates he virtually aided the enemies of his country. Events, however, have opened his eyes, and, offering a lame apology for his recent behaviour, he comes forward to rate the Government for its "unwillingness to admit the importance of the crisis," and, so impatient has he grown that he fears lest the favourable opportunity should slip from our hands. Indeed, he goes much further, for he denounces those divided counsels which he assisted to produce. "This is not the moment," he writes, "for Liberals and Conservatives to indulge in mutual recriminations;" "this is the time to be united and act, for beneficial action can only be obtained by prompt decision." What a pity it is that such sound advice was not tendered in 1876, or even in 1877! The drift and design of Russian statecraft, alike on the Danube and the Oxus, were just as plain to eyes not blinded by religious hatred; and an officer who sets up for a judge of Anglo-Indian policy should have been able to discern the scope of Muscovite plans quite as well in September, 1876, as he seems to be in September, 1878. It was the duty of every "Englishman" to justify his right to the title, and it was as incumbent on him to serve his country then as it is now. Sir HENRY HAVELOCK did not act on the opinion we have expressed, and it is that fact which gives the chief importance to his tardy emancipation from fanaticism. Like other converts, he is now all zeal and impatience, and, though a few phrases cannot obliterate remembrance of the course he took, we may accept his fervid advocacy of instant and united action as some proof that the latest proceedings of his former clients have helped to clear the vision of his party as well as himself. The conversion of sectaries and cosmopolitans into Englishmen and patriots—if it be a conversion—will not be the least profit which an Empire threatened with factions may derive from the insult offered to Queen VICTORIA'S representative in the throat of the Khyber Pass.

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

PARIS, FRIDAY NIGHT.

Departing from its accustomed tone, the *Temps* of to-night, commenting on the Afghanistan question, says:

What ought to be the attitude of England with respect to Russia? We are not contradicting our former statements in saying that, after having so frequently pointed out the movements of the Russians, we must not ask the English to remain indifferent to them. We are satisfied that what is taking place at this moment has been brought about by the fault of the Russians; but how? We have always said that the conduct of the Russians could only be explained in two ways, either by negligence or a desire to bring about new complications. It is precisely because of the possibility of this being the case that there has been negligence, or that the Emperor has been badly served, that we may ask the English not to go too quickly to work.

Referring to the same subject the *Journal des Débats* of to-night says there is no new aspect of the question calling for special comment:

What we are anxious to know is what will be the ultimate attitude of Russia; but everything tends to the belief that at a moment when they come out of a war that has cost them so much they will hesitate to try their strength with the intact forces and almost inexhaustible resources of England.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.]

SIMLA, SEPT. 26.

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AFGHAN SUBJECTS OF THE AMEER.

THE TRUE STORY OF 1842.

Our telegrams will have informed our readers that the Viceroy of India has determined to await the result upon the Ameer and his people of the armed demonstrations now being made before giving the signal for actual hostilities. This prudence becomes the more conspicuous and more admirable when it is remembered with what promptitude Lord Lytton has acted since the momentous repulse of the British Mission at the Fort of Ali Musjid. Three armies have sprung up at as many gates of the Ameer's kingdom, and from all the military stations along the frontier line there has been a concentration of the materials of war towards the

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points selected for the rendezvous of the British troops. Meanwhile we may be sure the news of the activity along the Indus line has travelled from end to end of Afghanistan, and history has taught us what happens in the East when rumours of trouble impending over the central power begin to circulate. In Afghanistan, more notably, perhaps, than anywhere, the bonds of the provinces to the capital begin to slacken, and Herat and Candahar and Ghuzni all awake afresh to the remembrance that each was at one time a royal city itself, as royal as Cabul now, and the capital of an independent government. Moreover, of all the rulers that from time to time the Afghan Sirdars have affected to serve there has not been one so precariously circumstanced as the present, Shere Ali Khan. The Barakzai clique to which he belongs, may, perhaps, be loyal, but search Afghanistan over, and hardly another of all the tribes that people it can be found upon whom Shere Ali could lay his hand as staunch supporters of his cause. In the wars by which he reached his throne, lost it and regained it, the Ameer learnt how few in all the kingdom would fight for him against another claimant, and in his rule there has been little to attach to his person the fickle, treacherous chiefs who command his forts and troops. Indeed, there are not many who do not owe Shere Ali Khan a personal grudge, from the troopers whom he bilks of their pay to the princes of the blood whom he imprisons, tortures, and outlaws.

The Afghans, it is true, are a difficult multitude to govern. They are not a nation in the true sense of the word, for great sections of the population of Afghanistan differ from one another in nationality, language, and religion. In a recent issue we pointed out these differences between the Afghan, Persian, Tartar, and Hindustani races that combine to form "the subjects of the Ameer," and showed that, unless two-thirds of the total population were left out of consideration, Afghanistan possessed no nationality. Even if we take out from their neighbours and fellow subjects the Afghans proper, we do not find a compact people, for tribal feuds attain among them the serious proportions of international antipathies, become hereditary, and even in political crises obstruct or even forbid united action. Yet it is the Afghans, if any, that we must consider the nation of Afghanistan. Their physical characteristics and their manners and customs we have already described, showing that, while they differ very widely—even radically—from the surrounding population, they are bound together by the ties of common tastes and traditions. Their speech and history, moreover, mark them out as a distinct community.

Their language proves, on analysis, one of the most interesting known to philologists, for its roots strike equally into Hebrew, Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian, with a large admixture of words derived from no known source. It is called Pushtoo, and is almost entirely a spoken language, the character being Arabic, with only very slight modifications to express particular sounds which in the spoken language have no corresponding sound in any other Oriental tongue. From the presence of Hebrew derivatives in their speech, and of Hebrew ceremonies in their customs, it has long been surmised that they were of Jewish origin. They style themselves Bani Israel, or children of Israel, affect to trace their descent from Saul, the King of Israel, and preserve among their traditions, amongst a medley of Mohammedan doctrines, the accounts of the deliverance from Egypt, the ark of the covenant, and the names of the Philistines, Amalek, Anak, and others. Dr. Bellew, in his record of the Mission to Candahar in 1857, gives a brief summary of the contents of certain Afghan historical books in which are traced the genealogy and history of the people from Kais or Kesh, the father of Saul, or Malik Twalut, "the Prince of Stature." In these works the Israelite origin of the Afghans is, to the Afghans at any rate, satisfactorily set forth, and there is some evidence in support of their claims. Be these as they may, history first recognises the existence of the tribes called "Afghans" when they were settled at Ghor, in Western Khorassan, in the eighth century. Here they were invaded by the Mohammedans, and embracing Islam *en masse*, continued to flourish. About two hundred years later a Tartar invasion of Cabul proper succeeded in driving out thence the Hindus who then possessed it, and in establishing a Tartar dynasty at the city of Ghuzni. The Afghans assisted the Tartars in the work of conquest, and with them spread not only over the present Afghanistan, but across the Suleiman range into the present British districts of Multan and Rohilkund, where their descendants still form a considerable proportion of the inhabitants. In time, however, they grew stronger than the conquerors, and in the twelfth century overthrew the Tartar dynasty of Ghuzni. One portion of the Afghans settled down as rulers of Cabul, while another entered India, where they founded at Delhi a dynasty that ruled in Upper India until 1526, when the Moghul conqueror, Baber, overthrew both kingdoms. After his death Western Afghanistan fell to the Persians, the Eastern portion remaining nominally under Delhi. But in 1740 Nadir Shah brought the whole under his sway, only, however, for seven years, for he was assassinated in 1747. His commander-in-chief, Ahmed Shah, an Afghan, at once seized the vast treasure which the Persian army was carrying home from the plunder of India, and, proclaiming himself King of the Afghans, readily united under him all the tribes of that name, and established within its present limits the independent kingdom over which Shere Ali now rules. Between the dates of Ahmed Shah and Shere Ali a hundred and forty years have elapsed, marked throughout by violent internal dissensions and resulting in frequent temporary changes of dynasty and frontier. The most important of these was the overthrow of the Suddozai family in 1839, which led to British interference. Under the impression that the restoration of the Suddozai dynasty would be pleasing to the Afghans the British Government attempted the reinstatement of the deposed Ameer, Shah Shuja, hoping also, by thus constituting a friendly power in Afghanistan, to obtain a permanent guarantee against the intrigues of Russia, then threatening to occupy Khiva and to disturb the peace of Afghanistan.

The history of that attempt and its results has been often written, but it is well to-day to recall to mind the true circumstances of that splendid episode. Speech makers have been found, who within the last few days, either from shameful ignorance of a glorious passage in our military annals or no less shameful perversion of notorious facts, have informed their hearers that the lessons of the past ought to teach us cowardice in the present; and that because in January, 1842, many Christian people and more Hindoos—men, women, and children—fell victims to the pitiless treachery of the Afghans and their allies, we are now to fear the ruler of Afghanistan. It is quite true that the most awful disaster that ever befel British arms was one result of the first occupation of Cabul: that tale was written large in blood on the mountains of the country. But it is no less true that, on the instant of the receipt of the news, a cry of fierce wrath broke from our countrymen in India, and that, a gallant, well-led army soon effaced the stain. The British infantry rushed into the Khyber Pass, and scaling its cliffs swept out the Khyberis from crevice and ravine; while the main body, breaking down the barricades with which in their impotent malignity the hill men had crowded the pass, hurried on towards the devoted city. The Ghilzais tried to oppose the avenging force at the Jugdullah defile, but were hurled back upon the main army encamped at Jugdeen. In five days more General Pollock was upon them in their strength. He inflicted a shattering defeat, and then swept down on Cabul, and the ruins in the capital of the Ameer bear witness to this day of the completeness of our triumph and our retribution. The defence and victory of Jellalabad, under General Sale, and the capture of Ghuzni by General Nott, are other memories of this notable campaign, which the detractors of our national glory have not scrupled to ignore. They are eager to remember and to cast in the teeth of their countrymen the terrible and most pathetic disaster of the Khyber Pass, when, led into the very jaws of death by the false promises of a treacherous friend, an army of five thousand men, principally native troops, with eleven thousand camp followers, were butchered like penned sheep among the rocks. But they are careful to forget, lest the memory should awaken in their hearers pride of race and contempt of an Afghan enemy, the brilliant annals of the retribution that so swiftly followed. It is forgotten, too, that to exact that splendid vengeance the British army had to march through the Punjab—not then a British province, but a possession of a disaffected if not

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actually hostile government—and through the same Khyber Pass, swarming with the same vile men that a few months before had made such easy prey of the blocked mass of fugitives, and were still exulting in the successful carnage. To-day, however, the circumstances are altogether changed and in our favour. The Punjab is peacefully in British possession, and affords us some of the finest soldiery in the world, the Sikhs, who hate the Afghans with a traditional hatred, and would prefer them to any other enemy. More than this, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, has, with a wise foresight, subsidised the Pass men, who, while serving us, become, by that very fact, the enemies of the Afghans and their Ameer. This enmity, however, is no new thing, for interwoven in the early history of the country are the feuds between the mountaineers of the Pass and the Afghans proper—feuds arising from the contemptuous refusal of the latter to recognise the former as clansmen of equal dignity of descent. Not only, therefore, are both the Punjab and the Pass friendly to us, but the Punjabis and the Pass men have grudges to pay off against the Afghans. With these circumstances in our favour, it is hard to understand how there can be any reasonable or honest doubt as to the result of a repetition of that advance which, thirty-five years ago, was so triumphantly executed in spite of every circumstance being so strongly adverse.

It is to be noted that the advance of Generals Pollock and Nott was made in the month of September. The month is now fast drawing to a close, but as the snows fall nowhere in Afghanistan before December there is ample time both for action and deliberation before the Viceroy of India. And that Lord Lytton will act when the time comes with promptitude and strength we have already had as sound assurance as that he will not now sacrifice prudence to the just eagerness of the nation to obtain reparation for the insult offered to him and them.

"Times" Sept: 28th

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, SEPT. 26.

Three thousand five hundred troops are to be sent to reinforce the Quettah garrison, and a force of 4,000 men will be assembled at Thall, at the entrance of the Koorum Valley. A reserve force of 6,000 men will be concentrated at Sukkur.

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RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 27.

The Russian *St. Petersburg Journal* of this evening publishes the following from Vernoe, in Russian Turkestan, under date September 24 :—

"If Kuldja were to be surrendered to China, Russian rule in the eastern part of Central Asia would be undermined. The western frontier is already half in the hands of England, and if Kuldja is given up the operations of the Russians in that region will be attended with great risks—Eastern Turkestan would, in fact, no longer exist for us. The surrender of Kuldja to China would be another triumph for England, and the Manchus would hold their heads still higher. In fine, Russian influence in Central Asia would be shaken."

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, SEPT. 27.

Trustworthy intelligence from St. Petersburg states that the Russian Government will permit Russian merchants and manufacturers to sell arms and ammunition to both parties in the impending war between England and Afghanistan.

The German Press, considerably excited by the Afghan news from the very first, gradually begins to take sides. Conservative journals are favourable to Russia. It is hardly necessary to say that the number and circulation of such papers is exceedingly small. Governmental organs are reserved and endeavour to be impartial, but rather incline towards the Russian side. In point of numerical strength and influence this sort of papers are even less formidable than the Conservative organs. The rest of the German Press is anti-Russian. Ultramontane and Socialist journals, always opposed to the Russian Government, now vie with one another in denouncing the ambitious policy attributed to our Eastern neighbours. Of the Liberal journals, forming the immense majority of the German Press, the more moderate represent military measures as unavoidable and just; while the more advanced, though likewise defending the action of the Calcutta authorities, have a great deal to say upon the remissness of the London Cabinet in allowing things to reach this climax. As a specimen of Moderate Liberal opinion, I may quote three leading organs. The *Cologne Gazette* says :—

"England cannot afford to ignore the affront which the Ameer has dared to inflict upon her. Inactivity in present circumstances would by her Indian subjects and the semi-independent Sovereigns still existing among them be interpreted in a manner dangerous to her *prestige* and power in the East. Shere Ali, there can be no doubt, listening to the whispers of Russian emissaries, prefers a Muscovite alliance to English friendship, even at the risk of war and defeat. Shere Ali must be aware that England cannot allow him to give her a slap in the face with impunity. Knowing this, he has had the audacity to insult England; he must, therefore, rely upon the promise of Russian support, and perhaps upon reminiscences of English defeat in his mountainous land. We shall soon see that he is out in his calculations. Even if Russia were to send all her Central Asiatic forces to his aid (which she clearly cannot do), or if she were to lend him all her money and military genius (commodities she can scarcely call her own), the ruler of Cabul would soon have to deplore the part he has taken. England is incomparably better prepared for an Afghan war now than she was 36 years ago. Her army is far more numerous, her resources are infinitely greater, her communications better insured, her allies more trustworthy. Strong enough to avenge defeat 36 years ago, England is sure to punish Asiatic insults at this time of the day. Measures have long been taken to prevent a repetition of the Khyber disaster."

The Berlin *National Zeitung* has the following :—

"A considerable force will be concentrated to give a fitting reply to the provocation of the insolent Ameer. Though Shere Ali evidently relies upon Russian help, it is greatly doubted that Russia will openly assist him in the war. Of course, it is foreseen that General Kaufmann will place his advice and resources at his disposal. Since the Servian campaign we are aware that war may be carried on not only officially, but also semi-officially. The impending campaign will probably result in the expulsion of Shere Ali and the annexation of his domains to the Indian Empire."

The Bremen *Weser Zeitung*, alluding to the probable action of Russia in the event of an Afghan campaign, says :—

"If England enters Afghanistan from the south-east, Russia is sure to look for guarantees in the north. In other words, Russia must be expected to occupy the long-coveted oasis of Merv. The move will be accompanied by the excuse that Russia's proposal that Afghanistan should be recognized as a neutral zone by both Powers was rejected by England in 1873. England, on the other hand, is only too fully justified in regarding Russian intrigues in Afghanistan as imperilling the safety of her Indian frontiers. The extent of the measures to be adopted will depend upon England's determination to anticipate Russian plots at the risk of a Russian war. People at St. Petersburg obviously aim at making up by Asiatic success for defeats sustained at the Congress."

The *Bielefelder Zeitung*, an organ of the Advanced Liberals, expresses itself more vehemently :—

"Were England to tolerate the affront she has received, her authority in Asia would be gone. It being impossible for England to run this risk, she has to confront the contingency of an Afghan and may be a Russian war. This is the penalty England has to pay for her indecision in the Russo-Turkish War. Had England's power been employed in supporting Turkey, Russia would have exhausted her strength in Bulgaria, and could not have dreamt of taking the offensive on the Indian frontier. The shortsighted and cowardly policy pursued by England on that occasion is now condignly punished. The value of a Convention which professes to protect Asia Minor when the dismemberment of European Turkey is quietly endured is strikingly illustrated by what is going on in the far East."

In conclusion, I may say that our political circles are seriously interested in this latest complication. It is generally felt that in this age of steam and electricity events impending on the Hindoo Koosh will exercise a direct and possibly an immediate effect upon the course of European politics. The Russia that operates in Central Asia is the same who occupies the Ægean shore and comes up to the German and Austrian frontiers.

A St. Petersburg letter in the Berlin Conservative *Kreuz Zeitung*, sure to come from an authentic source, is as follows :—

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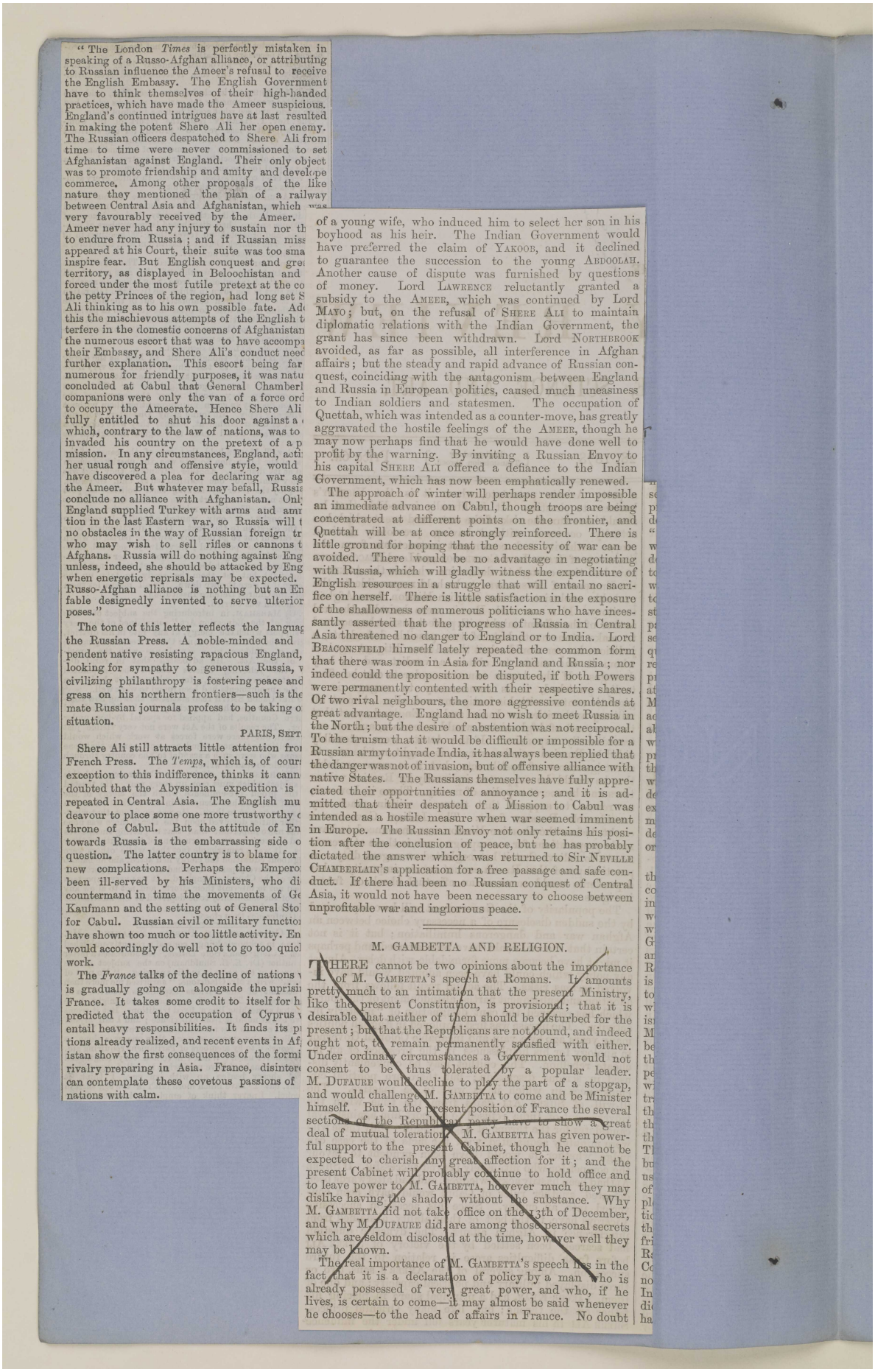

"The London *Times* is perfectly mistaken in speaking of a Russo-Afghan alliance, or attributing to Russian influence the Ameer's refusal to receive the English Embassy. The English Government have to think themselves of their high-handed practices, which have made the Ameer suspicious. England's continued intrigues have at last resulted in making the potent Shere Ali her open enemy. The Russian officers despatched to Shere Ali from time to time were never commissioned to set Afghanistan against England. Their only object was to promote friendship and amity and develope commerce. Among other proposals of the like nature they mentioned the plan of a railway between Central Asia and Afghanistan, which was very favourably received by the Ameer. Ameer never had any injury to sustain nor th to endure from Russia; and if Russian miss appeared at his Court, their suite was too sma inspire fear. But English conquest and gre territory, as displayed in Beloochistan and forced under the most futile pretext at the co the petty Princes of the region, had long set S Ali thinking as to his own possible fate. Ad this the mischievous attempts of the English t terfere in the domestic concerns of Afghanistan the numerous escort that was to have accompa their Embassy, and Shere Ali's conduct need further explanation. This escort being far numerous for friendly purposes, it was natu concluded at Cabul that General Chamberl companions were only the van of a force ord to occupy the Ameerate. Hence Shere Ali fully entitled to shut his door against a which, contrary to the law of nations, was to invaded his country on the pretext of a p mission. In any circumstances, England, acti her usual rough and offensive style, would have discovered a plea for declaring war ag the Ameer. But whatever may befall, Russia conclude no alliance with Afghanistan. Onl England supplied Turkey with arms and amu tion in the last Eastern war, so Russia will t no obstacles in the way of Russian foreign tr who may wish to sell rifles or cannons t Afghans. Russia will do nothing against Eng unless, indeed, she should be attacked by Eng when energetic reprisals may be expected. Russo-Afghan alliance is nothing but an En fable designedly invented to serve ulterior poses."

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PARIS, SEPT

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of a young wife, who induced him to select her son in his boyhood as his heir. The Indian Government would have preferred the claim of YAKOOB, and it declined to guarantee the succession to the young ABDOOLAH. Another cause of dispute was furnished by questions of money. Lord LAWRENCE reluctantly granted a subsidy to the AMEER, which was continued by Lord MAYO; but, on the refusal of SHERE ALI to maintain diplomatic relations with the Indian Government, the grant has since been withdrawn. Lord NORTHBROOK avoided, as far as possible, all interference in Afghan affairs; but the steady and rapid advance of Russian conquest, coinciding with the antagonism between England and Russia in European politics, caused much uneasiness to Indian soldiers and statesmen. The occupation of Quettah, which was intended as a counter-move, has greatly aggravated the hostile feelings of the AMEER, though he may now perhaps find that he would have done well to profit by the warning. By inviting a Russian Envoy to his capital SHERE ALI offered a defiance to the Indian Government, which has now been emphatically renewed.

The approach of winter will perhaps render impossible an immediate advance on Cabul, though troops are being concentrated at different points on the frontier, and Quettah will be at once strongly reinforced. There is little ground for hoping that the necessity of war can be avoided. There would be no advantage in negotiating with Russia, which will gladly witness the expenditure of English resources in a struggle that will entail no sacrifice on herself. There is little satisfaction in the exposure of the shallowness of numerous politicians who have incessantly asserted that the progress of Russia in Central Asia threatened no danger to England or to India. Lord BEACONSFIELD himself lately repeated the common form that there was room in Asia for England and Russia; nor indeed could the proposition be disputed, if both Powers were permanently contented with their respective shares. Of two rival neighbours, the more aggressive contends at great advantage. England had no wish to meet Russia in the North; but the desire of abstention was not reciprocal. To the truism that it would be difficult or impossible for a Russian army to invade India, it has always been replied that the danger was not of invasion, but of offensive alliance with native States. The Russians themselves have fully appreciated their opportunities of annoyance; and it is admitted that their despatch of a Mission to Cabul was intended as a hostile measure when war seemed imminent in Europe. The Russian Envoy not only retains his position after the conclusion of peace, but he has probably dictated the answer which was returned to Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN's application for a free passage and safe conduct. If there had been no Russian conquest of Central Asia, it would not have been necessary to choose between unprofitable war and inglorious peace.

M. GAMBETTA AND RELIGION.

THERE cannot be two opinions about the importance of M. GAMBETTA's speech at Romans. It amounts pretty much to an intimation that the present Ministry, like the present Constitution, is provisional; that it is desirable that neither of them should be disturbed for the present; but that the Republicans are not bound, and indeed ought not, to remain permanently satisfied with either. Under ordinary circumstances a Government would not consent to be thus tolerated by a popular leader. M. DUFAURE would decline to play the part of a stopgap, and would challenge M. GAMBETTA to come and be Minister himself. But in the present position of France the several sections of the Republican party have to show a great deal of mutual toleration. M. GAMBETTA has given powerful support to the present Cabinet, though he cannot be expected to cherish any great affection for it; and the present Cabinet will probably continue to hold office and to leave power to M. GAMBETTA, however much they may dislike having the shadow without the substance. Why M. GAMBETTA did not take office on the 13th of December, and why M. DUFAURE did, are among those personal secrets which are seldom disclosed at the time, however well they may be known.

The real importance of M. GAMBETTA's speech lies in the fact that it is a declaration of policy by a man who is already possessed of very great power, and who, if he lives, is certain to come—it may almost be said whenever he chooses—to the head of affairs in France. No doubt

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The tone of this letter reflects the language of the Russian Press. A noble-minded and independent native resisting rapacious England, and looking for sympathy to generous Russia, whose civilizing philanthropy is fostering peace and progress on his northern frontiers—such is the estimate Russian journals profess to be taking of the situation.

PARIS, SEPT. 27.

Shere Ali still attracts little attention from the French Press. The *Temps*, which is, of course, an exception to this indifference, thinks it cannot be doubted that the Abyssinian expedition is to be repeated in Central Asia. The English must endeavour to place some one more trustworthy on the throne of Cabul. But the attitude of England towards Russia is the embarrassing side of the question. The latter country is to blame for these new complications. Perhaps the Emperor has been ill-served by his Ministers, who did not countermand in time the movements of General Kaufmann and the setting out of General Stolietoff for Cabul. Russian civil or military functionaries have shown too much or too little activity. England would accordingly do well not to go too quickly to work.

The *France* talks of the decline of nations which is gradually going on alongside the uprising of France. It takes some credit to itself for having predicted that the occupation of Cyprus would entail heavy responsibilities. It finds its predictions already realized, and recent events in Afghanistan show the first consequences of the formidable rivalry preparing in Asia. France, disinterested, can contemplate these covetous passions of other nations with calm.

"Saturday Review" Sept: 28th

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Y REVIEW

E, SCIENCE, AND ART.

28, 1878. [Registered for Transmission abroad.] Price 6*d*.

AFGHANISTAN.

THE probable failure of the unintelligible Convention with Turkey to effect its supposed objects would have attracted more attention if the condition of Asia Minor had not been superseded in interest by the affairs of Afghanistan. The refusal of the AMEER to admit Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN and his escort into his country is almost equivalent to a declaration of war; yet it is difficult to believe that this occurrence can have been wholly unexpected by the Indian Government. SHERE ALI has for several years refused to hold official communication with the Viceroy, and of late even native Indian agents have been excluded from Cabul. A friendly reception of the Mission would have been almost equivalent to a concession of the demands which it would have conveyed. The murder or forcible detention of the English Envoy would have involved still graver complications than those which must now be dealt with. The appointment of two natives of high rank as members of the Mission is too much in Lord LYTTON'S manner to cause extreme surprise. His object was perhaps at the same time to flatter the Indian nobility and to persuade the AMEER that the English Government commanded the active support of the indigenous population. In the result the VICEROY has secured the attendance of two observant witnesses at the ceremony of a formal and deliberate affront offered to his Government; and to a certain extent he has increased the obligation of resenting the injury. If the Indian Government had acquiesced in the insult which it has received, there could be but one opinion as to the grossness of the blunder which it would have committed. Lord LYTTON, unless he acted under direct orders from the SECRETARY of STATE, was not compelled to notice at any particular time the challenge which was offered by the AMEER'S reception of the Russian Mission. SHERE ALI well knew the feelings which his conduct produced at Simla; and he would have waited, not without anxiety, for some practical expression of resentment. The announcement some weeks ago that Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN was ordered to proceed to Cabul seemed to put an end to uncertainty and delay. An expectant policy, which might formerly have offered some advantages, would now be considered a proof of fear or weakness.

Some of the newspaper reports of Lord LYTTON'S present purposes were from the first incredible, in the common and figurative sense that it would have been disagreeable to believe them; and they seem to be sufficiently contradicted by the movements of troops on the frontier. It was said that, having ascertained that the AMEER'S refusal was dictated by the Russian Envoy, the VICEROY held that the question had become rather English than Indian, and that therefore, disclaiming all responsibility, he only awaited orders from home. According to this startling version of his policy, Lord LYTTON would have left it to the SECRETARY of STATE to decide whether the quarrel should be prosecuted, if at all, in Europe or in Asia. He might himself have dealt with the Ameer of CABUL; but a war with Russia was too great an undertaking for the highest subordinate functionary. If such imbecility could be justly attributed to the VICEROY, it would be a sufficient answer to the supposed argument that he ought to have thought earlier of the limitations of his powers. The rebuff administered to the Indian Government was directly offered by a petty Asiatic potentate, whom it is the VICEROY'S business to chastise. It is literally incredible that he should have run the risk of the untoward event which has actually occurred without having previously received proper authority and contingent instructions from the SECRETARY of STATE. Lord CRANBROOK and Lord BEACONSFIELD have had time enough to determine whether the AMEER or the Emperor of RUSSIA was to be held responsible for the probable exclusion of the English Mission from Afghan territory. If a war with Russia were desirable, the real author of the affront might with perfect justice be required to make atonement; but, of two possible defendants, a judicious lawyer would select the adverse litigant against whom it was easier to obtain a verdict and to levy damages. If the AMEER can at a moderate cost be effectually punished, it is unnecessary to engage in a gigantic contest with his instigator and ally. Almost all military authorities in India and in England assert that the conquest of Afghanistan would be certain, and not extraordinarily expensive. If the AMEER were ostensibly aided by Russian reinforcements, it might not be easy to affect ignorance of hostile acts; but it is more probable that he would be supported indirectly by Russian volunteers and by secret supplies of money. There is, however, no reason to suppose that there is within reach any considerable Russian force. The Indian Government ought, before the abortive Mission was announced, to have made preparations for a campaign; nor is there at present reason to believe that it has neglected an urgent duty. A practical proof that Russia cannot secure impunity to her dependents would serve as an effectual check on future intrigues.

The popularity of the Government will be compromised by the sudden disclosure of a necessary choice between an Afghan war and dangerous humiliation; but it is not certain that the evil could have been averted, and perhaps it might have become more formidable with delay. Almost any policy which could have been adopted would have involved serious risks. The actual result follows from the adoption and subsequent partial abandonment of the course which has received the cant designation of "masterly inactivity." The phrase was first employed in English politics many years ago by a vain and incapable Colonial Governor in apology for his helplessness in the presence of an incoate rebellion. The epithet may be conveniently disused in serious discussion; but there are political circumstances in which it is well to be inactive. The ill-will of SHERE ALI dates from the time when the Government of India refused to support him against rival candidates for the throne of Afghanistan. Only those who were minutely acquainted with the facts of the case can judge whether it would have been prudent to favour the competitor who ultimately proved successful. If SHERE ALI had been hastily acknowledged, and had afterwards been defeated, another ruler of Cabul would have been converted into an enemy. Since his accession successive Viceroys have, to the best of their ability, abstained from interference in Afghan affairs. The dynastic question had scarcely been settled by the victory of SHERE ALI before fresh difficulties arose in relation to the future succession. Among several of the AMEER'S sons, two or three displayed military and political capacity; and one of them, YAKOOB KHAN, had a principal share in placing his father on the throne; but, like many Oriental princes, SHERE ALI in his maturer years fell under the influence

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 28th

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This Evening's News.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The Bombay correspondent of the *Standard* states that the following is the personnel of the staff for the expeditionary army as at present decided :—

The column concentrating at Peshawur, 15,000 strong, will be commanded by General Crawford Trotter Chamberlain, C.S.I., at present commander of the Oude division. He is brother of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and distinguished himself much in the last Afghan war. The garrison of Quetta is being reinforced by 3,000 troops, British and native; 4,000 troops are assembling at Thull; the reserve of 6,000 men will be collected at Mooltan early in October. General Roberts commands the column at Kohat. Colonels Cobbe and Tytler will each command a brigade of infantry. Colonel Clough will have the cavalry brigade. The headquarter staff will consist of Major Galbraith, 85th Foot, assistant adjutant-general; Major Collet, assistant quartermaster-general; Colonel Perkins, chief engineer. Lieutenants Spratt and Childers will be the field engineers of the force, Captain Wynnefield will be telegraph officer, and Lord William Peresford one of the aides-de-camp. General Biddulph will command the Quetta column, having as his brigadiers Colonel Appleyard and Colonel Nuttall, of the Bombay army, with probably Colonel Fane, of the Staff Corps, in command of the cavalry brigade. Major Wolseley will be assistant adjutant-general; Captain R. G. Stewart, assistant quartermaster-general; Colonel Hitchens, chief engineer; and Captain Bisset, aide-de-camp. General Stewart commands the reserve column, and Colonel Baxter and Colonel Hughes will be brigadiers of the infantry Colonel A. Hills is appointed assistant adjutant-general, and Captain E. F. Chapman assistant quartermaster-general. The following troops, in addition to those befor detailed, have been ordered up to Kohat :—F Battery A Brigade, and 11th Battery 9th Brigade, under Colonel Alfred Lindsay, and the 8th Battery 4th Brigade, and the 3rd Peshawur Mountain Battery, under Colonel Le Mesurier. The 5th Company of Sappers and the 32nd Pioneers are ordered to march at once to Quetta. The A Battery B Brigade, G Battery 4th Brigade, and the 5th, 9th, and 11th Batteries 11th Brigade will join the reserve at Mooltan. A garrison battery from Madras, and one from Bombay, with a siege train, will probably be despatched to Sukkur. A telegram from Rawul Pindee states that the troops are all ready to march, but are awaiting carriage, which is not expected to be ready for some days.

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Morning Post*, discussing the question whether Russia will leave Afghanistan in the lurch or will support the Ameer, believes the answer entirely depends upon circumstances. The guesses of those political writers who suggest the possibility of Russia's being only intent upon making a "bargain" with England, and extorting "concessions" from England, will be probably discovered to be nearer to the mark than any other attempted elucidations of the problem in Central Asia. The "consideration" which Prince Gortschakoff hopes to obtain as the price of withdrawing from Cabul can be found nowhere else than in Turkey. It is the constant object of the Russian diplomatists and commanders, since the signing of the Treaty of Berlin, to make its practical outcome as nearly equivalent as possible to the intended results of the Treaty of San Stefano. Muscovite diplomacy is striving desperately to minimize or nullify the intended restrictions of that treaty. Eastern Roumelia is being organized as the Congress of Berlin hardly contemplated. The crushing out of the Rhodope patriots was hardly in unison with the pious vows of pacification freely exchanged across the green table in Prince Bismarck's palace. The unrest in Armenia is still maintained. Russian generals laugh at the idea of limiting the army of occupation to the 50,000 men permitted by the plenipotentiaries of Europe. What will be the action of England in face of these intended violations of the great international treaty of pacification? Russia must have reason to watch with anxiety how English diplomacy will assert itself, and it is no idle supposition which connects the treacherous move at Cabul with the design to embarrass British action south of the Balkans and within the new frontiers of the Asia Minor which we have guaranteed against the Cossack.

The Afghan difficulty continues to be largely discussed by the continental press. In Germany, the *Times* Berlin correspondent says, the Conservative journals are favourable to Russia; the Governmental organs are reserved and endeavour to be impartial, but rather incline towards the Russian side; but the rest of the German press is anti-Russian. Of the Liberal journals, the more moderate represent military measures as unavoidable and just; while the more advanced, though likewise defending the action of the Calcutta authorities, dwell upon the remissness of the London Cabinet in allowing things to reach their present position. In Italy the action of the Ameer is, a *Standard* telegram says, openly attributed to Russian influence. In France the matter does not attract much attention. The *Temps*, which is an exception to this indifference, says that the English must endeavour to place some one more trustworthy on the throne of Cabul, but that the attitude of England towards Russia is the embarrassing side of the question. As to the Russian press, the Berlin correspondent of the *Times* says that its description of the situation is that of "a noble-minded and independent native resisting rapacious England, and looking for sympathy to generous Russia, whose civilizing philanthropy is fostering peace and progress on his northern frontiers." A Reuter's telegram from Berlin says that it is believed there that the question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia; and another despatch states that the Russian Government will permit Russian merchants and manufacturers to sell arms and ammunition to both parties in the impending war.

AFGHANISTAN.

According to Baron Reuter's reporters, Lord Augustus Loftus, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in passing through Germany on his return to the Russian capital, had an interview with Prince Gortschakoff. But "it is believed that the Afghanistan question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia." The establishment of a mission at Cabul is in complete violation of Russian engagements with England; and however much, or however little, the conduct of the Ameer may be due to Russian suggestion and support, this step is what we have already described it: a deliberate rupture of an agreement upon which peace between the two nations in the East was based. And the Russian envoy is domiciled

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at Cabul while Shere Ali is in open hostility to England. But, if Baron Reuter is well informed, the Afghanistan question will not lead to any explanations between England and Russia.

This, however, is incredible; notwithstanding that the ministerial papers studiously refrain from reference to the fact that if the Ameer has given us "a slap in the face," so has the Czar. Moreover, it is said in St. Petersburg that Lord Salisbury *has* addressed a Note to the St. Petersburg Cabinet requesting an explanation of the objects of the Russian Embassy to the Ameer of Cabul, and desiring to know what position Russia intends assuming regarding Afghanistan. On this news the *Golos* remarks:—"English diplomacy has long been accustomed to put these indiscreet sort of questions, violating all ordinarily accepted diplomatic traditions. The noble Marquis will probably be informed, firstly, that the St. Petersburg Cabinet does not consider itself bound to explain, to whomsoever it may be, its aims when sending missions to any foreign potentate, European or Asiatic; secondly, that in war between England and Afghanistan Russia intends observing just such a strict neutrality as England observed in the war between Russia and Turkey. We shall not be behind England in strictly adhering to the laws and rules of international right; but shall not go a step further in that direction." In a St. Petersburg letter which is said to be "sure to come from an authentic source" a similar tone is taken. The writer says it is an entire mistake to attribute to Russian influence the Ameer's refusal to receive the English Embassy. "The Russian officers despatched to Shere Ali from time to time were never commissioned to set Afghanistan against England. Their only object was to promote friendship and amity and develop commerce. Among other proposals of the like nature, they mentioned the plan of a railway between Central Asia and Afghanistan, which was very favourably received by the Ameer. The Ameer never had any injury to sustain nor threat to endure from Russia; and if Russians missions appeared at his Court their suite was too small to inspire fear. But English conquest and greed of territory, as displayed in Beloochistan and enforced under the most futile pretext at the cost of the petty Princes of the region, had long set Shere Ali thinking as to his own possible fate. Shere Ali was fully entitled to shut his door against a corps which, contrary to the law of nations, was to have invaded his country on the pretext of a pacific mission. Whatever may befall, Russia will conclude no alliance with Afghanistan. Only, as England supplied Turkey with arms and ammunition in the late Eastern war, so Russia will throw no obstacles in the way of Russian foreign traders who may wish to sell rifles or cannons to the Afghans."

In this state of things we recommend our readers to look into a letter from Dresden in to-day's *Times*: it is worth all the attention that can be bestowed on it. From another point of view it is as well to glance at this morning's *Telegraph*, in which will be found the "views" which that paper is now instructed to lay before the country. From the obviously inspired article to which we refer, it appears that her Majesty's Ministers, so far from being distressed, are quite cheered by the news from Afghanistan. We are to understand that the "explosion of the Russo-Afghan plot" is an "enormous blunder on the part of the contrivers." It is suggested that, the Russian intrigue having been already "squared" by the Preliminary Agreement between England and Russia, Shere Ali will find himself delivered over to us with all his belongings. We may expect to hear, it seems, that "Shere Ali is relying upon a policy the mainsprings of which have been broken by events;" and that he may find himself "disowned and deserted." And this, the *Telegraph* appears to think, without any further concessions on the part of England, secret or other. And then what will happen? "The first result of such diplomatic treachery on the part of Russia must be that the Central Asian Courts would lose all faith in her, and that our enemies among the Afghans would execrate her name. With the abortive plot at Cabul she would have to abandon any collateral designs she may have in Seistan and Balkh, and on the Persian and Afghan frontiers;" and, in short, it will be all over with the Russians in Asia. It should be remarked that this is what the Russians are to do for themselves—voluntarily, and by way of putting a finishing stroke to the whole business. In observance of certain agreements with England, they are to end all with a piece of "diplomatic treachery" which will do for them in the East finally. Here we have a fair indication of the sort of stuff which is officially offered to the public from time to time, and a measure of the subserviency at their command in the press.

M. Arminius Vambéry, writing in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on recent events in Central Asia, says that it is a mistake to suppose that General Abramoff is the Russian envoy at Cabul. General Abramoff is commander-in-chief in Khokand; the name of the envoy in Cabul is Colonel Stolyetoff. The chief object of the Russian mission is to establish friendly relations between Taschkend and Cabul. As a means of putting pressure on Shere Ali, with the above view, Russia holds in reserve the Afghan prince, Abdurrahman Khan, a relation of the Ameer and at the same time his deadly enemy. Abdurrahman has for some time been residing in voluntary exile at Samarcand, and with the help of Russia might become very dangerous to Shere Ali. It has been lately reported that Russia proposes to exchange Abdurrahman for Khudoyar Khan, the ex-ruler of Khokand, who escaped last winter from Orenburg to Cabul. Khudoyar, who is nearly seventy years old, pursued the trade of a horse-dealer while interned at Orenburg, and then contrived to escape on a swift horse across the great steppe by Bokhara and Khiva to Afghanistan. But though he is evidently a man of considerable energy, he was not popular with his people, who thrice expelled him from their country, and M. Vambéry thinks the Russians are not likely to put themselves to any trouble to get Khudoyar again into their hands. Abdurrahman, on the other hand, is very popular in North-eastern Afghanistan, and by threatening to support him as a pretender to the Afghan throne Russia can at any moment secure the submissiveness of Shere Ali to her wishes.

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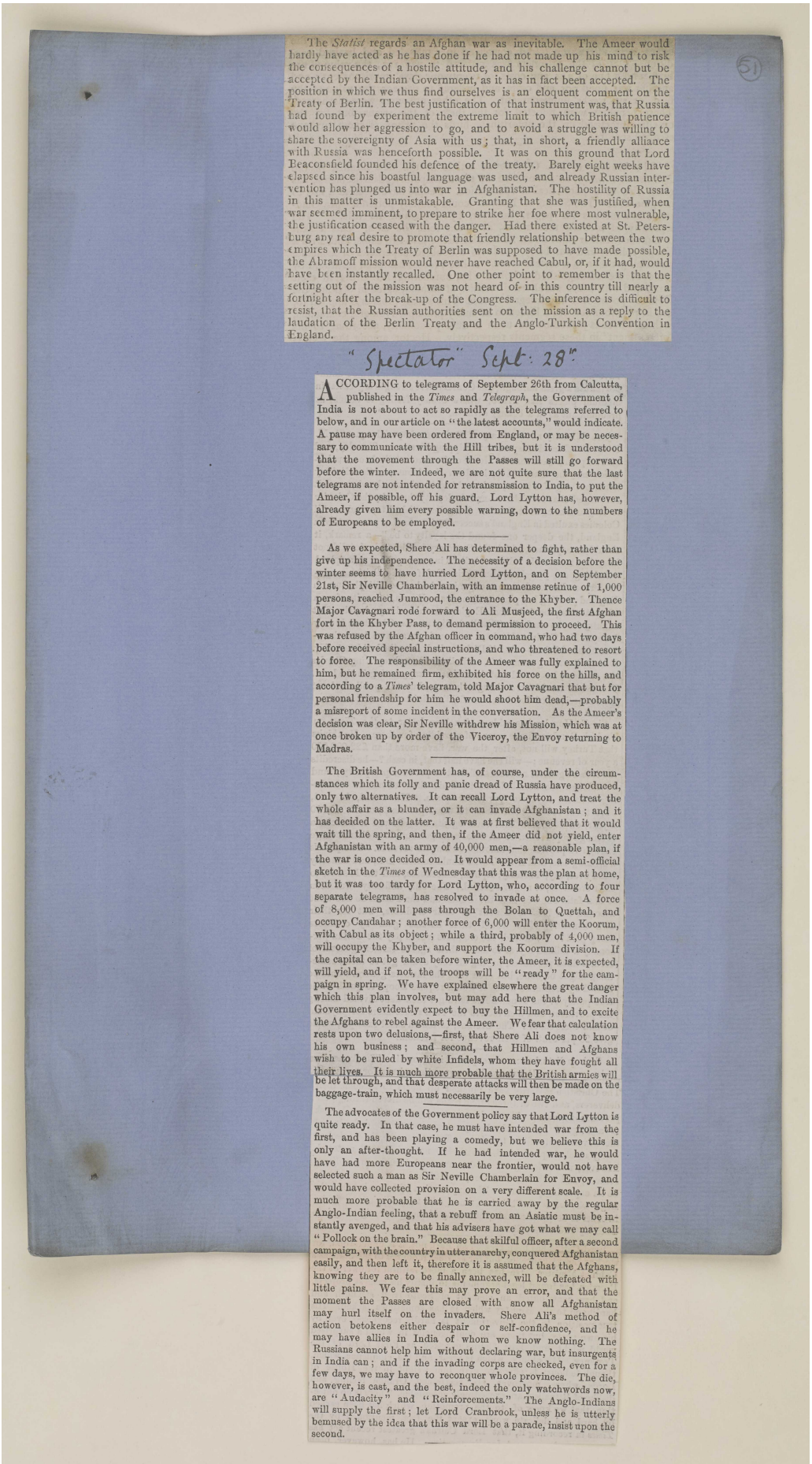

The *Statist* regards an Afghan war as inevitable. The Ameer would hardly have acted as he has done if he had not made up his mind to risk the consequences of a hostile attitude, and his challenge cannot but be accepted by the Indian Government, as it has in fact been accepted. The position in which we thus find ourselves is an eloquent comment on the Treaty of Berlin. The best justification of that instrument was, that Russia had found by experiment the extreme limit to which British patience would allow her aggression to go, and to avoid a struggle was willing to share the sovereignty of Asia with us; that, in short, a friendly alliance with Russia was henceforth possible. It was on this ground that Lord Beaconsfield founded his defence of the treaty. Barely eight weeks have elapsed since his boastful language was used, and already Russian intervention has plunged us into war in Afghanistan. The hostility of Russia in this matter is unmistakable. Granting that she was justified, when war seemed imminent, to prepare to strike her foe where most vulnerable, the justification ceased with the danger. Had there existed at St. Petersburg any real desire to promote that friendly relationship between the two empires which the Treaty of Berlin was supposed to have made possible, the Abramoff mission would never have reached Cabul, or, if it had, would have been instantly recalled. One other point to remember is that the setting out of the mission was not heard of in this country till nearly a fortnight after the break-up of the Congress. The inference is difficult to resist, that the Russian authorities sent on the mission as a reply to the laudation of the Berlin Treaty and the Anglo-Turkish Convention in England.

"Spectator" Sept: 28th

ACCORDING to telegrams of September 26th from Calcutta, published in the *Times* and *Telegraph*, the Government of India is not about to act so rapidly as the telegrams referred to below, and in our article on "the latest accounts," would indicate. A pause may have been ordered from England, or may be necessary to communicate with the Hill tribes, but it is understood that the movement through the Passes will still go forward before the winter. Indeed, we are not quite sure that the last telegrams are not intended for retransmission to India, to put the Ameer, if possible, off his guard. Lord Lytton has, however, already given him every possible warning, down to the numbers of Europeans to be employed.

As we expected, Shere Ali has determined to fight, rather than give up his independence. The necessity of a decision before the winter seems to have hurried Lord Lytton, and on September 21st, Sir Neville Chamberlain, with an immense retinue of 1,000 persons, reached Jumrood, the entrance to the Khyber. Thence Major Cavagnari rode forward to Ali Musjeed, the first Afghan fort in the Khyber Pass, to demand permission to proceed. This was refused by the Afghan officer in command, who had two days before received special instructions, and who threatened to resort to force. The responsibility of the Ameer was fully explained to him, but he remained firm, exhibited his force on the hills, and according to a *Times*' telegram, told Major Cavagnari that but for personal friendship for him he would shoot him dead,—probably a misreport of some incident in the conversation. As the Ameer's decision was clear, Sir Neville withdrew his Mission, which was at once broken up by order of the Viceroy, the Envoy returning to Madras.

The British Government has, of course, under the circumstances which its folly and panic dread of Russia have produced, only two alternatives. It can recall Lord Lytton, and treat the whole affair as a blunder, or it can invade Afghanistan; and it has decided on the latter. It was at first believed that it would wait till the spring, and then, if the Ameer did not yield, enter Afghanistan with an army of 40,000 men,—a reasonable plan, if the war is once decided on. It would appear from a semi-official sketch in the *Times* of Wednesday that this was the plan at home, but it was too tardy for Lord Lytton, who, according to four separate telegrams, has resolved to invade at once. A force of 8,000 men will pass through the Bolan to Quettah, and occupy Candahar; another force of 6,000 will enter the Koorum, with Cabul as its object; while a third, probably of 4,000 men, will occupy the Khyber, and support the Koorum division. If the capital can be taken before winter, the Ameer, it is expected, will yield, and if not, the troops will be "ready" for the campaign in spring. We have explained elsewhere the great danger which this plan involves, but may add here that the Indian Government evidently expect to buy the Hillmen, and to excite the Afghans to rebel against the Ameer. We fear that calculation rests upon two delusions,—first, that Shere Ali does not know his own business; and second, that Hillmen and Afghans wish to be ruled by white Infidels, whom they have fought all their lives. It is much more probable that the British armies will be let through, and that desperate attacks will then be made on the baggage-train, which must necessarily be very large.

The advocates of the Government policy say that Lord Lytton is quite ready. In that case, he must have intended war from the first, and has been playing a comedy, but we believe this is only an after-thought. If he had intended war, he would have had more Europeans near the frontier, would not have selected such a man as Sir Neville Chamberlain for Envoy, and would have collected provision on a very different scale. It is much more probable that he is carried away by the regular Anglo-Indian feeling, that a rebuff from an Asiatic must be instantly avenged, and that his advisers have got what we may call "Pollock on the brain." Because that skilful officer, after a second campaign, with the country in utter anarchy, conquered Afghanistan easily, and then left it, therefore it is assumed that the Afghans, knowing they are to be finally annexed, will be defeated with little pains. We fear this may prove an error, and that the moment the Passes are closed with snow all Afghanistan may hurl itself on the invaders. Shere Ali's method of action betokens either despair or self-confidence, and he may have allies in India of whom we know nothing. The Russians cannot help him without declaring war, but insurgents in India can; and if the invading corps are checked, even for a few days, we may have to reconquer whole provinces. The die, however, is cast, and the best, indeed the only watchwords now, are "Audacity" and "Reinforcements." The Anglo-Indians will supply the first; let Lord Cranbrook, unless he is utterly bemused by the idea that this war will be a parade, insist upon the second.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

THE THIRD AFGHAN WAR.

THIS Afghan business is a very bad business. Lord Lytton, in the foolish feverishness of his desire for action, and Lord Beaconsfield, in his eagerness for a showy policy, have almost deprived her Majesty's Government of their freedom of action in Afghanistan. The Viceroy of India has placed himself in such a position that his face has been slapped by a semi-barbarous potentate in full sight of all Asia, and the Government must either avenge the insult by a great war and a burdensome annexation, or recall him, and submit to a serious loss of dignity and prestige. There was no necessity whatever, even on the Jingo theory, for hurrying the Mission forward to Afghanistan before the Native Agent just received by Shere Ali had returned from Cabul, still less for acting without the secret but trustworthy intelligence from that city which every Viceroy has hitherto obtained. Lord Lawrence or Lord Northbrook would have known Shere Ali's decision to a word. Lord Lytton, however, either acting on instructions intended to provoke a war, or full of confidence in the inability of the Ameer to resist the impression of his showy preparations, ordered the Mission, a huge cavalcade of 1,000 men—"too large," as Lord Carnarvon has said, "for a Mission, and too small for an army," to enter the Khyber Pass. It had no sooner crossed the frontier at Jumrood, than Sir Neville Chamberlain, the chief Envoy, was informed by a trusted officer of the Ameer, who, it is ascertained, had just received special instructions from his master, that its advance would be resisted by force, and the force was displayed on the hills commanding the defile. Sir Neville's agent, Major Cavagnari, conferred with the officer for three hours, and pointed out the direct and terrible responsibility of the Ameer, but without effect, and as a further advance would have caused a useless loss of valuable lives, and perhaps have ended in a massacre which would have sent an electric shock throughout India, the Envoy took his cavalcade back quietly to Peshawur, there to await orders from the Governments of India and Great Britain. That in this retreat he was in the right there can be no question. Sir Neville Chamberlain is not only an officer of the highest class, a man carefully selected for the command of a separate army, but he is an experienced Political, he understands the men of this region, and he could tell at a glance if those who threatened him were bragging or if they were acting under orders, and finding the latter to be the case, he only receded before a visible impossibility. Only an organised European division, properly supported, could force the Khyber Pass in the teeth of the mountaineers and Afghans together, or emerge with baggage on the Afghan side of the continuous thirty-three miles of gorges, commanded by hills on both sides, occupied by matchlock-men, of which the Pass consists. There has been no error of management on Sir Neville's part, and there can be no mistake as to his adversary's meaning. Afghan officers do not exceed their Ameer's instructions, nor would the Hillmen insult Great Britain without the fullest certainty that they would be supported. It is certain that Shere Ali issued the orders to stop the Mission, and his motive is the one we indicated last week. He thinks his independence worth retaining; he has resolved to fight, rather than yield one jot of the Indian Government's demands; and having resolved, has bidden us defiance, with the rude fury which the polished Asiatic, once resolved on resistance, invariably displays.

Nor can there be any question of the seriousness of the insult, for Lord Lytton has done everything that in him lay to give it point and meaning. Instead of sending a quiet Embassy, he has sent a pompous Mission, with a Commander-in-Chief at its head, two Indian Princes in its train, and 1,000 followers, cavalry and infantry together, to increase its splendour. Instead of keeping the whole matter in the Secret Department, and so leaving himself free up to the last moment, he has paraded his designs throughout India and Europe, has encouraged official newspapers in India to urge action, and has described, in communicated telegrams addressed through the *Times* to all Europe, the great deeds he intended to perform. The attention of two continents has been fixed upon his "policy," and the sound of its failure is already reverberating through every bazaar of India and every capital of Europe. There is not a Mussulman in India whose head is not the higher because of Shere Ali's bold defiance, or a statesman in Europe who is not

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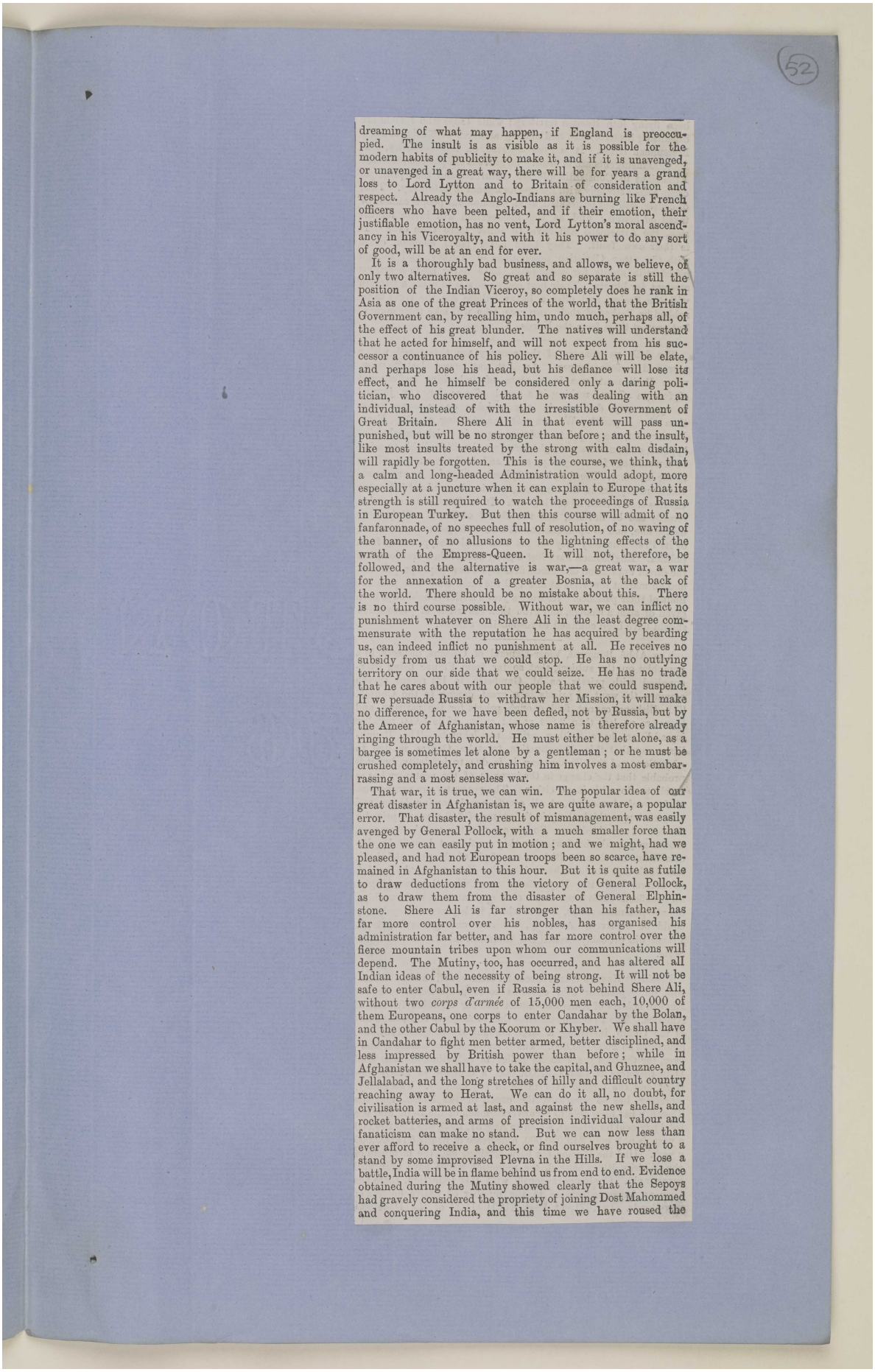

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dreaming of what may happen, if England is preoccupied. The insult is as visible as it is possible for the modern habits of publicity to make it, and if it is unavenged, or unavenged in a great way, there will be for years a grand loss to Lord Lytton and to Britain of consideration and respect. Already the Anglo-Indians are burning like French officers who have been pelted, and if their emotion, their justifiable emotion, has no vent, Lord Lytton's moral ascendancy in his Viceroyalty, and with it his power to do any sort of good, will be at an end for ever.

It is a thoroughly bad business, and allows, we believe, of only two alternatives. So great and so separate is still the position of the Indian Viceroy, so completely does he rank in Asia as one of the great Princes of the world, that the British Government can, by recalling him, undo much, perhaps all, of the effect of his great blunder. The natives will understand that he acted for himself, and will not expect from his successor a continuance of his policy. Shere Ali will be elate, and perhaps lose his head, but his defiance will lose its effect, and he himself be considered only a daring politician, who discovered that he was dealing with an individual, instead of with the irresistible Government of Great Britain. Shere Ali in that event will pass unpunished, but will be no stronger than before; and the insult, like most insults treated by the strong with calm disdain, will rapidly be forgotten. This is the course, we think, that a calm and long-headed Administration would adopt, more especially at a juncture when it can explain to Europe that its strength is still required to watch the proceedings of Russia in European Turkey. But then this course will admit of no fanfaronnade, of no speeches full of resolution, of no waving of the banner, of no allusions to the lightning effects of the wrath of the Empress-Queen. It will not, therefore, be followed, and the alternative is war,—a great war, a war for the annexation of a greater Bosnia, at the back of the world. There should be no mistake about this. There is no third course possible. Without war, we can inflict no punishment whatever on Shere Ali in the least degree commensurate with the reputation he has acquired by bearding us, can indeed inflict no punishment at all. He receives no subsidy from us that we could stop. He has no outlying territory on our side that we could seize. He has no trade that he cares about with our people that we could suspend. If we persuade Russia to withdraw her Mission, it will make no difference, for we have been defied, not by Russia, but by the Ameer of Afghanistan, whose name is therefore already ringing through the world. He must either be let alone, as a bargee is sometimes let alone by a gentleman; or he must be crushed completely, and crushing him involves a most embarrassing and a most senseless war.

That war, it is true, we can win. The popular idea of our great disaster in Afghanistan is, we are quite aware, a popular error. That disaster, the result of mismanagement, was easily avenged by General Pollock, with a much smaller force than the one we can easily put in motion; and we might, had we pleased, and had not European troops been so scarce, have remained in Afghanistan to this hour. But it is quite as futile to draw deductions from the victory of General Pollock, as to draw them from the disaster of General Elphinstone. Shere Ali is far stronger than his father, has far more control over his nobles, has organised his administration far better, and has far more control over the fierce mountain tribes upon whom our communications will depend. The Mutiny, too, has occurred, and has altered all Indian ideas of the necessity of being strong. It will not be safe to enter Cabul, even if Russia is not behind Shere Ali, without two *corps d'armée* of 15,000 men each, 10,000 of them Europeans, one corps to enter Candahar by the Bolan, and the other Cabul by the Koorum or Khyber. We shall have in Candahar to fight men better armed, better disciplined, and less impressed by British power than before; while in Afghanistan we shall have to take the capital, and Ghuznee, and Jellalabad, and the long stretches of hilly and difficult country reaching away to Herat. We can do it all, no doubt, for civilisation is armed at last, and against the new shells, and rocket batteries, and arms of precision individual valour and fanaticism can make no stand. But we can now less than ever afford to receive a check, or find ourselves brought to a stand by some improvised Plevna in the Hills. If we lose a battle, India will be in flame behind us from end to end. Evidence obtained during the Mutiny showed clearly that the Sepoys had gravely considered the propriety of joining Dost Mahommed and conquering India, and this time we have roused the

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deadly suspicions of the Princes. This Government is like an inferior musician, who values a composition not for its thought or for its melody, but for the rubbishy *fioriture*, the pretty ornaments he can contrive to introduce. Instead of quietly limiting the force of each noble, or if possible, coercing them in detail, the Government has flourished magnificently about "our policy," has warned all the world through the *Times* that the feudatory armies are doomed, and has even specified those which it thinks most dangerous. If there is a disaster, the Princes will try whether their honour and their armies cannot alike be saved. The evidence taken after the Mutiny also revealed the strength of the sympathy which exists between the Mahommedans of Bengal Proper, shown by Sir G. Campbell to number twenty millions, and the rulers of Afghanistan, or the pious brigands of the Hills, and they hear now of every event day by day. We must advance, therefore, with every Prince listening in full armour, with the Mahratta people boiling with excitement, and with every Mussulman in Bengal craning to catch the signal. All that is no matter, for we have faced it all before; but all that makes it indispensable that we should win, and a war in which we *must* win will be a great and expensive war. The numbers must be ample, the reserves profuse. There must be no deficiency of commissariat or cartage, no risk run of a break in communications for ten days, no hesitation in guarding railways, no forgetting that along the Nerbudda and on the Deccan plateau we must be ready to strike, and strike hard. It must be remembered that the army, when its work is done, will not return, but must garrison the "Douranee Empire" against a disaffected people, and against possible assault from the petty empire, Persia, which will then be feverish with suspicion, and from the great empire, Russia, which will be then feverish with delight that Great Britain has voluntarily ceased to be impregnable and inaccessible. Russia thenceforward can strike home at will, can drag our armies, when she chooses, 8,000 miles, to fight amid roadless hills, with two hundred millions of possible rebels watching them behind. It is useless to warn, for this Government is "fey," and ridiculous to croak, for England can survive all things—even Lord Beaconsfield—but was ever such folly known! Fifteen millions to be spent, and all policy disorganised, because Lord Lytton, like the Premier, must show that he is great.

THE LATEST ACCOUNTS FROM SIMLA.

IT is the duty of a journalist to say what he thinks, even if he stands alone, or if inconsiderate men deem his saying unpatriotic, and we think there is serious danger of a disaster in Afghanistan. In the preceding article we have endeavoured to show both the folly and the danger of our recent policy, but that article was written while we still disbelieved the telegrams announcing that Lord Lytton, impatient of a diplomatic affront, had resolved on a course of action which is foolhardy, rather than courageous. It seemed to us incredible that a Government which professed to believe that Russia was behind Shere Ali, which at all events believed in the necessity of either ruling or annexing the Douranee Empire, and which had pointed out to the world the strength of the Feudatory armies in the Peninsula, should resolve on an invasion of Afghanistan without adequate preparations, before it had disarmed its distrusted allies, and at a moment only six weeks before the snow will render the Passes on which its communications will depend, impassable to carts. So, however, it is. It is impossible to resist the evidence of the telegrams raining on all the journals; and if they are true, which, we repeat, we have still an extreme difficulty in believing, Lord Lytton, eager for prestige, and Lord Beaconsfield, eager to distract attention from our failure in Turkey, have resolved upon a great and venturesome dramatic *coup*. The insult offered by the Ameer of Afghanistan is to be avenged at once. Afghanistan is to be entered at three points by three separate and small *corps d'armée*, and the Ameer, if not struck from his throne at a blow, is to be convinced that the only alternatives are submission to the British demand—that is, that he become a subordinate ally—or the loss of all his possessions. One corps, stated to be 8,000 strong, but we judge, exaggerated through a telegraphic blunder, will thread the Bolan to Quettah, and thence march to Candahar, where it will either await orders, or march forward upon Ghuznee. A second, 6,000 strong, will press through the Koorum, or as it is now spelt, "Karam," direct upon Cabul; while a third, 4,000 strong, will occupy the Khyber, and ultimately support the second. The belief at Simla evidently is that the Ameer will yield, or be paralysed by insurrection,—an idea carefully and constantly conveyed in the telegrams; but if he does not, he will either be destroyed at once by the capture of his capital, or "points" will be occupied to facilitate a more complete conquest in the spring.

The entire arrangement meets, we are told, with the approval of competent experts, and it must have been sanctioned by the extremely able officers on whom the Government of India relies for counsel in military emergencies, men, some of them, of first-class ability, and thirty years of experience in warfare. It seems, therefore, mere foolishness and presumption for any civilian journalist, writing at this distance, even to criticise plans so authoritative, and it may be, so long matured, and we hardly wonder at the irritation which all such criticisms raise in military circles. Nevertheless, our duty is to say what is in us to say, and it is this,—that in this plan, if correctly reported, there is every mark of rashness, and of some overruling political idea, under which considerations of the highest moment have been overlooked. We do not believe that the Indian Administrators have provided adequate means, have calculated time with sufficient accuracy, or have allowed for that margin of unfavourable accident which is always possible in such a war. With a Viceroy determined on a campaign, with Indian opinion at blood-heat, and with the prospect before them of exchanging unendurable monotony for wild excitement, the Indian military administrators are not to be implicitly relied on. They will not dissuade from action. It is their worst defect, as it is also their highest merit, that they cannot see danger, that they believe absolutely in audacity, and that they would receive orders to take Tobolsk or Lhassa with a thrill of delight. They have, as we believe, studied Pollock's campaign till they under-estimate the enemy. So urgent is the necessity for speed, that they have clutched at the nearest garrisons; and the columns, strong enough if they were composed of Englishmen, will be two-thirds composed of natives with a traditionary awe of Afghanistan, with no capacity to bear cold, and with many points of sympathy with the people they invade. The columns will be separated for weeks by hundreds of miles. No one column is strong enough in Europeans to be sure of success, and a check to any one column will rouse throughout India the belief that English Destiny is bounded by the Suleiman; that a second disaster has occurred in Afghanistan, and that now is the time, if ever, for insurrection. The motion of the columns, which ought, on the plans reported, to be as rapid as that of Germans in pursuit, must necessarily be slow. The Indian Government, though essentially a military monarchy, resting on the sword and permanently prepared for war, controls a territory so vast and arsenals so separated that it takes time—six weeks, at least—to get the splendid machine into its speed. The Commissariat difficulties are great, the difficulties of cartage, when we have once quitted the regions within which we can enforce the military *corvée*, almost insuperable. The Bolan Corps alone will require sixteen miles of carts, allowing two miles per thousand fighting men; and making no provision, though that will be indispensable, for the carriage of water. Unless India is strangely changed, or unless Lord Lytton has designed this war for months, the requisite supply of shells will not be in Quettah till the Pass is closed behind us by the snow; and a full supply of food will not be there at all. We dread the locking-up of a column under circumstances which will encourage all Afghanistan to precipitate itself upon it as a separate army, and reduce it to rely for safety on the determination and skill of 1,500 hungry Europeans. The idea that Shere Ali will be impressed by mere invasion to the point of yielding is a dream. He knows perfectly well that if he yields his sovereignty is at an end, and that he had much better die sword in hand battling against the Infidel, than die under the dagger of some successful and rebellious Sirdar. He will fight to the bitter end, and so will his kinsmen, the Afghans; and if he has money stored up or remitted from St. Petersburg, so will the Kuzzilbashes, all the more strongly because of one of our habitual English blunders. We do not blame Lord Lytton, for any Viceroy would have done the same, but can folly be worse than this of telegraphing the numbers and constitution of each of these three invading columns? On Wednesday, the facts were at Orenberg, and as we write couriers are riding hard to Cabul bearing to General Abramoff every detail of the composition of the invading columns, including the point of highest moment, the number of Europeans they contain. It is the Europeans, the White men, not the Sepoys, whom the Afghans dread, and of Europeans they will know that we are sending only regiments.

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"Times". Sept: 30th

LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1878.

Our relations with Afghanistan and the probable course of the Indian Government with reference to them are the great subjects to which all thoughts in India are turned. Our telegraphic news from Calcutta this morning leaves us little room to expect that matters will be arranged peaceably. War is looked upon as almost certain, and the Government is hastening on its military preparations in prospect of it. Troops are being collected from all sides and sent on to various points on the North-West frontier. There they will remain for the present massed and in readiness to take the offensive as soon as a forward movement has been determined on. The AMEER has still the choice of submission open to him. His country is not yet invaded, nor is it thought likely that it will be, in force, until the winter has passed. Strong as the reasons are for an immediate advance, and welcome as the news would be that it had been tried and had succeeded, the case for delay, as our Correspondent states it, is too strong to be set aside. Before we could move safely on Cabul with the troops just now at our disposal, we must be assured of the goodwill, or at least of the neutrality, of the hill tribes that occupy the intervening passes. But we have as yet no certainty of these. As far as they owe any allegiance, it is to the AMEER, and not to us. Their past relations with us have been mostly hostile, and the desire for revenge might combine now with the lust of plunder to rouse them to active enmity. The passage of our troops through their country would, at the present moment, probably not be unopposed, and if it were necessary for us to force our way, our invading columns would need to be raised considerably beyond their actual strength. The difficulty, moreover, of a winter campaign in Afghanistan is so great that it could not be lightly undertaken, nor without the chance of some advantage sufficient to counterbalance it. If we wait for the return of spring, we shall be differently placed in every way. The weather will then be favourable to us, and there will have been time given either to conciliate the hill tribes or, if this is not to be done, to get ready a force which will overcome the resistance they can offer us. We cannot afford to begin war until we see our way clear before us. We must run no risks that we can avoid. Our aim must be not only to succeed in the end, but to leave no possibility open for intermediate failure. On a question between the instant and the deferred invasion of Afghanistan we must accept the judgment of the military authorities of India. They alone can know the whole case, and, whatever may be the issue, it is with them that the responsibility will rest. There are plenty of ardent spirits in this country and, no doubt, in India too, who will chafe at the idea that we must wait some months longer before we move on Afghanistan. We trust, however, that if the Indian Government is convinced of the wisdom of delay, it will not suffer itself to be forced on by the pressure of less patient, less well-informed, and less responsible critics.

An invasion of Afghanistan will, our Correspondent reminds us, be no military march over. We must expect hard fighting before our business will be done. The result can be in no doubt, but the resistance we are likely to encounter will be so great that there must be ample preparations on our part for meeting it. War, if war we are to have, will be a troublesome and a costly affair. It promises, nevertheless, to be well worth its cost in the end. We may even be glad at the opportunity now granted us of settling our relations with Afghanistan. We are so clearly in the right that we shall have no scruple about striking, if strike we must, very hard indeed. We hold at present a frontier line which needs to be guarded by a long succession of forts and by a permanent body of some thirty-five thousand men. We may look to the result of a war with Afghanistan as a cure for this standing evil. We shall hardly be content to leave matters as they are when war is over. We shall take up a new line of defence, more easy to be held, and giving us a command over regions where it is necessary that our influence should be maintained. If we cannot obtain this peaceably—and we could hardly expect to do so in any case—we may, after all, find some permanent advantage from a war which we have yet done our utmost to avoid. Even now, we are told, the Indian Government is anxious not to act with harshness. If the AMEER will comply with the demands we have been making upon him, we shall be willing even now to hold our hand. But we have both gone too far for a return to our former position. We must have security against foreign intrigue in Afghanistan, nor can any mere verbal explanation satisfy us as to this. An apology on the part of the AMEER and a continued presence of Russian envoys at Cabul would be a termination we could not accept. Some material guarantee for the supremacy of our influence in Afghanistan we are entitled to demand, and we shall very shortly be in a position to make our demand felt. We may not always be as well placed for war as we are now. We can give our full attention to the matter, and we have already done so much in the way of military preparation that we shall not be willing to allow these efforts to be wasted. An insecure peace would be an alternative which we should refuse to take. It would amount merely to a putting off of the inevitable struggle, and this to a time not within our own choice, and possibly not as favourable to us as the present time is.

Whether the insolent conduct of SHERE ALI has or has not been instigated by Russia is more than we can say certainly. We will forgive her freely if she has rendered us this service, whatever may have been the motive that has prompted her to it. Nor can we rouse ourselves even to the mildest anger at any Russian exultation over the prospect of trouble to England. If Russia really thinks we shall break our teeth upon Afghanistan, she may be as jubilant as she pleases over the as yet unaccomplished fact. But when Russian journals go on further to talk of the help SHERE ALI may expect from Russian subjects, they are on less safe ground. The argument that as England gave assistance to Turkey in the late war, so may Russia give assistance by and by to Afghanistan, is not as conclusive as they may think it. Sound as a matter of inference, it has no weight if the assumption on which it proceeds is untrue, and this it is unquestionably. England not only gave no active assistance to Turkey, but prohibited such assistance from being given by English subjects, and took what care she could to see that the prohibition was obeyed. We should not permit an opposite course on the part of Russia, nor have we any belief that she intends to follow it. But we cannot be surprised if some of our countrymen are minded to be less charitable, and if we hear in some quarters loud counter-threats of what England will do if Russia directly or indirectly interferes with her in Afghanistan. If such feelings are aroused and such words used, it will be to a portion of the Russian Press that this mischievous excitement must be debited, As for the notion of the *Novoye Vremya* that parties in England will be divided on the Afghan question, and that the attacks of the Parliamentary Opposition on Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Ministry will be renewed—to the advantage, we presume, of some other interest than England's—this we may dismiss as foolish rather than malicious. If anything could unite all parties, it would be the occurrence of a war in which English credit and English interests were felt to be alike concerned, and it is such a war as this on the brink of which we are now standing.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, SEPT. 29.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain has arrived here.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 28.

With reference to the telegrams and articles published by the English papers ascribing the stoppage of the British Mission to the counsel of Russia, it is pointed out in official quarters that when the first news of the event arrived here the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally. It is added that the belief expressed by these papers of Russian complicity in the matter may have arisen from the following considerations:—During the Russo-Turkish war various reports were received to the effect that England was making attempts to create difficulties for Russia in Central Asia. The English Mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar was avowedly undertaken with this purpose, and even in Bokhara it was alleged that English agents were at work. In order to counteract the effect of these movements, Russia took various measures, and contemplated sending several expeditions to reconnoitre the neighbouring territories. However, as soon as the Berlin Congress held out the prospect of bringing about a peaceful solution of the question, all these measures were countermanded. In any case, it is added, the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the Anglo-Indian Mission is groundless. Such conjectures are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

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AFGHANISTAN.

According to the news we publish this morning from India, there seems to be little doubt that, if the tenour of the Ameer's language on receipt of Lord Lytton's letter be reported aright, the act of the Commandant of Ali Musjid was in direct accordance with Shere Ali's commands. Under these circumstances, the military authorities are to mass a sufficient number of troops at the various frontier stations in order to expedite the advance whenever circumstances offer a favourable opportunity. The fact that the Viceroy has directed the formation of his camp at Lahore shows that he himself has no hope of peace. This, it will be remembered, was the course adopted by the Earl of Elgin during the Umbeyla Expedition in 1863.

There can, as our Calcutta Correspondent suggests, be no expectation that a campaign in Afghanistan will prove a mere military promenade. Our recollection of the last war points to the belief that there will be constant exposure, great hardships, and sharp fighting. The march through the Bolan, the Khojuk, and the Khyber passes were beset with difficulties of no ordinary kind; dearth of forage and want of water told heavily on men and animals. Indeed, the army of the Indus is reported to have lost no less than 20,000 camels on the road between Ferozepore and Candahar. Food for the men was equally scarce, and the troops were constantly on half and even quarter rations. The casualty rolls in the skirmishes in the more mountainous districts were exceedingly heavy. Remembering these facts, it does not surprise us to hear that the military authorities are determined to render a successful issue absolutely certain by the consolidation of large military resources. As we have already pointed out, the attitude of the border tribes constitutes a most important factor in the question. The slightest check either on the road to Cabul or in that country itself would without doubt raise a blaze from the Mahabun to the Bolan—a blaze that would require all our exertions to quell. At a moderate computation, these tribes can put 100,000 fairly armed men into the field, without artillery, it is true, but all, or nearly all, armed with long range matchlocks, while many thousands are in possession of British rifles. Lord Lytton has already made overtures to the tribes of the Khyber Pass, and doubtless by this time the various political officers are making negotiations with the various clans down the border, in order to purchase their neutrality during the forthcoming operations. The Pathan, however, is notoriously faithless. It is utterly impossible to rely on his promises, his friendship, or his fidelity. He will enter into engagements and bind himself by the most solemn oaths to respect them; but should he see that the slightest advantage can be gained by breaking his plighted words, he has no hesitation in doing so. Fortunately, the various political officers along the frontier are military men, versed in the school of war, as well as in the wiles of Afghan diplomacy. They are not likely to place implicit trust in any engagements they may induce the Pathan tribes to enter into, and know full well that, although his pocket may be full of British gold, the Khyberi or Wazeeri would not hesitate to attack our troops should he think he could do so in safety. Knowing the character of these men, it is not to be wondered at that we learn the Indian Government is acting with great circumspection and deliberation, for, in addition to the number of troops necessary for the purpose of bringing the Ameer to terms, it will be imperative to mobilize a force in order to maintain a free communication through nearly 800 miles of rugged mountainous country, inhabited by men whom a mistake would convert at a moment into most formidable foes. The remembrance of many acts of retributive justice on our part will tend to make these various hill tribes very watchful over our movements in order that they may seize the opportunity of retaliating for loss of prestige incurred in their numerous encounters with our troops. The contingency of hostility on the part, then, of these border tribes is one that the Indian authorities are compelled to guard against. Consequently it will be necessary to avoid all appearance of hurry, and not endeavour to move forward until a force is collected sufficiently strong not only to coerce the Ameer, but to overawe into quietude the frontier clans of the Sufaid Koh and the Suleiman range. Although it was with comparative ease that both Sir Claude Wade and Sir George Pollock forced the Khyber Pass in the last Afghan war, yet more recent experiences of border expeditions, as well as the lessons to be learnt from the present operations in Bosnia, show that it is no easy matter for disciplined troops to sweep a determined, though undisciplined foe from their mountain fastnesses. Our relations with many of these tribes has not been of the most peaceful character. During the thirty years we have held our present frontier line we have been engaged in a like number of petty wars with our neighbours. A roll of upwards of three thousand killed and wounded on our side speaks volumes for the dash and gallantry of our opponents. It is, then, not to be wondered at that the military authorities in India are taking every means in their power to mass such a number of troops on the spot as will effectually remove all chance of failure.

The north-west frontier of India, stretching from Abbottabad in Hazarah to Jacobabad in Scinde, gives us a line of defence of about 600 miles. To guard this we have ten large military stations, garrisoned, in round numbers, by 20,000 men. In advance, again, of these cantonments are 90 lesser fortified posts, placed so as to guard the entrance to the chief passes in the mountains. In pushing forward through the range into Cabul it will be essential that this line be not weakened, else of a certainty the frontier tribes will take advantage of the absence of the troops to recommence their old tactics of levying blackmail all down our border. The question, then, before the Government of India is not only to take effective measures to coerce the Ameer, but also to provide against the very probable contingency of these border tribes aiding and abetting Shere Ali by carrying war into our own country or at any rate harassing our line of communications after our advance.

The details of troops warned for service will be read with interest by our military readers. The 17th Foot will renew its acquaintance with "Afghanistan, Ghuznee, and Khelat," names which it carries emblazoned on its colours. The numbers, however, must be far from complete. A far stronger force of cavalry than our Correspondent enumerates will be necessary for the subjugation of Afghanistan. In the campaign 1839-42 the Ameer's Horse was ever hovering around our Infantry, and was a constant source of annoyance to General Elphinstone's men. Profiting by past experience, it is probable that this branch will be very considerably strengthened. Nothing in the telegram we publish justifies the assertion that Sir Neville Chamberlain has been relieved by his brother. Sir Neville's great experience of mountain warfare, his long command of the Punjaub frontier, his admirable plans in the Bozdar, Kabul Khail, Mahsood Vaziri and Umbeyla expeditions, all point him out, should his health permit it, as the fittest man for this most important appointment. He is one of the few living Generals who has commanded an army in the field, and no man in the service has earned a better name for proficiency in hill tactics, while his reputation for personal bravery is a byword in the mouth of every Pathan on the border. This alone would carry great weight. General Biddulph, who is spoken of as the commander of the Quettah column, is an officer possessing exceptional talents. He first came to notice at Woolwich for an act of gallantry in saving the life of a brother cadet, and during the Crimean war distinguished himself greatly. He has held many high positions on the head-quarter Staff in India, and besides being a very popular Brigadier, possesses the confidence of all who have served under him. General Donald Stewart, who is assigned to the command of the Reserve forces, is an Indian officer who served with great distinction in many border skirmishes under Sir Colin Campbell prior to the Mutiny, in that campaign he acted in the Adjutant-General's Department, was repeatedly mentioned in despatches, and finally rose to the post of Deputy-Adjutant-General of the Indian Army. He commanded the Bengal Brigade in the Abyssinian War, and subsequently was Chief Commissioner of the Andaman Islands. For some time he has been in command of a division in Bengal, and left England last week to take up his new appointment. As far then as leaders of the expedition are concerned we see that we have men schooled in hill warfare, men in the prime of life on whom the nation can confidently rely. Thus one element that insured failure in the last war is wanting in the coming one. Let us hope that the military leader may combine in his person the chief political office. Undivided command is absolutely necessay. If the Generals are to be hampered by instructions, such as caused the breach so early between the soldiers and the civilians in 1839, it is useless to anticipate prompt success. Every precaution, it appears, is being taken by Lord Lytton's Government to insure the successful issue of the complications that have unfortunately arisen. We trust they will not be led into any hasty measures by the tone of that portion of the English Press which counsels prompt action. There are three enemies to contend against: the Ameer's own forces, the climate of Afghanistan, and the Border tribes who inhabit the Suliman and Sufaid Koh, and, fortunately, all three are being carefully provided for in the plans of the Indian Government.

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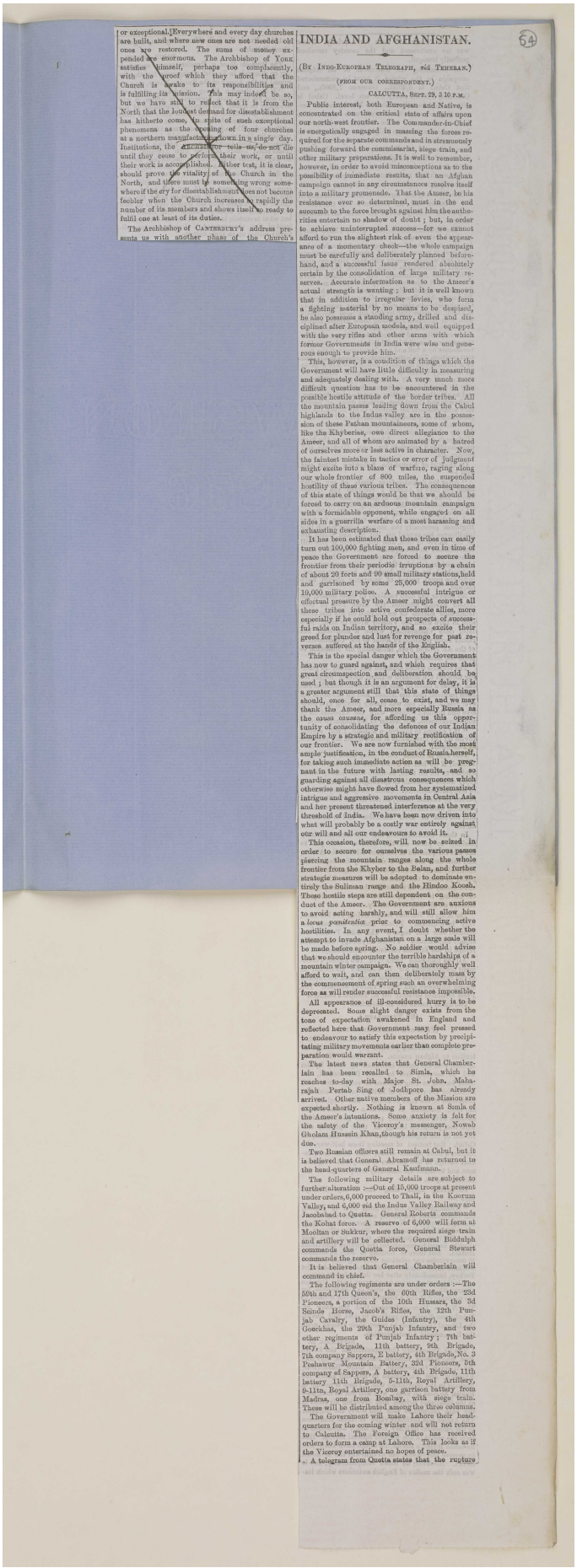

or exceptional. Everywhere and every day churches are built, and where new ones are not needed old ones are restored. The sums of money expended are enormous. The Archbishop of YORK satisfies himself, perhaps too complacently, with the proof which they afford that the Church is awake to its responsibilities and is fulfilling its mission. This may indeed be so, but we have still to reflect that it is from the North that the loudest demand for disestablishment has hitherto come, in spite of such exceptional phenomena as the opening of four churches at a northern manufacturing town in a single day. Institutions, the Archbishop tells us, do not die until they cease to perform their work, or until their work is accomplished. Either test, it is clear, should prove the vitality of the Church in the North, and there must be something wrong somewhere if the cry for disestablishment does not become fainter when the Church increases so rapidly the number of its members and shows itself so ready to fulfil one at least of its duties.

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY's address presents us with another phase of the Church's

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

54

(BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH, *viâ* TEHERAN.)

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

CALCUTTA, SEPT. 29, 3.10 P.M.

Public interest, both European and Native, is concentrated on the critical state of affairs upon our north-west frontier. The Commander-in-Chief is energetically engaged in massing the forces required for the separate commands and in strenuously pushing forward the commissariat, siege train, and other military preparations. It is well to remember, however, in order to avoid misconceptions as to the possibility of immediate results, that an Afghan campaign cannot in any circumstances resolve itself into a military promenade. That the Ameer, be his resistance ever so determined, must in the end succumb to the force brought against him the authorities entertain no shadow of doubt; but, in order to achieve uninterrupted success—for we cannot afford to run the slightest risk of even the appearance of a momentary check—the whole campaign must be carefully and deliberately planned beforehand, and a successful issue rendered absolutely certain by the consolidation of large military reserves. Accurate information as to the Ameer's actual strength is wanting; but it is well known that in addition to irregular levies, who form a fighting material by no means to be despised, he also possesses a standing army, drilled and disciplined after European models, and well equipped with the very rifles and other arms with which former Governments in India were wise and generous enough to provide him.

This, however, is a condition of things which the Government will have little difficulty in measuring and adequately dealing with. A very much more difficult question has to be encountered in the possible hostile attitude of the border tribes. All the mountain passes leading down from the Cabul highlands to the Indus valley are in the possession of these Pathan mountaineers, some of whom, like the Khyberies, owe direct allegiance to the Ameer, and all of whom are animated by a hatred of corselves more or less active in character. Now, the faintest mistake in tactics or error of judgment might excite into a blaze of warfare, raging along our whole frontier of 800 miles, the suspended hostility of these various tribes. The consequences of this state of things would be that we should be forced to carry on an arduous mountain campaign with a formidable opponent, while engaged on all sides in a guerrilla warfare of a most harassing and exhausting description.

It has been estimated that these tribes can easily turn out 100,000 fighting men, and even in time of peace the Government are forced to secure the frontier from their periodic irruptions by a chain of about 20 forts and 90 small military stations, held and garrisoned by some 25,000 troops and over 10,000 military police. A successful intrigue or effectual pressure by the Ameer might convert all these tribes into active confederate allies, more especially if he could hold out prospects of successful raids on Indian territory, and so excite their greed for plunder and lust for revenge for past reverses suffered at the hands of the English.

This is the special danger which the Government has now to guard against, and which requires that great circumspection and deliberation should be used; but though it is an argument for delay, it is a greater argument still that this state of things should, once for all, cease to exist, and we may thank the Ameer, and more especially Russia as the *causa causans*, for affording us this opportunity of consolidating the defences of our Indian Empire by a strategic and military rectification of our frontier. We are now furnished with the most ample justification, in the conduct of Russia herself, for taking such immediate action as will be pregnant in the future with lasting results, and so guarding against all disastrous consequences which otherwise might have flowed from her systematized intrigue and aggressive movements in Central Asia and her present threatened interfrance at the very threshold of India. We have been now driven into what will probably be a costly war entirely against our will and all our endeavours to avoid it.

This occasion, therefore, will now be seized in order to secure for ourselves the various passes piercing the mountain ranges along the whole frontier from the Khyber to the Bolan, and further strategic measures will be adopted to dominate entirely the Suliman range and the Hindoo Koosh. These hostile steps are still dependent on the conduct of the Ameer. The Government are anxious to avoid acting harshly, and will still allow him a *locus penitentiæ* prior to commencing active hostilities. In any event, I doubt whether the attempt to invade Afghanistan on a large scale will be made before spring. No soldier would advise that we should encounter the terrible hardships of a mountain winter campaign. We can thoroughly well afford to wait, and can then deliberately mass by the commencement of spring such an overwhelming force as will render successful resistance impossible.

All appearance of ill-considered hurry is to be deprecated. Some slight danger exists from the tone of expectation awakened in England and reflected here that Government may feel pressed to endeavour to satisfy this expectation by precipitating military movements earlier than complete preparation would warrant.

The latest news states that General Chamberlain has been recalled to Simla, which he reaches to-day with Major St. John. Maharajah Pertab Sing of Jodhpore has already arrived. Other native members of the Mission are expected shortly. Nothing is known at Simla of the Ameer's intentions. Some anxiety is felt for the safety of the Viceroy's messenger, Nowab Gholam Hussein Khan, though his return is not yet due.

Two Russian officers still remain at Cabul, but it is believed that General Abramoff has returned to the head-quarters of General Kaufmann.

The following military details are subject to further alteration:—Out of 15,000 troops at present under orders, 6,000 proceed to Thal, in the Kooram Valley, and 6,000 *viâ* the Indus Valley Railway and Jacobabad to Quetta. General Roberts commands the Kohat force. A reserve of 6,000 will form at Mooltan or Sukkur, where the required siege train and artillery will be collected. General Biddulph commands the Quetta force, General Stewart commands the reserve.

It is believed that General Chamberlain will command in chief.

The following regiments are under orders:—The 59th and 17th Queen's, the 60th Rifles, the 23d Pioneers, a portion of the 10th Hussars, the 3d Scinde Horse, Jacob's Rifles, the 12th Punjab Cavalry, the Guides (Infantry), the 4th Goorkhas, the 29th Punjab Infantry, and two other regiments of Punjab Infantry; 7th battery, A Brigade, 11th battery, 9th Brigade, 7th company Sappers, E battery, 4th Brigade, No. 3 Peshawur Mountain Battery, 23d Pioneers, 5th company of Sappers, A battery, 4th Brigade, 11th battery 11th Brigade, 5-11th, Royal Artillery, 9-11th, Royal Artillery, one garrison battery from Madras, one from Bombay, with siege train. These will be distributed among the three columns.

The Government will make Lahore their head-quarters for the coming winter and will not return to Calcutta. The Foreign Office has received orders to form a camp at Lahore. This looks as if the Viceroy entertained no hopes of peace.

A telegram from Quetta states that the rupture

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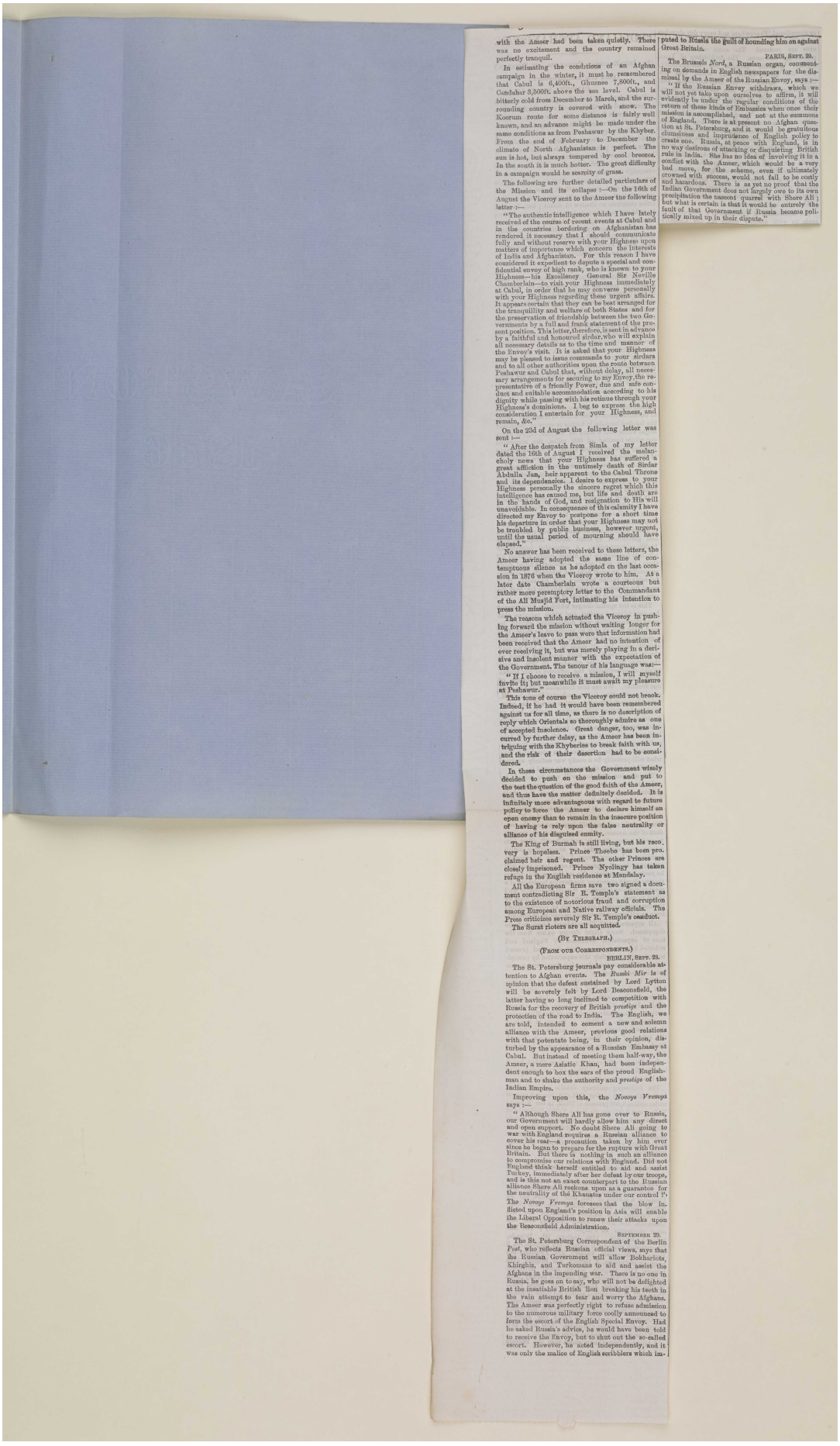

with the Ameer had been taken quietly. There was no excitement and the country remained perfectly tranquil.

In estimating the conditions of an Afghan campaign in the winter, it must be remembered that Cabul is 6,400ft., Ghuznee 7,800ft., and Candahar 3,500ft. above the sea level. Cabul is bitterly cold from December to March, and the surrounding country is covered with snow. The Koorum route for some distance is fairly well known, and an advance might be made under the same conditions as from Peshawur by the Khyber. From the end of February to December the climate of North Afghanistan is perfect. The sun is hot, but always tempered by cool breezes. In the south it is much hotter. The great difficulty in a campaign would be scarcity of grass.

The following are further detailed particulars of the Mission and its collapse :—On the 16th of August the Viceroy sent to the Ameer the following letter :—

"The authentic intelligence which I have lately received of the course of recent events at Cabul and in the countries bordering on Afghanistan has rendered it necessary that I should communicate fully and without reserve with your Highness upon matters of importance which concern the interests of India and Afghanistan. For this reason I have considered it expedient to depute a special and confidential envoy of high rank, who is known to your Highness—his Excellency General Sir Neville Chamberlain—to visit your Highness immediately at Cabul, in order that he may converse personally with your Highness regarding these urgent affairs. It appears certain that they can be best arranged for the tranquillity and welfare of both States and for the preservation of friendship between the two Governments by a full and frank statement of the present position. This letter, therefore, is sent in advance by a faithful and honoured sirdar, who will explain all necessary details as to the time and manner of the Envoy's visit. It is asked that your Highness may be pleased to issue commands to your sirdars and to all other authorities upon the route between Peshawur and Cabul that, without delay, all necessary arrangements for securing to my Envoy, the representative of a friendly Power, due and safe conduct and suitable accommodation according to his dignity while passing with his retinue through your Highness's dominions. I beg to express the high consideration I entertain for your Highness, and remain, &c."

On the 23d of August the following letter was sent :—

"After the despatch from Simla of my letter dated the 16th of August I received the melancholy news that your Highness has suffered a great affliction in the untimely death of Sirdar Abdulla Jan, heir apparent to the Cabul Throne and its dependencies. I desire to express to your Highness personally the sincere regret which this intelligence has caused me, but life and death are in the hands of God, and resignation to His will unavoidable. In consequence of this calamity I have directed my Envoy to postpone for a short time his departure in order that your Highness may not be troubled by public business, however urgent, until the usual period of mourning should have elapsed."

No answer has been received to these letters, the Ameer having adopted the same line of contemptuous silence as he adopted on the last occasion in 1876 when the Viceroy wrote to him. At a later date Chamberlain wrote a courteous but rather more peremptory letter to the Commandant of the Ali Musjid Fort, intimating his intention to press the mission.

The reasons which actuated the Viceroy in pushing forward the mission without waiting longer for the Ameer's leave to pass were that information had been received that the Ameer had no intention of ever receiving it, but was merely playing in a derisive and insolent manner with the expectation of the Government. The tenour of his language was:—

"If I choose to receive a mission, I will myself invite it; but meanwhile it must await my pleasure at Peshawur."

This tone of course the Viceroy could not brook. Indeed, if he had it would have been remembered against us for all time, as there is no description of reply which Orientals so thoroughly admire as one of accepted insolence. Great danger, too, was incurred by further delay, as the Ameer has been intriguing with the Khyberies to break faith with us, and the risk of their desertion had to be considered.

In those circumstances the Government wisely decided to push on the mission and put to the test the question of the good faith of the Ameer, and thus have the matter definitely decided. It is infinitely more advantageous with regard to future policy to force the Ameer to declare himself an open enemy than to remain in the insecure position of having to rely upon the false neutrality or silliance of his disguised enmity.

The King of Burmah is still living, but his recovery is hopeless. Prince Theebo has been proclaimed heir and regent. The other Princes are closely imprisoned. Prince Nyolingy has taken refuge in the English residence at Mandalay.

All the European firms save two signed a document contradicting Sir R. Temple's statement as to the existence of notorious fraud and corruption among European and Native railway officials. The Press criticizes severely Sir R. Temple's conduct.

The Surat rioters are all acquitted.

(By Telegraph.)

(From our Correspondents.)

BERLIN, Sept. 23.

The St. Petersburg journals pay considerable attention to Afghan events. The *Russki Mir* is of opinion that the defeat sustained by Lord Lytton will be severely felt by Lord Beaconsfield, the latter having so long inclined to competition with Russia for the recovery of British *prestige* and the protection of the road to India. The English, we are told, intended to cement a new and solemn alliance with the Ameer, previous good relations with that potentate being, in their opinion, disturbed by the appearance of a Russian Embassy at Cabul. But instead of meeting them half-way, the Ameer, a mere Asiatic Khan, had been independent enough to box the ears of the proud Englishman and to shake the authority and *prestige* of the Indian Empire.

Improving upon this, the *Novoye Vremya* says :—

"Although Shere Ali has gone over to Russia, our Government will hardly allow him any direct and open support. No doubt Shere Ali going to war with England requires a Russian alliance to cover his rear—a precaution taken by him ever since he began to prepare for the rupture with Great Britain. But there is nothing in such an alliance to compromise our relations with England. Did not England think herself entitled to aid and assist Turkey, immediately after her defeat by our troops, and is this not an exact counterpart to the Russian alliance Shere Ali reckons upon as a guarantee for the neutrality of the Khanates under our control?"

The *Novoye Vremya* foresees that the blow inflicted upon England's position in Asia will enable the Liberal Opposition to renew their attacks upon the Beaconsfield Administration.

September 29.

The St. Petersburg Correspondent of the Berlin *Post*, who reflects Russian official views, says that the Russian Government will allow Bokhariots, Khirghis, and Turkomans to aid and assist the Afghans in the impending war. There is no one in Russia, he goes on to say, who will not be delighted at the insatiable British lion breaking his teeth in the vain attempt to tear and worry the Afghans. The Ameer was perfectly right to refuse admission to the numerous military force coolly announced to form the escort of the English Special Envoy. Had he asked Russia's advice, he would have been told to receive the Envoy, but to shut out the so-called escort. However, he acted independently, and it was only the malice of English scribblers which imputed to Russia the guilt of hounding him on against Great Britain.

PARIS, Sept. 29.

The Brussels *Nord*, a Russian organ, commenting on demands in English newspapers for the dismissal by the Ameer of the Russian Envoy, says :—

"If the Russian Envoy withdraws, which we will not yet take upon ourselves to affirm, it will evidently be under the regular conditions of the return of these kinds of Embassies when once their mission is accomplished, and not at the summons of England. There is at present no Afghan question at St. Petersburg, and it would be gratuitous clumsiness and impurtence of English policy to create one. Russia, at peace with England, is in no way desirous of attacking or disquieting British rule in India. She has no idea of involving it in a conflict with the Ameer, which would be a very bad move, for the scheme, even if ultimately crowned with success, would not fail to be costly and hazardous. There is as yet no proof that the Indian Government does not largely owe to its own precipitation the nascent quarrel with Shere Ali; but what is certain is that it would be entirely the fault of that Government if Russia became politically mixed up in their dispute."

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"Morning Post" Sept. 30th

ENGLAND AND AFFGHANISTAN.

(*Reuter's Telegrams.*)

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 28.

With reference to the telegrams and articles published by the English papers ascribing the stoppage of the British mission to the counsel of Russia, it is pointed out in official quarters that when the first news arrived here the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally. It is added that the belief expressed by these papers of Russian complicity in the matter may have arisen from the following considerations:—During the Russo-Turkish war various reports were received to the effect that England was making attempts to create difficulties for Russia in Central Asia. The English mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar was avowedly undertaken with this purpose, and even in Bokhara it was alleged that English agents were at work; in order to counteract the effect of these movements Russia took various measures, and contemplated sending several expeditions to reconnoitre the neighbouring territories. However, as soon as the Berlin Congress held out the prospect of bringing about a peaceful solution of the question, all these measures were countermanded. In any case, it is added that the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the Anglo-Indian mission is groundless. Such conjectures are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

SIMLA, SEPT. 23.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain has arrived here.

Two days ago we uttered a warning that our difficulty with SHERE ALI might not be limited to the opposition of an Affghan army and the underhand assistance of Russia, and we pointed out that signs were also to be observed of action on the part of Persia. In commenting on the telegrams which were then to hand we expressed a belief that the frontier complications which have already developed in Seistan, and the news of an intended movement by Persia in the direction of Herat, both pointed to the probability of Persian interference. Other circumstances have since come to light which tend to confirm that opinion. It is stated in a Vienna telegram that when the SHAH was recently in that capital he caused profound astonishment by his purchase of Uchatius guns, Werndl rifles, "and enough ammunition to "fill the Persian arsenals several times over." The West-end creditors of the SHAH will learn with surprise that, costly as was this "supposed hobby," the SHAH had no difficulties on the score of expense. It is now suggested, not here in Russophobist England, as the St. Petersburg papers describe us, but in Vienna; that the CZAR'S purse supplied his Persian ally with the needful funds. Whether that be so or not the fact remains that Persia has just possessed herself of a large supply of war material, and the knowledge of that circumstance, added to the report of her intended demonstration against Herat and to the reported disturbances in Seistan, demand the cautious observation of this country.

We must take it for granted that England will be bound to bring her difficulty with SHERE ALI to a successful issue. Russia has shown that notwithstanding all her pledges in regard to non-intervention in Affghanistan she had a plan of campaign relating to that country. It will therefore be our first duty when SHERE ALI is brought to his knees not simply to give this country supreme influence in Affghanistan, but to take such guarantees as shall exclude every other agent but our own from the Cabul Court. Russia must be very blind if she does not foresee that result. She doubtless appreciates already that if the Affghan campaign be properly conducted—we speak of the part which diplomacy will play—it will leave England much stronger in India than it has hitherto been. The plains of the Indus form a worthless line of defence. The command of the passes through the Suleyman Mountains is the least military advantage that we shall demand, but it is very unlikely that these will be all. Russian military men can understand as clearly as anybody else that, in view of the attitude just shown by Russia in Central Asia, the English Government are not unlikely to demand that the Hindoo Kush, instead of the Suleyman Mountains, shall be regarded as the rampart of the Indian Empire. It will be better for India that the Kawak and the Bamian Passes shall be in the hands of English instead of Russian troops; and the same opinion will prevail yet more strongly in regard to Herat, by which those passes can be turned. Russia's past pledges respecting Affghanistan preclude her from interfering between England and SHERE ALI when once SHERE ALI sues for terms. With a keen appreciation of considerations like these the military governor of Turkestan is not likely to let the present occasion go by for improving his own position in Central Asia without availing himself of it. If the defence of India is bettered by this Affghan difficulty, we may depend upon it that Russia will make a counter move. For months past—since the dispersion of the Tiflis army after the peace in Asia Minor—we have had whispers of a Russian expedition lurking at Krasnovadok, with the view of moving to Kizil Arvat, which is the first step to Merv. Now that the Affghan Question is come before Russia with the certainty of her diplomacy being foiled by English arms at Cabul, it is all the more likely that Russia will seek for some pretext to annex Merv. It will, however, be still better for her if independently of that movement, or simultaneously with it, Persia is able to lay hands upon Herat, for Merv is but the stepping-stone to the great Affghan fortress.

But there is an obvious difficulty in the way of Russia giving Persia any encouragement to take Herat from Affghanistan. The Persians and the Affghans hate each other with sectarian rancour, and the feud between Persia and Affghanistan is of too old a standing to be lightly passed over. If, therefore, a Persian advance be made upon Herat it will be a sign that Russia acknowledges herself to be foiled at Cabul. SHERE ALI would make no terms with a neighbour whose partner was attempting to annex the capital of Western Affghanistan. Should Russia discover a change in SHERE ALI'S mood, or assure herself that England will in future prevent the adoption of any serious intrigue at the Affghan capital, we may expect to hear of her making an effort to increase her own influence in other directions. Whether this movement will be restricted to the capture of Merv, or whether it will include an expedition against Herat, secretly supported by Russia, will largely depend upon the action of the English Government. Signs are not wanting that these contingencies have been duly considered by the English Government. It has been publicly announced that we may have to increase our fleet in the Persian Gulf, and a demonstration in that quarter may cause the SHAH to pause before he departs from an attitude of strict neutrality. As to Merv, it is already known to Russia that any occupation of that place by her armies would years ago have met with a counter movement from England. In the altered condition of affairs which has now been brought about the necessity for that action on our part becomes all the greater. If, say two or three years ago, a Russian advance upon Merv, as the first step towards taking Herat, would have called forth the active opposition of this country, that proceeding on our part will now be all the more necessary in view of our altered relations with Affghanistan. Merv and Herat turn the Hindoo Kush in the west, just as the Chitral turns those mountains in the east. Our Affghan complications will render it exceedingly desirable to keep a closer watch than ever upon the movements of Russia and her allies in those regions. One little circumstance which has just come to light invests the Chitral with an additional interest at the present moment. The most recent map of the Turkestan Topographical Department shows that the Russian frontier is not four hundred miles from our dependency of Cashmere, but only a hundred and fifty miles. Those who remember the alterations in the Russian official map after the Atrek country was annexed up to the Gurgan, and when the north-western boundary of Affghanistan was under settlement, will recognise the significance of the information which is to be gathered from a careful study of large maps, and especially Russian maps.

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AFFGHANISTAN.

"Anglo-Ind" writes in the *Observer* as follows :—

"Revolving ages always bring the bitter day home to every empire when some disagreeable question, shelved from time to time, has to be faced at last. They have now brought, what all thoughtful men knew they must bring sooner or later, the Affghan Question ; and as graver issues than the mere barbaric affront offered by a conceited and vindictive Affghan ruler are involved in that question, it behoves the nation to face it with a calm and united front, and without any indulgence in partisan 'views' or untimely crotchets on one side or the other. It will be essential to adhere as closely as possible to the inexorable logic of facts. The characteristics, history, and customs of the people with whom we shall have to deal, and the nature and climate of the country they inhabit, are the principal factors in the calculation of a plan of campaign, political or military ; and it is exactly on these points that nine-tenths of the public are radically ignorant. It will be as well at the outset to note and correct more than one error which passes as current history among people who have not made the Affghan Question a special study. Of all the ways of writing history 'the sensational' is the most abominable and mischievous, and its inherent faults are but half redeemed even when some master hand throws the charms and graces of his style into the task. It is to the somewhat feeble imitations of this style that we are unfortunately indebted for what is generally known of our former expeditions into Affghanistan, and especially with that part of them relating to General Elphinstone's miserable *fiasco* at Cabul in the winter of 1841-2 and his retreat to Gundamuck. But it will be found that a good deal of the phrase-making and high colouring which have been lavished on that disaster can be modified and toned down by the application of analysis and statistics.

"To take that melodramatic statement, which has been repeated in print and conversation *ad nauseam* within the last few days, that 'out of our army one Englishman, and one alone, came back alive to tell the tale,' the general public would jump to the conclusion that an army composed of Englishmen had been slaughtered with the exception of one individual, who returned, like the solitary fugitive of Thermopylæ, to tell the tale. The incident, no doubt, is a very dramatic one, and affords a fine temptation for fine writing. The late Dr. Brydon, attached at the time as surgeon to Shah Shoojah's force, and whose subsequent fate it was, curiously enough, to form one of the garrison of the Lucknow Residency, was the 'one Englishman'—or, rather, Scotchman—who succeeded in reaching Sir Robert Sale's garrison at Jellalabad out of the brigade that had once formed General Elphinstone's command ; the rest having been killed by the enemy or by the cold, been taken prisoners, or having deserted. The strength of the whole brigade—for it was nothing more—that left the entrenched cantonments before Cabul on the morning of the 6th of January, 1842, numbered, as far as could be ascertained, about 4,500 fighting men, with six horse-artillery and three mountain-train guns. In addition to the above were about 12,000 camp followers, who from the very first mile proved a terrible clog on the movements of the column, and were the main cause of the misfortunes after the retreat had commenced. The blunder of permitting such a following must never be perpetrated again, especially in such a country as Affghanistan. The Europeans in the Cabul brigade numbered a little over 900 souls, of whom between 180 and 190 were military and civil officers, 12 women, some 24 children, about 90 of a troop of Bengal Horse Artillery, and nearly 600 rank and file of the 44th, or East Essex Regiment. Amongst the last were some details of the 13th Foot, who had been left behind when Sir Robert Sale moved from Cabul to Jellalabad in October, 1841. Of this European strength 37 officers, 50 rank and file, 12 women, and 22 children were released from the clutches of Mohammed Akbar on Sir George Pollock's arrival at the Affghan capital. Of the native portion of the brigade it is perhaps not too much to say that nearly one half escaped destruction by desertion to the enemy. The men of Shah Shoojah's cavalry and the mission escort went over bodily, as did also a great portion of his 6th Infantry and nearly all the Mohammedans of the brigade. In connection with the estimates, more or less exaggerated, of the loss of life during this retreat, it is well to bear in mind that during Pollock's advance the number of skeletons found on the line of march was very small when compared with the thousands which were reported to have perished.

"In the contemplation of the Cabul catastrophe, the very easy victories gained by our other commanders during the four years of Affghan warfare have been well nigh forgotten. This is also probably due to the very circumstance that these victories were comparatively easy ; but one would suppose that a more just and less panic-stricken estimate of the many successes and the one great disaster would enable us to ascribe both to their true causes, which were simply the inferior military capacity of the Affghans and their sirdars in the one case, and the total senile incapacity—and nothing else, for everything else resulted from it—of General Elphinstone, whose proper place, good and amiable man as he was, should have been an armchair in 'the Senior,' and not the command of a brigade in the snows of Cabul. Lord Keane's march through the Bolan and Khojuck Passes to Candahar and Cabul was almost a military promenade as far as Ghuznee. Here, as he stated in his despatch to the Governor-General, under date July 24, 1839, 'The army under my command has succeeded in performing one of the most brilliant acts it has ever been my lot to witness during my service of 45 years in the four quarters of the globe, in the capture by storm of the strong and important fortress and citadel of Ghuznee yesterday.' While one strong and, at the outset, admirably composed Indo-British brigade was drifting hopelessly to destruction for want of competent leaders, two others, and neither of them so strong as the first, were upholding the honour of England at Candahar and Jellalabad in a manner that some writers and speakers do not care to dwell upon at present. The first-named place and the adjacent country were held by the 40th Foot and four Bengal Native Infantry regiments under General Nott and Sir Henry Rawlinson with a unanimity in council and vigour in the field that afford a striking contrast to the unfortunate dissensions between the envoy, Sir William M'Naghten, and the military chiefs, Elphinstone and Shelton, as well as the feebleness of the military measures adopted by the latter at Cabul and on the retreat. At Jellalabad its 'illustrious garrison,' to quote Lord Ellenborough's phraseology, under Sir Robert Sale, consisting of the 13th Foot and late 35th Bengal Native Infantry—both subsequently created 'Light Infantry' regiments for this service—with some details of gunners and native horse, held the place for six months, despite of dilapidated fortifications, earthquakes, rigours of climate, and the utmost efforts of Mohammed Akbar and his adherents, who were soundly thrashed, moreover, in the open field, more than once. Sir Claude Wade, in July, 1839, with a column composed of native troops only, forced the 28 miles of the Khyber Pass with a loss of but 180 men, and marched with little further molestation to Cabul. Sir George Pollock, with the force collected by Lord Ellenborough to retrieve our fame and relieve our garrisons, forced the whole series of defiles from the Khyber to the Khoord Cabul in the teeth of Khyberees, Ghiljies, and Mohammed Akbar's followers, with trifling loss ; and, when joined there by General Nott from Candahar, the whole of Affghanistan lay practically prostrate at his feet. All these successes are surely some set-off against one disaster, even such an undoubted disaster as that which ended in the massacre of Gundamuck.

'In speaking and writing in exaggerated terms of the retreat from Cabul as 'the most terrible disaster that ever occurred to the British arms,' and so forth, it should not be forgotten that we have had other retreats and massacres where the loss of military prestige has been to the full as great as that incurred by General Elphinstone's incapacity, and that, nevertheless, British prestige and the British Empire have both managed to survive the shock. Presumably, too, the present generation of Britons will not care to call themselves degenerate sons of their fathers. In India it is only necessary to recall the retreats of Colonels Monson and Baillie, and in America that of Braddock. On the latter continent also the evacuation of Fort William Henry by Colonel Munro under the terms of the convention with the Marquis de Montcalm, and the subsequent massacre of the troops and camp followers by the French Iroquois Indians, bear a strong resemblance to the evacuation of the Cabul cantonments by General Elphinstone under the 'safe conduct' of Akbar Khan and his fellow sirdars, followed by the massacre of the best part of the brigade and camp followers by the irrepressible Ghiljies.

" There can be no doubt whatever that we shall be able to overrun Affghanistan as we have done before, but the difficulty will come when the exigencies of our policy require parts of it to be more or less permanently occupied. In this case the mistake must not again be made of denuding the occupied territory too soon, under a false confidence, of our troops, even though we are now closer to our base of operations than we were in 1839-42. In this we have a decided advantage, which we did not then possess for our strategy. In the last war we had to traverse the dominions of Runjeet Singh from Ferozepore to the Khyber, a distance of nearly 300 miles, as well as the territories of the Scinde Ameers. The 'Lion of Lahore' and the Khâlsa Durbar, on the whole, were loyal allies enough ; but, if our troubles had come on us a little later, it is pretty certain we should have had the Sikhs as well as the Affghans on our hands at the same time. The alliance of the Scinde Ameers fell considerably short of the benevolent, and this fact, joined with other circumstances, led to their suppression by Sir Charles Napier at Meeanee and Hyderabad in 1842. To-day we are established on the Khorassan side of the Bolan Pass, and the Afredees and Shinwarees of the Khyber have neither power nor the will to injure us as much as they had and did in former times. It is more than probable that they will have less when the coming struggle is over. Notwithstanding the impetuous instincts of some advisers, and all that has been said to the contrary, it may be safely predicted that the Indian authorities have no intention of moving on Cabul till next spring, in the event of Shere Ali

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remaining recalcitrant. The statements that have been made by some writers, that snow does not appear anywhere in Affghanistan till December, and that Sir George Pollock marched to Cabul in September, are not correct. Snow does not appear in the passes between Jellalabad and Cabul long before December, and Sir George Pollock did not commence his march through the Khyber till the beginning of April. Cabul might certainly be reached before the defiles are completely blocked with snow, but there remain the questions of supply and communications to be considered. It will, however, be advisable—nay, absolutely necessary—as far as the moral effect on our subject populations is concerned, to seize the passes and move, at all events, on Candahar. Ali Musjeed can and ought to be captured at once with the help of the Khyberees, and an advance made to Lalpoora or Ali Boghan. The above measures are both possible and expedient; an immediate march to Cabul is neither."

ENGLAND AND RUSSIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

SIR,—Surely, at length, Englishmen who have the slightest claim to the title of patriots, and who have in their hearts one spark of national sentiment, must be alive to the designs of Russia, and painfully sensible of the fact that England has hitherto been overreached or betrayed. Are we again about to allow ourselves to be cozened and circumvented? Are we again to enter into private arrangements with Russia and make still baser sacrifices than we have already made? I have written much and freely on the Eastern Question during these last three humiliating years. I have called attention again and again to the deplorable policy to which we were committed from the first. I beg you to allow my feeble voice to sound once more through your columns the note of warning and of alarm. If a vigorous policy was needed and miserably absent upon every one of the critical occasions which have successively presented themselves—from the Conference of Constantinople to the Congress of Berlin—let us now at length—now, when the continued absence of vigour will be tantamount to an acknowledgment of national insignificance—let us, I say, now at length, in unmistakable accents, protest against any more weakness, any more wavering, any more wretched, cowardly compromise and concurrence with robbery and injustice. A general election cannot be far off. Now is the time to let the voice of the nation make itself heard. Let that voice proclaim that what has been called "Peace with honour" is not sufficient, is not what England demands. What England demands is that her empire shall be maintained and thoroughly protected, whatever the cost. And what England wants is a Ministry to whom the nation feels that it can confide this all-important duty. Are there to be found, in this our day, statesmen who are really competent for the task, statesmen who are capable of agreement in a vigorous policy? Are statesmen still to be found who will not be forced by timidity and discord to have recourse to a miserable policy of inactivity and condonation of insult and of violated faith? If such there be, they are the men that are wanted. The nation most undoubtedly sees in Russia a most unscrupulous and insidious foe. That is a fact which must be recognised in Downing-street. Has it been recognised?—I am, sir, &c.,

ROBERT PHELPS.

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

RUSSIA AND AFFGHANISTAN.—It appears to be generally considered by those whose special knowledge on the subject renders their opinion of value that the Russians have committed an error in reference to the Cabul difficulty. There is no doubt but that the Russian troops in Central Asia have been pushed on with the idea of seizing Balkh and the passages across the Oxus, and the mission forwarded as a sort of extreme advance guard. But by their recent policy the Russian Government have exposed their hand, and even the peace party now can judge of what value are the constant promises "on honour" of Gortschakoff and Schouvaleff. If Russia is to have a Resident in the Affghan capital, it is the more necessary that we should have one too; for we have everything to lose, whilst they have everything to gain. We may guard the mouths of the defiles into India, but unless we know something of what is going on beyond them we cannot make arrangements to meet the foe at the mouth of the particular defile he might at any moment select, and if we allow the further ends to be closed to us we may be suddenly attacked at the most inopportune moment. It is to such another opportunity as the mutiny that the Russians are looking forward. The disasters of Cabul are very apt to recur to our memories at the present crisis. They stand out as the prominent part of the whole picture because it has been so rare for us to suffer disaster; but if the story of the campaign be carefully read it must be seen that these disasters occurred only through fatuous idiocy on our part, and it is only necessary to mention that the "honour" of an Affghan chief was considered worthy of reliance to explain in a few words the whole case. The fact should not be lost sight of that when a small amount of military science was brought to bear we were able to walk over Affghanistan without difficulty, and ultimately to leave behind us an officer commanding the British forces at Bamian. We are now far stronger in arms, in troops, in intelligence—in fact, in everything.—*Army and Navy Gazette.*

THE PUNJAUB.*

Situated in the extreme north-west of our Anglo-Indian Empire, the Punjaub holds an important place among our possessions in the East. Those, also, who have watched the course of recent events entertain a strong conviction that, at no distant period, this importance will be materially increased; it behoves us therefore to conduct the affairs of the province with all possible vigilance and circumspection. Nothing will further this end so much as a thorough knowledge of the country, its inhabitants and surroundings, and this volume, which supplies much useful information on each branch of the subject in a compact form, comes most opportunely for our enlightenment. The author, "An Old Punjaubee," has derived many of his facts from well-authenticated sources and State documents, combined with his own personal opportunities for observation, extending over ten or twelve years. He first describes the boundaries and geographical features of "the land of the five rivers, or Punjaub proper," a wide tract lying between the Sutlej and the Indus rivers, between which flow also the Bêâs, the Râvee, the Chenaub, and the Jhelum. To the south of the Sutlej, likewise, a large territory, including the Ferozepore, Loodianah, and Umballah districts, has always been considered to form part of the province, and later on, for convenience of local administration after the Mutiny, the Delhi and Hissar divisions were removed from the domination of the Agra Government and added to the Punjaub, while to the north-west the tract of country lying between the Indus and the Affghan mountains, which had been occupied by the Sikhs under Runjeet Singh, was included as part of the British province of the Punjaub at the annexation of the country in 1849. Thus "the northern and western boundaries of the province are formed by the mountain ranges of the Himalayas, from Simla on the north-east to the Suleimani range, whose spurs reach the Scinde frontier to the westward. The twenty-eighth degree of north latitude represents nearly the southern and the seventy-eighth degree of east longitude the eastern boundary." The most remarkable geographical feature of the country is a large barren waste called the Bâr, which runs down the centre of each Dovâb, or delta, of the several rivers. Formerly these waters were left almost entirely to the nomadic breeders of camels, cattle, &c., and furnished also a safe refuge for cattle-stealers, whose depredations were totally unchecked during the Sikh occupation, and scarcely less so for some time under our own more enlightened rule. Civilisation, however, has been attended here, as everywhere else, with its usual results. Increase of cultivation and growth of population are gradually reducing the limits of the waste, and, aided by a better system of police administration, the complete suppression of these "reivers of the wilderness" may be ere long anticipated. The area of the Punjaub is estimated at 95,768 square miles, with a population of 17,500,000, comprising peoples of widely differing characteristics as regards physique, habits, and religion. The inhabitants when classified by religions consist of Sikhs, Hindoos, including several sections of that creed, Mohammedans of the Punjaub, Mohammedans of the frontier, and, in comparatively small numbers, Buddhists, who are found only in the hill regions. The Brahmins here, as in Hindostan, hold the first place, and "Rajpoots" are to be found principally among the tribes inhabiting the lower hills to the north-east, several of the petty Rajahs of that quarter being of that tribe. All the classes thus indicated, with their subdivisions, are briefly brought under notice, and it will be seen that the Mohammedans of the Punjaub proper form the majority of the population. The history of the Sikhs has been so much discussed of late years that comparatively very little is here said of them. It is merely related that they came into existence as a sect about A.D. 1510, Nanuk being the first prophet, and Gooroo Govind in 1700 the first religious leader; and it is shown by various statistics that the tribe is rapidly decreasing in number. This may be, the author considers, a fortunate circumstance for the stability of our rule in the Punjaub, for there can be little doubt that the Sikhs were the most formidable enemies the British troops ever encountered in the field in India, and that, too, when they had lost the cohesion which made them so powerful under Runjeet Singh. It is also stated that the Sikhs are excellent agriculturists, though hardly equal in this respect to some of the less warlike races, and that their religion holds somewhat the same relation to the Hindoo faith as the Wahabee schism does to the creed of the Mohammedans. A few details are related concerning a branch of the tribe known as Kookas, who gave a great deal of trouble in 1871, and the causes are shortly explained which led to the invasion of British India in 1845, and entailed the occupation and subsequent annexation of the Punjaub. In connection with this part of the subject a short *résumé* is added of

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the administration of affairs under the first British Resident, the well-known Sir Henry Lawrence, with a staff of subordinates, many of whom likewise became noted not very long afterwards. The events, however, of that early period of our rule in the Punjaub have often been described, and we will pass on to the author's account of the border tribes on our North-Western frontier, which is roughly estimated as eight hundred miles in extent, about two hundred and eighty of which are inhabited by Hindoo, and the remaining five hundred and twenty by Mohammedan races. The Affghans, or "Pathâns," are particularly brought under notice in their political relations, and as bearing comparison with the ancient Americans in the time of Cortes. He then proceeds to tell of the causes which led to the Umbeiah campaign; the progress and principal events of the war, and the lessons to be derived from it for our guidance if called upon to undertake another expedition of the kind. A few particulars as to their comparative numbers and location are also given of the "Bonairs," "Swattees," "Momunds," and "Bajourees," and of the numerous tribes, or rather assemblage of tribes, known as "Afreedees"—a term which will be familiar to many English readers from the accounts in the public journals of our dealings with them in the matter of the Kohât Pass. The different races are taken in geographical order, and in this way the Khutuks, Wuzeerees, and Muhsoods come in turn under consideration. There are also the Powindahs, and the Bilooch tribes which join the Pathâns at the southern extremity of the Derah Ismail Khan district, and like their neighbours are divided into clans. Some remarks are added with regard to the defence of our frontier against these border races, showing not only the arduous nature of the warfare in which our forces have been continually engaged, but the dissatisfaction generally felt at the non-recognition of their services. Such neglect was particularly galling considering the manner in which honours were showered after the Abyssinian and Ashantee campaigns, and the only way, it seems, in which to account for it is that the force being a civil corps, under the orders of a local Government, the officers' claims have not been brought to notice with sufficient earnestness, or the very fact of their not being under the military authorities may tell against them. The subject of placing the frontier force under the Commander-in-Chief has been under consideration for many years past, but it has not yet been effected; and in discussing the *pros* and *cons* on this point the author appears to think there are more arguments to be alleged in favour than against the measure. The second part of his book begins with a fuller description of the different border tribes, already roughly enumerated, in their physical characteristics religion, blood feuds, social customs, and numerical strength. He then considers the system of frontier management in Scinde and in the Punjaub since our first appearance on the Affghan border in the spring of 1849, the proposed change of system, our so-called policy of conciliation, and other matters connected with these points. In respect to our method of dealing with the frontier tribes, he agrees with those who, while inculcating the necessity of conciliatory treatment, yet think that all offences against the lives and property of our subjects in India should be visited with prompt and severe chastisement, a line of policy which has hitherto been most insufficiently carried out. He offers some general observations on the feelings of the natives of India towards the English, as manifested both by Mohammedans and Hindoos; and briefly estimates the results which have followed our efforts to improve and educate the masses. The past and present relations of native soldiers with their officers are also briefly discussed, and the importance of union among the English in India is strongly advocated; while in the closing chapters due prominence is naturally given to a serious consideration of Russian movements in Central Asia and their effect in India. In all that the writer alleges, whether on the question of Russian aggression, so much agitated at the present moment, or on our Eastern policy and responsibilities towards India, he is guided by an anxious desire to indicate the true state of affairs. He displays the dark as well as the bright side of the picture, and while giving our rulers in India full credit for much that may justly be deemed laudable in their administrative system, he does not hesitate to point straight at the errors through which the good effects of their policy have been too often checked. The volume is altogether of a most unpretending character, but though ostensibly occupied with a history of the Punjaub, yet an attentive perusal will show that its pages are stored with many useful hints on the past and present condition and future prospects of our great Indian Empire.

* The Punjaub and North-West Frontier of India. By an Old Punjaubee. London: C. Kegan Paul and Co.

RUSSIA.

56

THE SPREAD OF NIHILISM.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 22.

Never before has the helplessness of Government in contending with secret political agitations become so palpable as in its present endeavours for the suppression of Nihilism. More than a month has passed since General Mesentzoff's murder without any clue having been obtained as to the perpetrators and instigators of this dreadful crime. The appeal of Government to the nation for assistance in the fierce struggle with the revolutionists has utterly failed in effect because the people, purposely deprived of all liberties, and always taught to rely in emergencies on the Czar and his officials, are quite at a loss to know the manner or extent of the help demanded. When Government perceived the utter failure of its address to the citizens, instead of establishing a kind of constitutional freedom, it returned to its old practices of eradicating the evil by fire and sword. The Nihilists, however, were not in the least daunted by the proclamation of a most ruthless war against them, but took up the glove in defence of their pretended rights. The Imperial Ukase respecting the institution of military courts with jurisdiction over all political offences called forth a manifesto bearing the motto "Blood for blood," by which the police and other officials were threatened, in a style resembling that of Marat, with instant death in case they molested or tried to bring to justice any of the Nihilist fraternity. In Odessa and Kieff, apparently the head-quarters of the conspirators, placards were posted and bills distributed demanding liberty for the people, and making public "the decisions of the revolutionary party." Announcements were simultaneously made of the existence of properly constituted courts, deciding on the life and death of all those inculpated in the misgovernment of the people and the cruel proceedings against the Nihilists.

Demands for a constitutional government and active participation of the people in the direction of State affairs are not only confined to the Revolutionists, but are heard also in moderate circles, despising any radical measures for the realisation of their views. Foremost among these claims stands an address from the nobles of Rjâsan, imploring the Czar, who is reminded of the great sacrifices willingly borne in the direst hours of the last war, to grant a constitution to his subjects, who will then not brook any destruction of the fundamentals of government. The address, laying stress on the brilliant example always given by the nobility of Russia, emphasises their duty, loyally but firmly to lead the way towards the political emancipation of the nation. His Majesty is said to have been bitterly offended by this demand. He apparently is furtively forgetful of his having himself intended during the dreadful suspense of the last war to forestall the wishes of the enlightened part of his subjects—a resolution abandoned, however, on the surrender of Plevna, the turning-point in favour of the Russian flag. It is well remembered that Gortschakoff, alarmed at the effects which continued defeat might have on the minds of his countrymen, had submitted, shortly before Osman Pasha's capitulation to the Emperor Alexander a project for the promulgation of a constitution, which, perhaps, not by unpremeditated indiscretion, found its way into the press, which at once studiously discussed its value. Relying for the annihilation of the Nihilist propaganda on the force of arms, his Majesty has not hesitated to sanction General Miljutine's plan for an increase of the army to such an extent that it will in about five years number two million combatants. I have given you already in one of my late communications a general outline of the projected reorganisation of the army, which is now fully corroborated. The battalions of infantry are to be raised from 1,000 to 1,500 men, whilst to each regiment of cavalry two new squadrons are to be added. In the same way as the standing army is to be reinforced, the reserve corps will be strengthened by a permanent maintenance of

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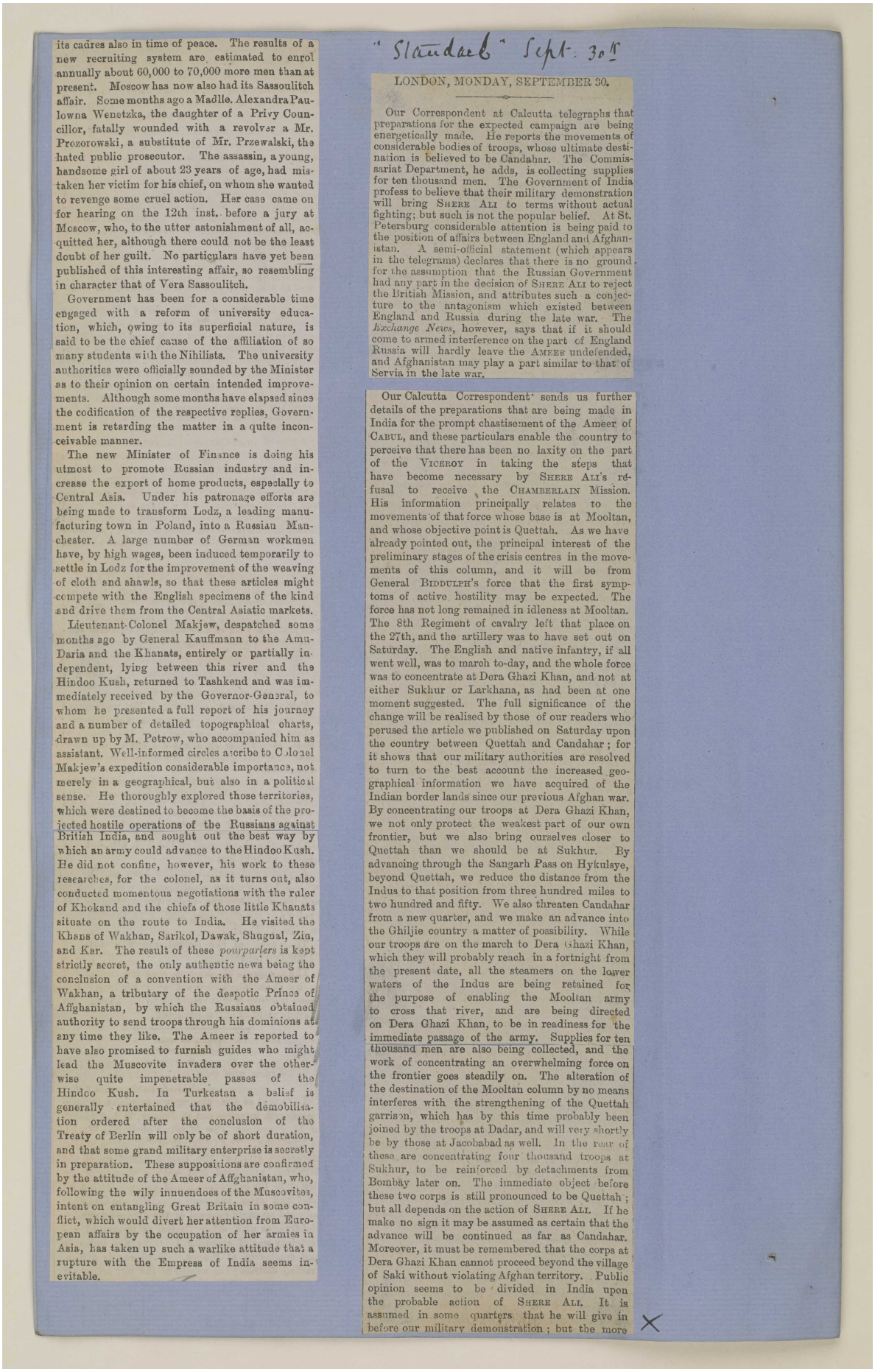

its cadres also in time of peace. The results of a new recruiting system are estimated to enrol annually about 60,000 to 70,000 more men than at present. Moscow has now also had its Sassoulitch affair. Some months ago a Madlle. Alexandra Paulowna Wenetzka, the daughter of a Privy Councillor, fatally wounded with a revolver a Mr. Prozorowski, a substitute of Mr. Przewalski, the hated public prosecutor. The assassin, a young, handsome girl of about 23 years of age, had mistaken her victim for his chief, on whom she wanted to revenge some cruel action. Her case came on for hearing on the 12th inst. before a jury at Moscow, who, to the utter astonishment of all, acquitted her, although there could not be the least doubt of her guilt. No particulars have yet been published of this interesting affair, so resembling in character that of Vera Sassoulitch.

Government has been for a considerable time engaged with a reform of university education, which, owing to its superficial nature, is said to be the chief cause of the affiliation of so many students with the Nihilists. The university authorities were officially sounded by the Minister as to their opinion on certain intended improvements. Although some months have elapsed since the codification of the respective replies, Government is retarding the matter in a quite inconceivable manner.

The new Minister of Finance is doing his utmost to promote Russian industry and increase the export of home products, especially to Central Asia. Under his patronage efforts are being made to transform Lodz, a leading manufacturing town in Poland, into a Russian Manchester. A large number of German workmen have, by high wages, been induced temporarily to settle in Lodz for the improvement of the weaving of cloth and shawls, so that these articles might compete with the English specimens of the kind and drive them from the Central Asiatic markets.

Lieutenant-Colonel Makjew, despatched some months ago by General Kauffmann to the Amu-Daria and the Khanats, entirely or partially independent, lying between this river and the Hindoo Kush, returned to Tashkend and was immediately received by the Governor-General, to whom he presented a full report of his journey and a number of detailed topographical charts, drawn up by M. Petrow, who accompanied him as assistant. Well-informed circles ascribe to Colonel Makjew's expedition considerable importance, not merely in a geographical, but also in a political sense. He thoroughly explored those territories, which were destined to become the basis of the projected hostile operations of the Russians against British India, and sought out the best way by which an army could advance to the Hindoo Kush. He did not confine, however, his work to these researches, for the colonel, as it turns out, also conducted momentous negotiations with the ruler of Khokand and the chiefs of those little Khanats situate on the route to India. He visited the Khans of Wakhan, Sarikol, Dawak, Shugnal, Zia, and Kar. The result of these *pourparlers* is kept strictly secret, the only authentic news being the conclusion of a convention with the Ameer of Wakhan, a tributary of the despotic Prince of Affghanistan, by which the Russians obtained authority to send troops through his dominions at any time they like. The Ameer is reported to have also promised to furnish guides who might lead the Muscovite invaders over the otherwise quite impenetrable passes of the Hindoo Kush. In Turkestan a belief is generally entertained that the demobilisation ordered after the conclusion of the Treaty of Berlin will only be of short duration, and that some grand military enterprise is secretly in preparation. These suppositions are confirmed by the attitude of the Ameer of Affghanistan, who, following the wily innuendoes of the Muscovites, intent on entangling Great Britain in some conflict, which would divert her attention from European affairs by the occupation of her armies in Asia, has taken up such a warlike attitude that a rupture with the Empress of India seems inevitable.

"Standard" Sept. 30th

LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30.

Our Correspondent at Calcutta telegraphs that preparations for the expected campaign are being energetically made. He reports the movements of considerable bodies of troops, whose ultimate destination is believed to be Candahar. The Commissariat Department, he adds, is collecting supplies for ten thousand men. The Government of India profess to believe that their military demonstration will bring SHERE ALI to terms without actual fighting; but such is not the popular belief. At St. Petersburg considerable attention is being paid to the position of affairs between England and Afghanistan. A semi-official statement (which appears in the telegrams) declares that there is no ground for the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of SHERE ALI to reject the British Mission, and attributes such a conjecture to the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war. The *Exchange News*, however, says that if it should come to armed interference on the part of England Russia will hardly leave the AMEER undefended, and Afghanistan may play a part similar to that of Servia in the late war.

Our Calcutta Correspondent sends us further details of the preparations that are being made in India for the prompt chastisement of the Ameer of CABUL, and these particulars enable the country to perceive that there has been no laxity on the part of the VICEROY in taking the steps that have become necessary by SHERE ALI's refusal to receive the CHAMBERLAIN Mission. His information principally relates to the movements of that force whose base is at Mooltan, and whose objective point is Quettah. As we have already pointed out, the principal interest of the preliminary stages of the crisis centres in the movements of this column, and it will be from General BIDDULPH's force that the first symptoms of active hostility may be expected. The force has not long remained in idleness at Mooltan. The 8th Regiment of cavalry left that place on the 27th, and the artillery was to have set out on Saturday. The English and native infantry, if all went well, was to march to-day, and the whole force was to concentrate at Dera Ghazi Khan, and not at either Sukhur or Larkhana, as had been at one moment suggested. The full significance of the change will be realised by those of our readers who perused the article we published on Saturday upon the country between Quettah and Candahar; for it shows that our military authorities are resolved to turn to the best account the increased geographical information we have acquired of the Indian border lands since our previous Afghan war. By concentrating our troops at Dera Ghazi Khan, we not only protect the weakest part of our own frontier, but we also bring ourselves closer to Quettah than we should be at Sukhur. By advancing through the Sangarh Pass on Hykulsye, beyond Quettah, we reduce the distance from the Indus to that position from three hundred miles to two hundred and fifty. We also threaten Candahar from a new quarter, and we make an advance into the Ghiljie country a matter of possibility. While our troops are on the march to Dera Ghazi Khan, which they will probably reach in a fortnight from the present date, all the steamers on the lower waters of the Indus are being retained for the purpose of enabling the Mooltan army to cross that river, and are being directed on Dera Ghazi Khan, to be in readiness for the immediate passage of the army. Supplies for ten thousand men are also being collected, and the work of concentrating an overwhelming force on the frontier goes steadily on. The alteration of the destination of the Mooltan column by no means interferes with the strengthening of the Quettah garrison, which has by this time probably been joined by the troops at Dadar, and will very shortly be by those at Jacobabad as well. In the rear of these are concentrating four thousand troops at Sukhur, to be reinforced by detachments from Bombay later on. The immediate object before these two corps is still pronounced to be Quettah; but all depends on the action of SHERE ALI. If he make no sign it may be assumed as certain that the advance will be continued as far as Candahar. Moreover, it must be remembered that the corps at Dera Ghazi Khan cannot proceed beyond the village of Saki without violating Afghan territory. Public opinion seems to be divided in India upon the probable action of SHERE ALI. It is assumed in some quarters that he will give in before our military demonstration; but the more

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general view is that he will fight, as he cannot but regard our threatening preparations as a menace to his independence. He will resort to this dangerous course simply because he is too proud to adopt any other, and not because he anticipates that he can emerge from the struggle in any other way than as the vanquished. Instead of acquiring prudence by past misfortune, he is supposed to have become more audacious and less calculating. He can only expect from Russia such assistance as was vouchsafed to Servia, while he fills the position of a disunited Servia opposed to a Turkey of overwhelming strength. The result of a war with England must be political extinction, and the overthrow can only be of the most complete kind. Yet we by no means deny that there is much to be advanced in favour of the view that SHERE ALI, despite odds, superior weapons, and other tactical deficiencies, will not budge an inch from the defiant position he has assumed.

In any case there can be no doubt that such is the proper view our authorities should take of the crisis, upon which our well-informed Correspondent "Anglo-Indian" makes some significant comments in the letter we publish from him this morning. There can be no doubt of the gravity of the crisis, and a sentence from Mr. LOWE's paper on Imperialism in the current *Fortnightly Review* sums up with striking terseness the position we hold in India. He says, "We had a wolf by the ears, which it was as difficult to let go as to hold. We could not go back, we could not stand still, we had no choice but to advance." In those words applied to our position in India a century ago may be found the key to the present situation. We have made our preparations, and those preparations have been made for just cause, and to resent a grave insult, and we cannot go back from them; and that we cannot stand still is equally evident. We have no choice but to advance. SHERE ALI is the wolf that we have by the ears, and it certainly is impossible to loose the hold we are steadily tightening upon him until he has submitted to us. But he is, after all, a very insignificant wolf if he is only dealt with in the proper manner. If we refuse to follow the advice of some of our well-intentioned and patriotic friends, and break our heads against the Khyber by precipitation, and only work out completely and thoroughly the firm policy followed by Lord LYTTON, it will be no difficult matter to tame even the fierce wolf of Cabul, as we have already tamed many a fierce wolf in India and elsewhere. SHERE ALI's defensive measures can be paralysed by an advance against Candahar, and by the occupation of the Khurum Valley; but so long as he retains possession of his southern capital he will persist in believing either in his capacity for resisting us or of tiring us out. In this matter of our crisis with Cabul we cannot play a waiting game, and "Anglo-Indian" is evidently persuaded that such is the intention either here at home or out in India. He strongly denounces the backwardness that has been shown in not cordially supporting the activity of Lord LYTTON, and, as he pertinently reminds us, no Cabinet Council has yet been summoned to consider what we are to do when the English troops are all concentrated on the Afghan frontier, and cannot advance further without violating Afghan territory. The rumours that the advance is to be postponed until the spring certainly do to some extent justify the strictures of our correspondent upon the timidity that would shirk dealing with our difficulty with SHERE ALI in a thorough manner.

To concentrate three columns on the frontier of a foreign Power whose hostility had been declared and then to sit down and await his return to sanity and friendship would be a policy that Asiatics could by no possibility comprehend. Both Cabul and India would construe it into a confession of weakness, that in its effects could only be disastrous to us as a governing Power, and that must infallibly elevate Russian *prestige* in Central Asia, soon to be debased if we follow the true policy, to a higher pitch than it has attained even by the annexation of the better half of Armenia. As Mr. LOWE says, "we have no course but to advance, unless, of course, SHERE ALI concedes what we have demanded, and makes the amplest reparation for the outrage offered to our representative at Ali Musjid. But until the AMEER demonstrates that he has unequivocally abandoned the Russian alliance so recently accepted by him, and has resolved to act towards us more fairly and more friendly than he ever has before, we have no option save to continue the forward movement we are now carrying out, and to strike a forcible blow at some of the exposed quarters of his State. Candahar, above all others, lies open to attack, and the advance of British troops to Dera Ghazi Khan proves that the Indian Government has resolved if necessary to strike at that city. The fact that we intend to utilise the Sangarh Pass, which is incomparably the best and easiest along the whole frontier, proves that the Indian Government is not in favour of half measures, and that nothing but complete submission on the part of SHERE ALI will be held by it to satisfy the exigencies of the occasion. We cannot doubt that the instant the home authorities think it necessary to declare their policy towards SHERE ALI they will do so in no hesitating phrases, but in an unequivocal endorsement of the policy of Lord LYTTON. It is possible to magnify our crisis with Cabul, but it is far easier to minimise it. We can upset SHERE ALI at any moment, if necessary, and in that conviction many rest content with the philosophical belief that the Afghan crisis is still a bugbear. But although we can overthrow him it would be weak to despise him, and the part he might play in the Punjab, either with allies or without, so deeply that we ignored his existence altogether. The Indian Government shows no trepidation in dealing with the crisis, but it manifests a keen appreciation of the question in all its bearings. The country has ratified the policy of Lord LYTTON in a most proclaimed manner, and for our part we cordially agree with the scheme he has sanctioned. There may or there may not be a different attitude elsewhere, but Lord LYTTON has at all events evinced remarkable promptitude, and promptitude is the watchword of the hour.

"Daily Telegraph" Sept: 30th

LONDON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30.

Sir Neville Chamberlain arrived at Simla on Saturday.

Our special correspondent at Simla telegraphs that the vernacular press of Northern India is nearly unanimous in praise of the Viceroy's Cabul policy, and specially approves the employment of native nobles in the Cabul Mission, as being calculated to show to foreigners the union that exists between the rulers and the ruled, and to exhibit to the people the confidence of the Government in native loyalty.

In official quarters at St. Petersburg it is held that there is no warrant for ascribing to Russian counsels the stoppage of the English Mission to Cabul.

LORD LYTTON's Government, with becoming decision, lost no time in directing the assembly of forces on the Afghan frontier. Whatever may be the ultimate course of events, this promptitude was absolutely imperative, since it showed the world that a proper estimate had been formed at Simla with regard to the Khyber incident. Moreover, the instant issue of orders was a matter of considerable moment from a purely practical as well as political point of view. India is a country of "magnificent distances;" the comparatively large army we maintain there is not massed in powerful bodies, but scattered in cantonments; and time is always required to bring together a field force of some numerical strength. No doubt the railways already finished will materially augment the speed of movements; but it must not to be forgotten that squadrons, battalions, and batteries will have to march over long tracts before swifter carriage is available. The interval needed to collect a column will be diminished by the fact that Northern India is always occupied in strength, and that the railways may be employed to forward reliefs and reserves from the south and east. When the most has been made of every advantage afforded by road, rail, and river, there must be what will look like delay. In addition to the ordinary obstacles which have to be overcome in collecting an army, there is the further and pressing need for supply and transport. The Indian commissariat is usually well prepared, and we cannot believe that the events which have occurred during the past three years have not induced the Government to increase its resources at several stations, as well as to keep full account of means obtainable at short notice. Nevertheless, some weeks must elapse before the several columns are equipped sufficiently to enter on active service. As no immediate hostilities are in contemplation, there is time enough to organise the powerful little armies now gathering in the Punjab and

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beyond the Indus ; and it may be fairly assumed that the military and civil authorities will exert themselves to the utmost in order that not an hour should intervene between decision and action. Preceding experience, gained by trying operations during the last twenty years, should enable the Government to avoid the grave error of encumbering the forces employed by permitting the addition of a single pound of baggage or one servant more than may be strictly necessary. Upon this head both the CHAMBERLAINS and scores of frontier officers will be able to speak with authority ; while the Commander-in-Chief of India is too good a soldier to allow a fungus growth of impedimenta to hamper military movements. On the other hand, considering the nature of the country beyond the Indus, a meagre equipment would be a serious mistake ; but so many expeditions into the hills have been carried out since 1850 that ample materials on which a correct estimate may be based must exist in the Government offices. For the present, therefore, we must await patiently the complete formation of the several columns, so that when they move the rough task before them may be swiftly and effectively accomplished.

Perhaps it is premature to speculate upon the mode of solving a complex military and political problem which may be adopted. One thing, however, should be borne in mind—that headstrong advice to enter Afghanistan by four or five passes is the offspring of new-born zeal and unsound judgment. Far more is known about the frontier and the roads into the Ameer's territory now than was accessible thirty or forty years ago. There are not one or two, but half a dozen practicable paths through the mountains, and the most notorious are among the least useful. As a matter of fact, there is no need to ascend the Bolan or thread the mazes of the Khyber and Khoord Cabul in order to master the country ; but whatever line be taken it will be well to direct the main effort by one route rather than to split up a valuable force into half-a-dozen fragments. Judging from the dispositions already ordered, it would appear that the Government favours a concentrated as opposed to a diffusive military policy. What has been ordered ? The assembly of a column at Thul, the reinforcement of the Quetta garrison, and the gathering of a reserve at Sukkur. These arrangements point to a diversion by the Kurrum Valley, and a movement in strength upon Candahar. For it should be noted that the weaker body is drawn from the Kohat country, while the selection of Sukkur as a post for the reserve indicates the Candahar road as its ultimate destiny. Despite reports to the contrary, we cannot think that there is any design to master the Khyber. An opportunity for a march on that side may arise ; but when the path to Candahar is plain and open, and when the pressure on the Ameer which the occupation of his Southern provinces would exert is manifest, we cannot believe that lives will be uselessly sacrificed in the sanguinary task of forcing the Northern passes. Nor is it necessary, though it may be convenient, to use the Bolan, because there is a good carriage track from Gundava to Khelat and thence to Quetta ; but the same kind of objection does not apply to the Bolan as to the Khyber, for, being in our hands, it may be traversed without opposition from end to end. The vast stores of accurate information at the disposal of Sir PAUL HAINES will enable him to determine how effect can best be given to the policy enforced on the Government, and the orders he has sent forth show that he is not bound down to any routine traditions, or likely to adopt the unsoldierlike plan of applying his troops in driblets. The political situation created by the Ameer is so serious that no postponement of action will be justified for any period beyond the time actually needful to organise well-appointed columns. Should ample satisfaction not be then received, Candahar should be seized without an instant's delay, the Kohat force should enter the Kurrum Valley, and the reserve, or part of it, move nearer to the front. Whether it will be necessary to go further events alone can determine ; but, now the question of mastery has been raised, the commonest prudence dictates unflagging exertion until indubitable securities have been solidly obtained.

In deciding upon its course of action, however, the Indian Government is not wholly at liberty, as some suggest, to consult the seasons and military conveniences. One consideration which must be steadfastly borne in mind is native feeling, which has been, beyond doubt, much excited by the affront offered to the English Power, and would not understand a leisurely and expectant policy. The insult put upon a British Envoy by the Ameer of Afghanistan was not "done in a corner." Circumstances combined to give it instant and universal publicity ; and it would be imprudent, if not dangerous, to leave the first part of such a passage in Indian history too long uncompleted by the second. The public opinion of our Eastern Empire is not, as in this land, a mandate which controls, but it is a force which must be studied and respected, and it judges its ruling men though it does not appoint them. It would condemn the Sircar for lack of ancient spirit, and for want of preparedness, if it saw nothing done or begun because it is cold at Cabul in December, or because the intentions of Russia have still to be learned. At present it is satisfactory to know that the tone of the Indian press almost without exception is loyal to a remarkable degree. A leading native journal, the *Hindoo Patriot*, attributes the affront ventured upon by SHERE ALI not to any fault of Lord LYTTON'S measures, but to the mischievous language of the un-English party in this country, which has misled Russia, and deceived her instruments. Our Simla despatch communicates the fact that the vernacular papers of Northern India are nearly unanimous in support of the Viceroy's policy towards Afghanistan, several among them, like the *Kohinoor* of Lahore, particularly applauding the employment of native noblemen in connection with the Cabul Mission. They point to this as a symbol of the union which exists between the British Raj and the people of India, and recall with pleasure an ancient instance of similar confidence, when Shah JEHAN sent the Maharajah of Jodhpoor as one of his representatives to the Cabul Court. The faith in British strength and fortune which these expressions of opinion reveal is worth maintaining, and will be best maintained by an energetic answer to the outrage which has been hazarded. Beyond popular feeling, too, the sentiments of the chief feudatory Princes must be taken into account. They also, however well affected, could hardly remain sincerely loyal if the least doubt arose as to our power to punish—not by-and-by, but immediately and signally—a menace offered to the peace and order of Hindostan. Their guarantee is the ever ready might of the British rule, and any advantage obtained by slow procedure would be dearly bought if it caused them to believe that we consulted the almanac and balanced Eastern and Western complications when the bazaars of the land were ringing with the story of our Envoy's repulse. Hence it is necessary that the winter should not arrive without practical proofs having been afforded of our power and purpose to efface such an outrage ; nor is there the least reason to believe that the Viceroy and her Majesty's Ministers are of any other opinion. Military preparations have followed the news from the Khyber with an alacrity which will confirm the public confidence of India in the British spirit ; and, failing the extremely improbable submission of the Afghan Prince, such decisive measures will be promptly adopted as will vindicate the honour and preserve the safety of the Empire.

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

TONE OF THE VERNACULAR PRESS.

[BY EASTERN COMPANY'S CABLE.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]
SIMLA, SEPT. 29 (5.30 P.M.)

The vernacular press of Northern India is nearly unanimous in praise of the Viceroy's Cabul policy. The Lahore *Kohinoor* and several other journals specially approve the employment of native nobles in the Cabul Mission which, they say, will show to foreigners the union that exists between the rulers and the ruled, and will also exhibit to the people the confidence of the Government in native loyalty. The *Kohinoor* recalls the fact that an ancestor of the Jodpore Maharajah was employed by Shah Jehan on a mission to Cabul. The chief exception is the Mooradabad newspaper, which says that the quarrel must be settled with Russia.

The *Hindoo Patriot*, one of the leading native journals, attributes the Cabul quarrel entirely to the action of an un-English party in England, which, deluded by the smooth words and glib promises of Russia, neglected to take the

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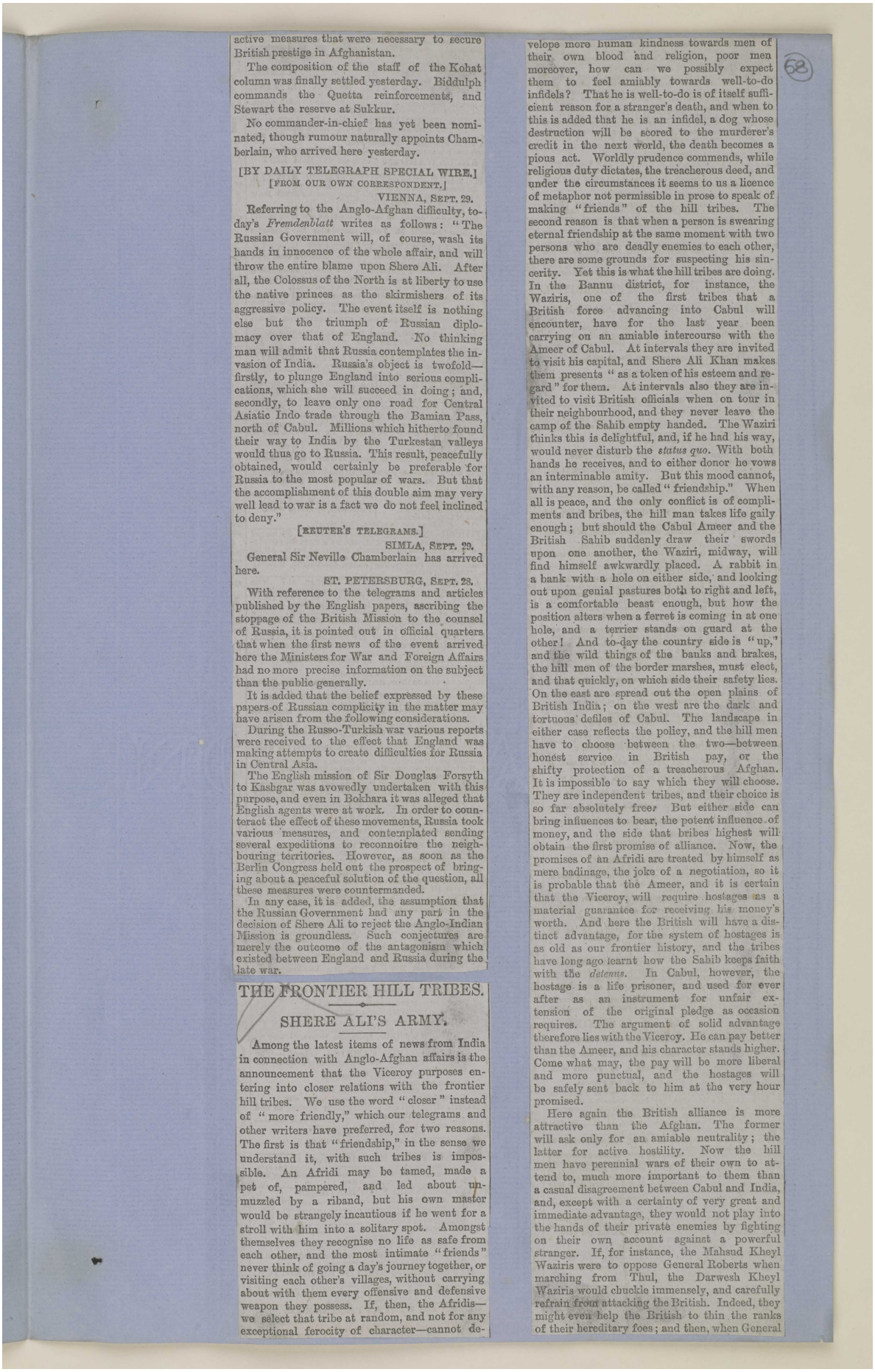

active measures that were necessary to secure British prestige in Afghanistan.

The composition of the staff of the Kohat column was finally settled yesterday. Biddulph commands the Quetta reinforcements, and Stewart the reserve at Sukkur.

No commander-in-chief has yet been nominated, though rumour naturally appoints Chamberlain, who arrived here yesterday.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, SEPT. 29.

Referring to the Anglo-Afghan difficulty, to-day's *Fremdenblatt* writes as follows: "The Russian Government will, of course, wash its hands in innocence of the whole affair, and will throw the entire blame upon Shere Ali. After all, the Colossus of the North is at liberty to use the native princes as the skirmishers of its aggressive policy. The event itself is nothing else but the triumph of Russian diplomacy over that of England. No thinking man will admit that Russia contemplates the invasion of India. Russia's object is twofold—firstly, to plunge England into serious complications, which she will succeed in doing; and, secondly, to leave only one road for Central Asiatic Indo trade through the Bamian Pass, north of Cabul. Millions which hitherto found their way to India by the Turkestan valleys would thus go to Russia. This result, peacefully obtained, would certainly be preferable for Russia to the most popular of wars. But that the accomplishment of this double aim may very well lead to war is a fact we do not feel inclined to deny."

[REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.]

SIMLA, SEPT. 29.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain has arrived here.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 28.

With reference to the telegrams and articles published by the English papers, ascribing the stoppage of the British Mission to the counsel of Russia, it is pointed out in official quarters that when the first news of the event arrived here the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally.

It is added that the belief expressed by these papers of Russian complicity in the matter may have arisen from the following considerations.

During the Russo-Turkish war various reports were received to the effect that England was making attempts to create difficulties for Russia in Central Asia.

The English mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar was avowedly undertaken with this purpose, and even in Bokhara it was alleged that English agents were at work. In order to counteract the effect of these movements, Russia took various measures, and contemplated sending several expeditions to reconnoitre the neighbouring territories. However, as soon as the Berlin Congress held out the prospect of bringing about a peaceful solution of the question, all these measures were countermanded.

In any case, it is added, the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the Anglo-Indian Mission is groundless. Such conjectures are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

THE FRONTIER HILL TRIBES.

SHERE ALI'S ARMY.

Among the latest items of news from India in connection with Anglo-Afghan affairs is the announcement that the Viceroy purposes entering into closer relations with the frontier hill tribes. We use the word "closer" instead of "more friendly," which our telegrams and other writers have preferred, for two reasons. The first is that "friendship," in the sense we understand it, with such tribes is impossible. An Afridi may be tamed, made a pet of, pampered, and led about unmuzzled by a riband, but his own master would be strangely incautious if he went for a stroll with him into a solitary spot. Amongst themselves they recognise no life as safe from each other, and the most intimate "friends" never think of going a day's journey together, or visiting each other's villages, without carrying about with them every offensive and defensive weapon they possess. If, then, the Afridis—we select that tribe at random, and not for any exceptional ferocity of character—cannot develope more human kindness towards men of their own blood and religion, poor men moreover, how can we possibly expect them to feel amiably towards well-to-do infidels? That he is well-to-do is of itself sufficient reason for a stranger's death, and when to this is added that he is an infidel, a dog whose destruction will be scored to the murderer's credit in the next world, the death becomes a pious act. Worldly prudence commends, while religious duty dictates, the treacherous deed, and under the circumstances it seems to us a licence of metaphor not permissible in prose to speak of making "friends" of the hill tribes. The second reason is that when a person is swearing eternal friendship at the same moment with two persons who are deadly enemies to each other, there are some grounds for suspecting his sincerity. Yet this is what the hill tribes are doing. In the Bannu district, for instance, the Waziris, one of the first tribes that a British force advancing into Cabul will encounter, have for the last year been carrying on an amiable intercourse with the Ameer of Cabul. At intervals they are invited to visit his capital, and Shere Ali Khan makes them presents "as a token of his esteem and regard" for them. At intervals also they are invited to visit British officials when on tour in their neighbourhood, and they never leave the camp of the Sahib empty handed. The Waziri thinks this is delightful, and, if he had his way, would never disturb the *status quo*. With both hands he receives, and to either donor he vows an interminable amity. But this mood cannot, with any reason, be called "friendship." When all is peace, and the only conflict is of compliments and bribes, the hill man takes life gaily enough; but should the Cabul Ameer and the British Sahib suddenly draw their swords upon one another, the Waziri, midway, will find himself awkwardly placed. A rabbit in a bank with a hole on either side, and looking out upon genial pastures both to right and left, is a comfortable beast enough, but how the position alters when a ferret is coming in at one hole, and a terrier stands on guard at the other! And to-day the country side is "up," and the wild things of the banks and brakes, the hill men of the border marshes, must elect, and that quickly, on which side their safety lies. On the east are spread out the open plains of British India; on the west are the dark and tortuous defiles of Cabul. The landscape in either case reflects the policy, and the hill men have to choose between the two—between honest service in British pay, or the shifty protection of a treacherous Afghan. It is impossible to say which they will choose. They are independent tribes, and their choice is so far absolutely free. But either side can bring influences to bear, the potent influence of money, and the side that bribes highest will obtain the first promise of alliance. Now, the promises of an Afridi are treated by himself as mere badinage, the joke of a negotiation, so it is probable that the Ameer, and it is certain that the Viceroy, will require hostages as a material guarantee for receiving his money's worth. And here the British will have a distinct advantage, for the system of hostages is as old as our frontier history, and the tribes have long ago learnt how the Sahib keeps faith with the *detenus*. In Cabul, however, the hostage is a life prisoner, and used for ever after as an instrument for unfair extension of the original pledge as occasion requires. The argument of solid advantage therefore lies with the Viceroy. He can pay better than the Ameer, and his character stands higher. Come what may, the pay will be more liberal and more punctual, and the hostages will be safely sent back to him at the very hour promised.

Here again the British alliance is more attractive than the Afghan. The former will ask only for an amiable neutrality; the latter for active hostility. Now the hill men have perennial wars of their own to attend to, much more important to them than a casual disagreement between Cabul and India, and, except with a certainty of very great and immediate advantage, they would not play into the hands of their private enemies by fighting on their own account against a powerful stranger. If, for instance, the Mahsud Kheyl Waziris were to oppose General Roberts when marching from Thul, the Darwesh Kheyl Waziris would chuckle immensely, and carefully refrain from attacking the British. Indeed, they might even help the British to thin the ranks of their hereditary foes; and then, when General

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Roberts's column had got safely past, they would wipe out the remnant of their weakened kinsmen. By asking for simple neutrality, the British alliance enables the hill tribes to lay out the rupees they pay them in compassing each other's destruction, and does not interfere with the serious business of the mountaineers' regular life—intertribal vendetta.

The Ameer, on the other hand, cannot afford to ask for mere neutrality. He will require from his allies active opposition to the advance. But the advancing army will be armed with Snider rifles, which are an abomination to the hillmen. They consider it revolting that a man should drop another at 600 yards, while the poor jezail-armed victim had still another quarter of a mile's stalking to do before he could hope to have his shot. That a bold mountaineer should not be allowed to show himself against the sky-line on one of his own native peaks without having bullets fired at him from half a mile's distance they think barbarous—but they respect the fact. On several accounts, therefore, Lord Lytton stands at an advantage as compared with the Ameer in his negotiations with the hillmen. Against this fact there remains the astonishing character of these mountaineers; and in estimating the chances of their services, or the value of them, this can hardly be sufficiently insisted upon. Their internal feuds are so constant and so malignant that the villages, corn fields, and orchards, as well as the hill sides, are studded with round towers in which men are at watch all day and night. Nothing belonging to their enemies is safe. If even a bullock or a fowl strays off its own premises it is sure to receive a bullet from a neighbour's house. It is a fact that the village children are taught never to walk in the centre of the road, and so, from the force of early habit, they creep stealthily along under any cover that offers from point to point. The natives themselves have asked travellers to remark that the cattle, as if by instinct, invariably follow the same example! Such are the tribes with whom we have to deal.

Meanwhile, in the history of the past year there is much to encourage those who believe that leopards' spots may be effaced by selection or an Ethiopian, under favouring circumstances, develope a white skin. For the purposes of administration, the Indian hill frontier on the north-west is divided into the six districts of Hazara, Peshawur, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Dera Ghazi Khan—the last three composing what is called "The Derajat"—and the Punjaub Government, reporting upon their condition, characterises the year's experiences along the whole line as being most satisfactory. The head men of the various tribes continue to hunt up each other when they are proscribed by the authorities with commendable diligence, and when one family has burnt down the village of another the aggrieved persons report the outrage with praiseworthy punctuality. Even this is, for the hill men, behaving excellently. Indeed, that they should refrain from murdering the workmen on British roads in British territory and from raiding upon British outposts, may be accepted as evidence that they are peaceably inclined towards us. But this will not be the ultimate object of our negotiations. By securing their neutrality towards ourselves we certainly deprive Cabul of a handle for annoying us and might be well content with this as the sole result of our "treaty relations." But by bribes and threats judiciously combined we may not only fairly hope to make our communications respected, but also, confiding in the sagacity and experience of our political officers on the frontier, we may look forward to detaching from troublesome coalitions the dominant elements, and thus utilising the whole. The Khyberi, at any rate, can do as good service, and that we have so often soundly beaten him on his own ground is a fact that will not militate against us in our negotiations. Not only by the moral influence upon other tribes that his presence as our escort will exercise will he be useful. His kinsmen hold the adversary's strongholds in the pass at their mercy, and with their co-operation the keeping open of communications would be immensely facilitated. As a matter of fact, the management of the hill tribes of our frontier is a fine art that has been specially studied by our political department, and at this moment we have on the spot several officers who have graduated with honours in it. Knowing this, and understanding from recent history the effect which the defection of one tribe to our service, and to the cause of law and order, has had and will have on their neighbours, we await with confidence, in spite of all adverse circumstances of character, the outcome of Lord Lytton's very sagacious policy.

In calculating the military resources of Afghanistan at any period of its history, it has always been found necessary to leave a wide margin to cover the possible vagaries of the Sirdars. These chiefs are the virtual rulers of the Ameer, the ruler of Cabul. They openly assert their independence at all times, and the tribal jealousies by which the population is always split up into factions favour their disrepect of the central authority. The Sirdars, or provincial governors, affect to be responsible to the Ameer not only for the revenues of the districts under their charge in times of peace, but also for the efficiency of the military contingent which those districts are bound to provide to the national army in times of war. In the neighbourhood of the capital, where the Ameer always holds his own regiments in readiness, and where he keeps stored all the arms presented to him by the Indian Government, this responsibility is something more than nominal. But in the outlying districts, on the east, west, and south, not only are the Sirdars independent in a great measure of the Ameer's authority, but the tribes over whom they are placed disregard as they choose both the Sirdar at hand and the Ameer at a distance. The revenue in these parts of the country is collected by force, and herds, standing crops, and hostages are as regular items in the revenue accounts as customs and taxes in more settled countries. Where it is so difficult to collect money, it might be thought that the collection of men would be no easy matter; but the character of the people, which makes the one almost impossible, facilitates the other, for the Afghans will rally to any standard provided that pay in the present and plunder in the future are promised. Against Shere Ali, in 1868, one disaffected chief collected over a hundred thousand men in the neighbourhood of Candahar alone, while another seized possession of the province of Balkh, at the head of nearly seventy thousand soldiers. "He who possesses a little money will soon have a sufficient number of partisans to assist in raising him to power," says the author of the "History of the Afghans;" and Elphinstone, in his "Account of the Kingdom of Cabul," says "the tribes will desert one party and attach themselves to another without feeling any compunction or incurring any disgrace;" and an Afghan has thus concisely stated the national feeling as to loyalty: "We are content with discord, with alarms, with bloodshed, but will never be content with a master." Concerted rebellion is, however, as impossible to this divided people as concerted loyalty, and, having therefore only to oppose and chastise one section at a time, the Ameer has managed to keep the upper hand of all. But on every occasion that he has had to make a general appeal to the country for support he has been notably deserted. Against Persia the late Ameer could not rally a sufficient army until he had obtained British assistance, and when threatened by Russia he had to seek the same aid to suppress pro-Russian agitation on the frontier. The present Ameer, Shere Ali, when a rival appeared in the field, found half his army in the rebel camp, and after the first defeat was left without any army at all. Three forces were operating independently at once. Again, when his son Yakub Khan broke out into rebellion he collected at once a sufficient army to seize Herat and most seriously endanger his father's tenure of power. Even the Ameer's nephew, Abdul Rahman Khan, returning from exile to dispute Shere Ali's possession of the throne, raised 25,000 men against him in the centre of his kingdom. The actual number, therefore, of the Ameer's army at the present day cannot be accurately calculated, and no figures yet published have been set forth or accepted as authoritative. Meanwhile it is known that Shere Ali entertains on more or less regular pay twenty regiments of infantry, seven of cavalry, and a small force of artillery. The Afghans form the bulk of the infantry, Persians and Moghuls of the cavalry, and Hindustanis of various kinds the artillery. Besides this—the so-called standing army—there is the vast body of militia, which includes, probably, nearly every adult male of the kingdom. They receive no pay in times of peace, and find their own arms, and, as might be expected, consider they owe very little to the Ameer. But they are bound by tribal ties to their chiefs; and, as these hold from the Ameer rent-free lands in military fief, they deem themselves responsible for their

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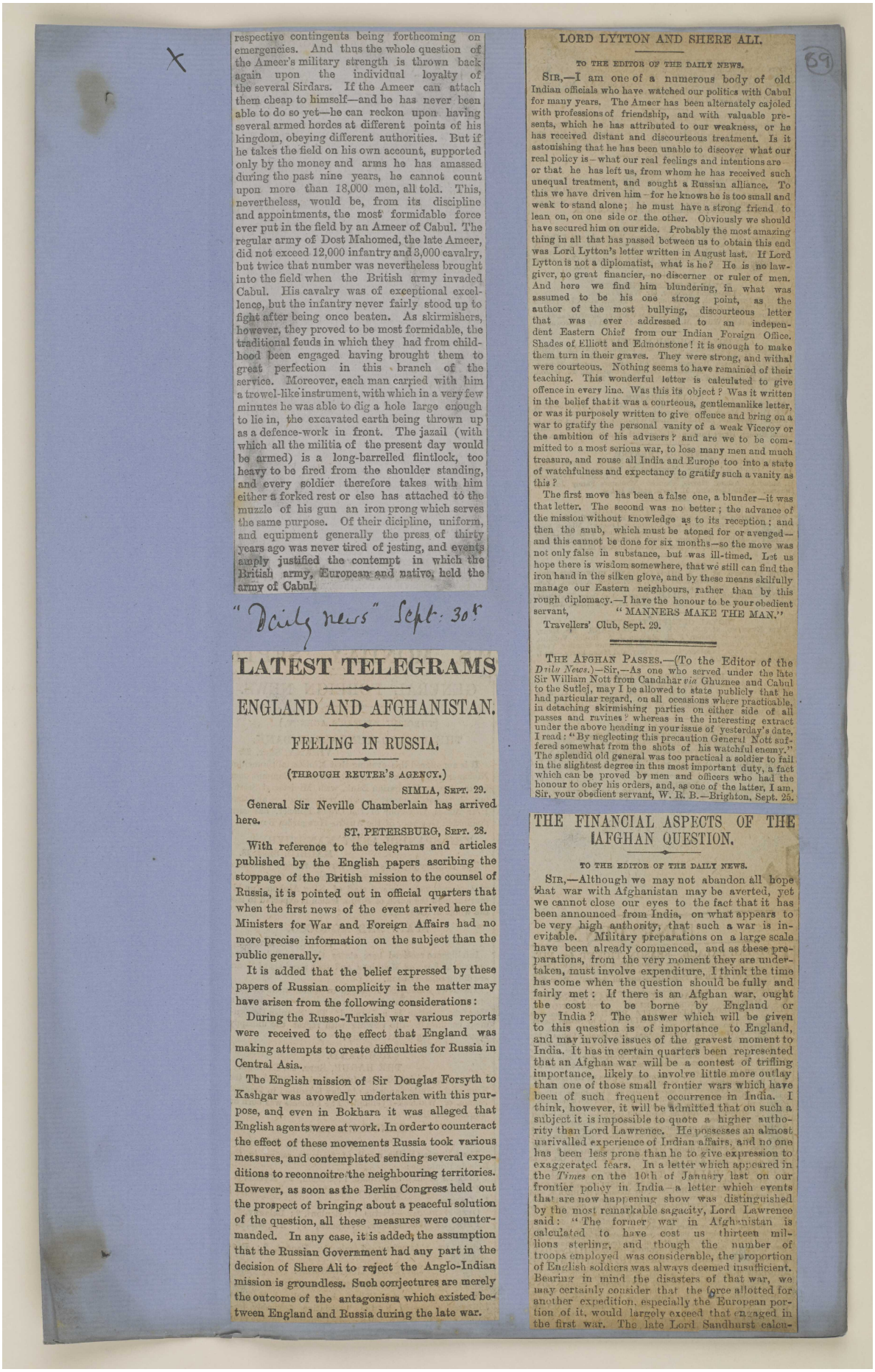

respective contingents being forthcoming on emergencies. And thus the whole question of the Ameer's military strength is thrown back again upon the individual loyalty of the several Sirdars. If the Ameer can attach them cheap to himself—and he has never been able to do so yet—he can reckon upon having several armed hordes at different points of his kingdom, obeying different authorities. But if he takes the field on his own account, supported only by the money and arms he has amassed during the past nine years, he cannot count upon more than 18,000 men, all told. This, nevertheless, would be, from its discipline and appointments, the most formidable force ever put in the field by an Ameer of Cabul. The regular army of Dost Mahomed, the late Ameer, did not exceed 12,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry, but twice that number was nevertheless brought into the field when the British army invaded Cabul. His cavalry was of exceptional excellence, but the infantry never fairly stood up to fight after being once beaten. As skirmishers, however, they proved to be most formidable, the traditional feuds in which they had from childhood been engaged having brought them to great perfection in this branch of the service. Moreover, each man carried with him a trowel-like instrument, with which in a very few minutes he was able to dig a hole large enough to lie in, the excavated earth being thrown up as a defence-work in front. The jazail (with which all the militia of the present day would be armed) is a long-barrelled flintlock, too heavy to be fired from the shoulder standing, and every soldier therefore takes with him either a forked rest or else has attached to the muzzle of his gun an iron prong which serves the same purpose. Of their dicipline, uniform, and equipment generally the press of thirty years ago was never tired of jesting, and events amply justified the contempt in which the British army, European and native, held the army of Cabul.

"Daily news" Sept. 30th

LATEST TELEGRAMS

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

FEELING IN RUSSIA.

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

SIMLA, SEPT. 29.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain has arrived here.

ST. PETERSBURG, SEPT. 28.

With reference to the telegrams and articles published by the English papers ascribing the stoppage of the British mission to the counsel of Russia, it is pointed out in official quarters that when the first news of the event arrived here the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally.

It is added that the belief expressed by these papers of Russian complicity in the matter may have arisen from the following considerations:

During the Russo-Turkish war various reports were received to the effect that England was making attempts to create difficulties for Russia in Central Asia.

The English mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar was avowedly undertaken with this purpose, and even in Bokhara it was alleged that English agents were at work. In order to counteract the effect of these movements Russia took various measures, and contemplated sending several expeditions to reconnoitre the neighbouring territories. However, as soon as the Berlin Congress held out the prospect of bringing about a peaceful solution of the question, all these measures were countermanded. In any case, it is added, the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the Anglo-Indian mission is groundless. Such conjectures are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

LORD LYTTON AND SHERE ALI.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—I am one of a numerous body of old Indian officials who have watched our politics with Cabul for many years. The Ameer has been alternately cajoled with professions of friendship, and with valuable presents, which he has attributed to our weakness, or he has received distant and discourteous treatment. Is it astonishing that he has been unable to discover what our real policy is—what our real feelings and intentions are—or that he has left us, from whom he has received such unequal treatment, and sought a Russian alliance. To this we have driven him—for he knows he is too small and weak to stand alone; he must have a strong friend to lean on, on one side or the other. Obviously we should have secured him on our side. Probably the most amazing thing in all that has passed between us to obtain this end was Lord Lytton's letter written in August last. If Lord Lytton is not a diplomatist, what is he? He is no law-giver, no great financier, no discerner or ruler of men. And here we find him blundering, in what was assumed to be his one strong point, as the author of the most bullying, discourteous letter that was ever addressed to an independent Eastern Chief from our Indian Foreign Office. Shades of Elliott and Edmonstone! it is enough to make them turn in their graves. They were strong, and withal were courteous. Nothing seems to have remained of their teaching. This wonderful letter is calculated to give offence in every line. Was this its object? Was it written in the belief that it was a courteous, gentlemanlike letter, or was it purposely written to give offence and bring on a war to gratify the personal vanity of a weak Viceroy or the ambition of his advisers? and are we to be committed to a most serious war, to lose many men and much treasure, and rouse all India and Europe too into a state of watchfulness and expectancy to gratify such a vanity as this?

The first move has been a false one, a blunder—it was that letter. The second was no better; the advance of the mission without knowledge as to its reception; and then the snub, which must be atoned for or avenged—and this cannot be done for six months—so the move was not only false in substance, but was ill-timed. Let us hope there is wisdom somewhere, that we still can find the iron hand in the silken glove, and by these means skilfully manage our Eastern neighbours, rather than by this rough diplomacy.—I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

"MANNERS MAKE THE MAN."

Travellers' Club, Sept. 29.

THE AFGHAN PASSES.—(To the Editor of the *Daily News*.)—Sir,—As one who served under the late Sir William Nott from Candahar *via* Ghuznee and Cabul to the Sutlej, may I be allowed to state publicly that he had particular regard, on all occasions where practicable, in detaching skirmishing parties on either side of all passes and ravines? whereas in the interesting extract under the above heading in your issue of yesterday's date, I read: "By neglecting this precaution General Nott suffered somewhat from the shots of his watchful enemy." The splendid old general was too practical a soldier to fail in the slightest degree in this most important duty, a fact which can be proved by men and officers who had the honour to obey his orders, and, as one of the latter, I am, Sir, your obedient servant, W. R. B.—Brighton, Sept. 25.

THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE AFGHAN QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—Although we may not abandon all hope that war with Afghanistan may be averted, yet we cannot close our eyes to the fact that it has been announced from India, on what appears to be very high authority, that such a war is inevitable. Military preparations on a large scale have been already commenced, and as these preparations, from the very moment they are undertaken, must involve expenditure, I think the time has come when the question should be fully and fairly met: If there is an Afghan war, ought the cost to be borne by England or by India? The answer which will be given to this question is of importance to England, and may involve issues of the gravest moment to India. It has in certain quarters been represented that an Afghan war will be a contest of trifling importance, likely to involve little more outlay than one of those small frontier wars which have been of such frequent occurrence in India. I think, however, it will be admitted that on such a subject it is impossible to quote a higher authority than Lord Lawrence. He possesses an almost unrivalled experience of Indian affairs, and no one has been less prone than he to give expression to exaggerated fears. In a letter which appeared in the *Times* on the 10th of January last on our frontier policy in India—a letter which events that are now happening show was distinguished by the most remarkable sagacity, Lord Lawrence said: "The former war in Afghanistan is calculated to have cost us thirteen millions sterling, and though the number of troops employed was considerable, the proportion of English soldiers was always deemed insufficient. Bearing in mind the disasters of that war, we may certainly consider that the force allotted for another expedition, especially the European portion of it, would largely exceed that engaged in the first war. The late Lord Sandhurst calcu-

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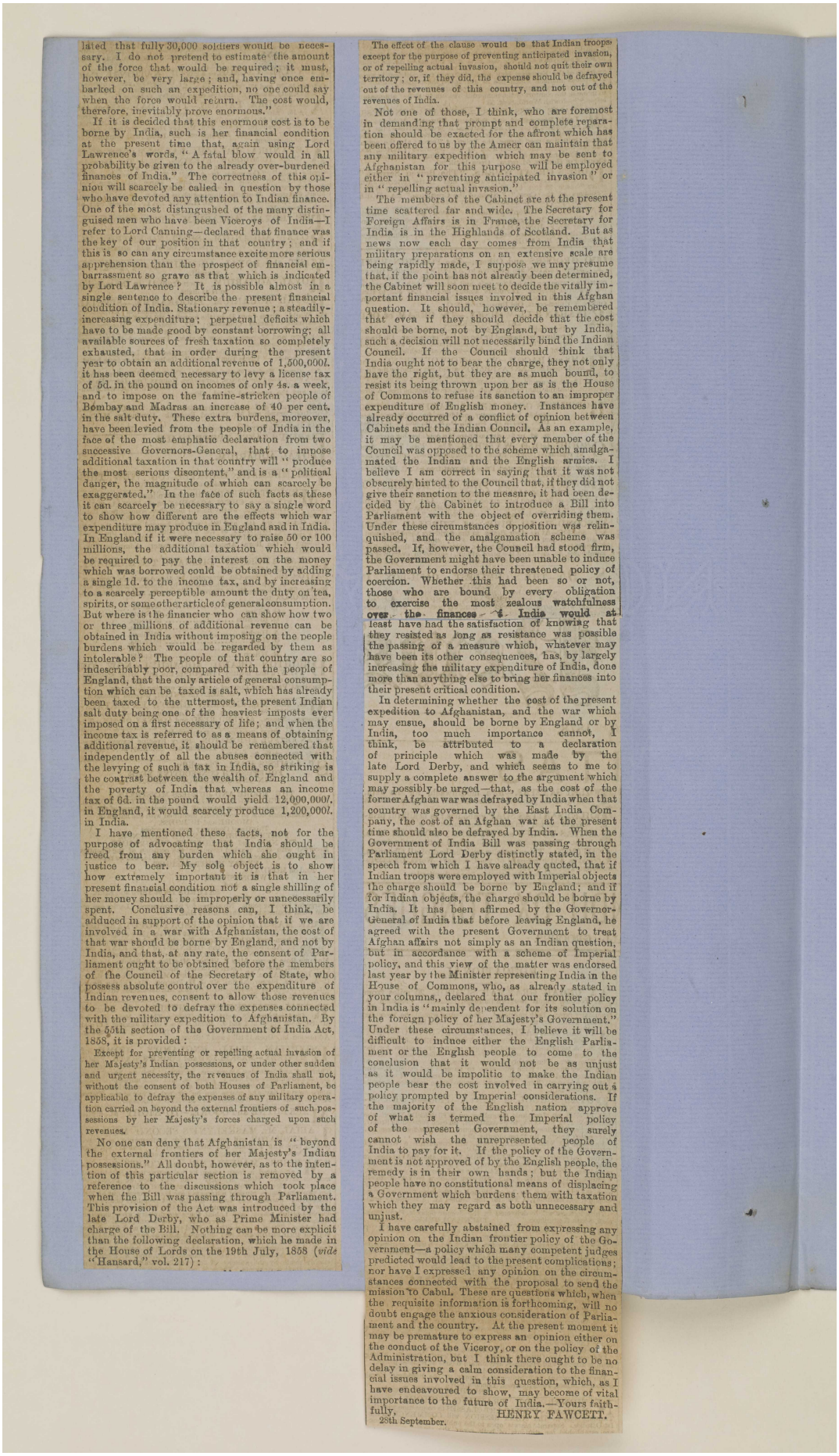

lated that fully 30,000 soldiers would be necessary. I do not pretend to estimate the amount of the force that would be required; it must, however, be very large; and, having once embarked on such an expedition, no one could say when the force would return. The cost would, therefore, inevitably prove enormous."

If it is decided that this enormous cost is to be borne by India, such is her financial condition at the present time that, again using Lord Lawrence's words, "A fatal blow would in all probability be given to the already over-burdened finances of India." The correctness of this opinion will scarcely be called in question by those who have devoted any attention to Indian finance. One of the most distinguished of the many distinguished men who have been Viceroys of India—I refer to Lord Canning—declared that finance was the key of our position in that country; and if this is so can any circumstance excite more serious apprehension than the prospect of financial embarrassment so grave as that which is indicated by Lord Lawrence? It is possible almost in a single sentence to describe the present financial condition of India. Stationary revenue; a steadily-increasing expenditure; perpetual deficits which have to be made good by constant borrowing; all available sources of fresh taxation so completely exhausted, that in order during the present year to obtain an additional revenue of 1,500,000*l.* it has been deemed necessary to levy a license tax of 5d. in the pound on incomes of only 4s. a week, and to impose on the famine-stricken people of Bombay and Madras an increase of 40 per cent. in the salt duty. These extra burdens, moreover, have been levied from the people of India in the face of the most emphatic declaration from two successive Governors-General, that to impose additional taxation in that country will "produce the most serious discontent," and is a "political danger, the magnitude of which can scarcely be exaggerated." In the face of such facts as these it can scarcely be necessary to say a single word to show how different are the effects which war expenditure may produce in England and in India. In England if it were necessary to raise 50 or 100 millions, the additional taxation which would be required to pay the interest on the money which was borrowed could be obtained by adding a single 1d. to the income tax, and by increasing to a scarcely perceptible amount the duty on tea, spirits, or some other article of general consumption. But where is the financier who can show how two or three millions of additional revenue can be obtained in India without imposing on the people burdens which would be regarded by them as intolerable? The people of that country are so indescribably poor, compared with the people of England, that the only article of general consumption which can be taxed is salt, which has already been taxed to the uttermost, the present Indian salt duty being one of the heaviest imposts ever imposed on a first necessary of life; and when the income tax is referred to as a means of obtaining additional revenue, it should be remembered that independently of all the abuses connected with the levying of such a tax in India, so striking is the contrast between the wealth of England and the poverty of India that whereas an income tax of 6d. in the pound would yield 12,000,000*l.* in England, it would scarcely produce 1,200,000*l.* in India.

I have mentioned these facts, not for the purpose of advocating that India should be freed from any burden which she ought in justice to bear. My sole object is to show how extremely important it is that in her present financial condition not a single shilling of her money should be improperly or unnecessarily spent. Conclusive reasons can, I think, be adduced in support of the opinion that if we are involved in a war with Afghanistan, the cost of that war should be borne by England, and not by India, and that, at any rate, the consent of Parliament ought to be obtained before the members of the Council of the Secretary of State, who possess absolute control over the expenditure of Indian revenues, consent to allow those revenues to be devoted to defray the expenses connected with the military expedition to Afghanistan. By the 55th section of the Government of India Act, 1858, it is provided:

> Except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues.

No one can deny that Afghanistan is "beyond the external frontiers of her Majesty's Indian possessions." All doubt, however, as to the intention of this particular section is removed by a reference to the discussions which took place when the Bill was passing through Parliament. This provision of the Act was introduced by the late Lord Derby, who as Prime Minister had charge of the Bill. Nothing can be more explicit than the following declaration, which he made in the House of Lords on the 19th July, 1858 (*vide* "Hansard," vol. 217):

> The effect of the clause would be that Indian troops, except for the purpose of preventing anticipated invasion, or of repelling actual invasion, should not quit their own territory; or, if they did, the expense should be defrayed out of the revenues of this country, and not out of the revenues of India.

Not one of those, I think, who are foremost in demanding that prompt and complete reparation should be exacted for the affront which has been offered to us by the Ameer can maintain that any military expedition which may be sent to Afghanistan for this purpose will be employed either in "preventing anticipated invasion" or in "repelling actual invasion."

The members of the Cabinet are at the present time scattered far and wide. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs is in France, the Secretary for India is in the Highlands of Scotland. But as news now each day comes from India that military preparations on an extensive scale are being rapidly made, I suppose we may presume that, if the point has not already been determined, the Cabinet will soon meet to decide the vitally important financial issues involved in this Afghan question. It should, however, be remembered that even if they should decide that the cost should be borne, not by England, but by India, such a decision will not necessarily bind the Indian Council. If the Council should think that India ought not to bear the charge, they not only have the right, but they are as much bound, to resist its being thrown upon her as is the House of Commons to refuse its sanction to an improper expenditure of English money. Instances have already occurred of a conflict of opinion between Cabinets and the Indian Council. As an example, it may be mentioned that every member of the Council was opposed to the scheme which amalgamated the Indian and the English armies. I believe I am correct in saying that it was not obscurely hinted to the Council that, if they did not give their sanction to the measure, it had been decided by the Cabinet to introduce a Bill into Parliament with the object of overriding them. Under these circumstances opposition was relinquished, and the amalgamation scheme was passed. If, however, the Council had stood firm, the Government might have been unable to induce Parliament to endorse their threatened policy of coercion. Whether this had been so or not, those who are bound by every obligation to exercise the most zealous watchfulness over the finances of India would at least have had the satisfaction of knowing that they resisted as long as resistance was possible the passing of a measure which, whatever may have been its other consequences, has, by largely increasing the military expenditure of India, done more than anything else to bring her finances into their present critical condition.

In determining whether the cost of the present expedition to Afghanistan, and the war which may ensue, should be borne by England or by India, too much importance cannot, I think, be attributed to a declaration of principle which was made by the late Lord Derby, and which seems to me to supply a complete answer to the argument which may possibly be urged—that, as the cost of the former Afghan war was defrayed by India when that country was governed by the East India Company, the cost of an Afghan war at the present time should also be defrayed by India. When the Government of India Bill was passing through Parliament Lord Derby distinctly stated, in the speech from which I have already quoted, that if Indian troops were employed with Imperial objects the charge should be borne by England; and if for Indian objects, the charge should be borne by India. It has been affirmed by the Governor-General of India that before leaving England, he agreed with the present Government to treat Afghan affairs not simply as an Indian question, but in accordance with a scheme of Imperial policy, and this view of the matter was endorsed last year by the Minister representing India in the House of Commons, who, as already stated in your columns,, declared that our frontier policy in India is "mainly dependent for its solution on the foreign policy of her Majesty's Government." Under these circumstances, I believe it will be difficult to induce either the English Parliament or the English people to come to the conclusion that it would not be as unjust as it would be impolitic to make the Indian people bear the cost involved in carrying out a policy prompted by Imperial considerations. If the majority of the English nation approve of what is termed the Imperial policy of the present Government, they surely cannot wish the unrepresented people of India to pay for it. If the policy of the Government is not approved of by the English people, the remedy is in their own hands; but the Indian people have no constitutional means of displacing a Government which burdens them with taxation which they may regard as both unnecessary and unjust.

I have carefully abstained from expressing any opinion on the Indian frontier policy of the Government—a policy which many competent judges predicted would lead to the present complications; nor have I expressed any opinion on the circumstances connected with the proposal to send the mission to Cabul. These are questions which, when the requisite information is forthcoming, will no doubt engage the anxious consideration of Parliament and the country. At the present moment it may be premature to express an opinion either on the conduct of the Viceroy, or on the policy of the Administration, but I think there ought to be no delay in giving a calm consideration to the financial issues involved in this question, which, as I have endeavoured to show, may become of vital importance to the future of India.—Yours faithfully,

HENRY FAWCETT.

28th September.

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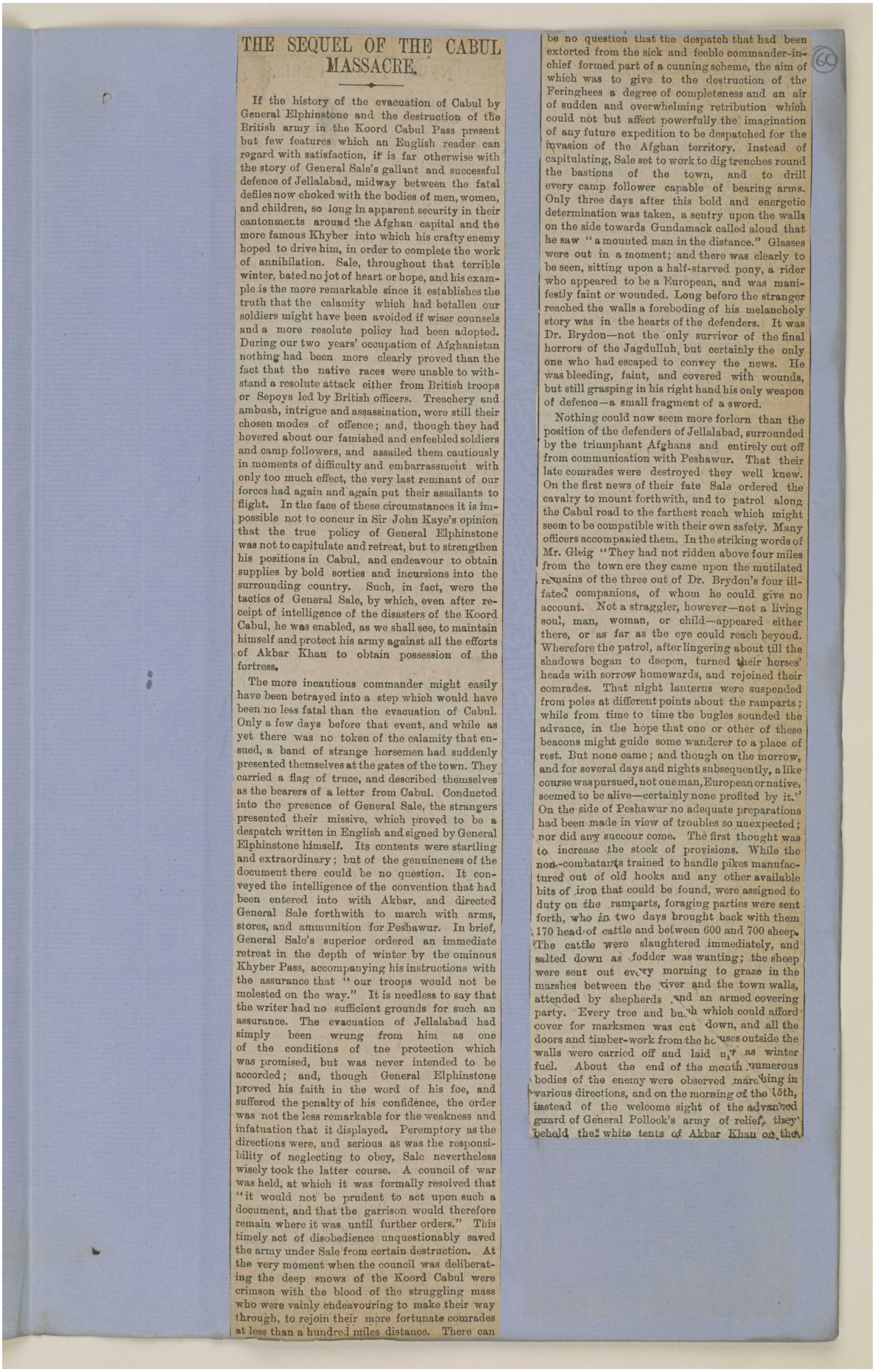

THE SEQUEL OF THE CABUL MASSACRE.

If the history of the evacuation of Cabul by General Elphinstone and the destruction of the British army in the Koord Cabul Pass present but few features which an English reader can regard with satisfaction, it is far otherwise with the story of General Sale's gallant and successful defence of Jellalabad, midway between the fatal defiles now choked with the bodies of men, women, and children, so long in apparent security in their cantonments around the Afghan capital and the more famous Khyber into which his crafty enemy hoped to drive him, in order to complete the work of annihilation. Sale, throughout that terrible winter, bated no jot of heart or hope, and his example is the more remarkable since it establishes the truth that the calamity which had befallen our soldiers might have been avoided if wiser counsels and a more resolute policy had been adopted. During our two years' occupation of Afghanistan nothing had been more clearly proved than the fact that the native races were unable to withstand a resolute attack either from British troops or Sepoys led by British officers. Treachery and ambush, intrigue and assassination, were still their chosen modes of offence; and, though they had hovered about our famished and enfeebled soldiers and camp followers, and assailed them cautiously in moments of difficulty and embarrassment with only too much effect, the very last remnant of our forces had again and again put their assailants to flight. In the face of these circumstances it is impossible not to concur in Sir John Kaye's opinion that the true policy of General Elphinstone was not to capitulate and retreat, but to strengthen his positions in Cabul, and endeavour to obtain supplies by bold sorties and incursions into the surrounding country. Such, in fact, were the tactics of General Sale, by which, even after receipt of intelligence of the disasters of the Koord Cabul, he was enabled, as we shall see, to maintain himself and protect his army against all the efforts of Akbar Khan to obtain possession of the fortress.

The more incautious commander might easily have been betrayed into a step which would have been no less fatal than the evacuation of Cabul. Only a few days before that event, and while as yet there was no token of the calamity that ensued, a band of strange horsemen had suddenly presented themselves at the gates of the town. They carried a flag of truce, and described themselves as the bearers of a letter from Cabul. Conducted into the presence of General Sale, the strangers presented their missive, which proved to be a despatch written in English and signed by General Elphinstone himself. Its contents were startling and extraordinary; but of the genuineness of the document there could be no question. It conveyed the intelligence of the convention that had been entered into with Akbar, and directed General Sale forthwith to march with arms, stores, and ammunition for Peshawur. In brief, General Sale's superior ordered an immediate retreat in the depth of winter by the ominous Khyber Pass, accompanying his instructions with the assurance that "our troops would not be molested on the way." It is needless to say that the writer had no sufficient grounds for such an assurance. The evacuation of Jellalabad had simply been wrung from him as one of the conditions of the protection which was promised, but was never intended to be accorded; and, though General Elphinstone proved his faith in the word of his foe, and suffered the penalty of his confidence, the order was not the less remarkable for the weakness and infatuation that it displayed. Peremptory as the directions were, and serious as was the responsibility of neglecting to obey, Sale nevertheless wisely took the latter course. A council of war was held, at which it was formally resolved that "it would not be prudent to act upon such a document, and that the garrison would therefore remain where it was until further orders." This timely act of disobedience unquestionably saved the army under Sale from certain destruction. At the very moment when the council was deliberating the deep snows of the Koord Cabul were crimson with the blood of the struggling mass who were vainly endeavouring to make their way through, to rejoin their more fortunate comrades at less than a hundred miles distance. There can be no question that the despatch that had been extorted from the sick and feeble commander-in-chief formed part of a cunning scheme, the aim of which was to give to the destruction of the Feringhees a degree of completeness and an air of sudden and overwhelming retribution which could not but affect powerfully the imagination of any future expedition to be despatched for the invasion of the Afghan territory. Instead of capitulating, Sale set to work to dig trenches round the bastions of the town, and to drill every camp follower capable of bearing arms. Only three days after this bold and energetic determination was taken, a sentry upon the walls on the side towards Gundamack called aloud that he saw "a mounted man in the distance." Glasses were out in a moment; and there was clearly to be seen, sitting upon a half-starved pony, a rider who appeared to be a European, and was manifestly faint or wounded. Long before the stranger reached the walls a foreboding of his melancholy story was in the hearts of the defenders. It was Dr. Brydon—not the only survivor of the final horrors of the Jagdulluh, but certainly the only one who had escaped to convey the news. He was bleeding, faint, and covered with wounds, but still grasping in his right hand his only weapon of defence—a small fragment of a sword.

Nothing could now seem more forlorn than the position of the defenders of Jellalabad, surrounded by the triumphant Afghans and entirely cut off from communication with Peshawur. That their late comrades were destroyed they well knew. On the first news of their fate Sale ordered the cavalry to mount forthwith, and to patrol along the Cabul road to the farthest reach which might seem to be compatible with their own safety. Many officers accompanied them. In the striking words of Mr. Gleig "They had not ridden above four miles from the town ere they came upon the mutilated remains of the three out of Dr. Brydon's four ill-fated companions, of whom he could give no account. Not a straggler, however—not a living soul, man, woman, or child—appeared either there, or as far as the eye could reach beyond. Wherefore the patrol, after lingering about till the shadows began to deepen, turned their horses' heads with sorrow homewards, and rejoined their comrades. That night lanterns were suspended from poles at different points about the ramparts; while from time to time the bugles sounded the advance, in the hope that one or other of these beacons might guide some wanderer to a place of rest. But none came; and though on the morrow, and for several days and nights subsequently, a like course was pursued, not one man, European or native, seemed to be alive—certainly none profited by it." On the side of Peshawur no adequate preparations had been made in view of troubles so unexpected; nor did any succour come. The first thought was to increase the stock of provisions. While the non-combatants trained to handle pikes manufactured out of old hooks and any other available bits of iron that could be found, were assigned to duty on the ramparts, foraging parties were sent forth, who in two days brought back with them 170 head of cattle and between 600 and 700 sheep. The cattle were slaughtered immediately, and salted down as fodder was wanting; the sheep were sent out every morning to graze in the marshes between the river and the town walls, attended by shepherds and an armed covering party. Every tree and bush which could afford cover for marksmen was cut down, and all the doors and timber-work from the houses outside the walls were carried off and laid up as winter fuel. About the end of the month numerous bodies of the enemy were observed marching in various directions, and on the morning of the 10th, instead of the welcome sight of the advanced guard of General Pollock's army of relief, they beheld the white tents of Akbar Khan on the

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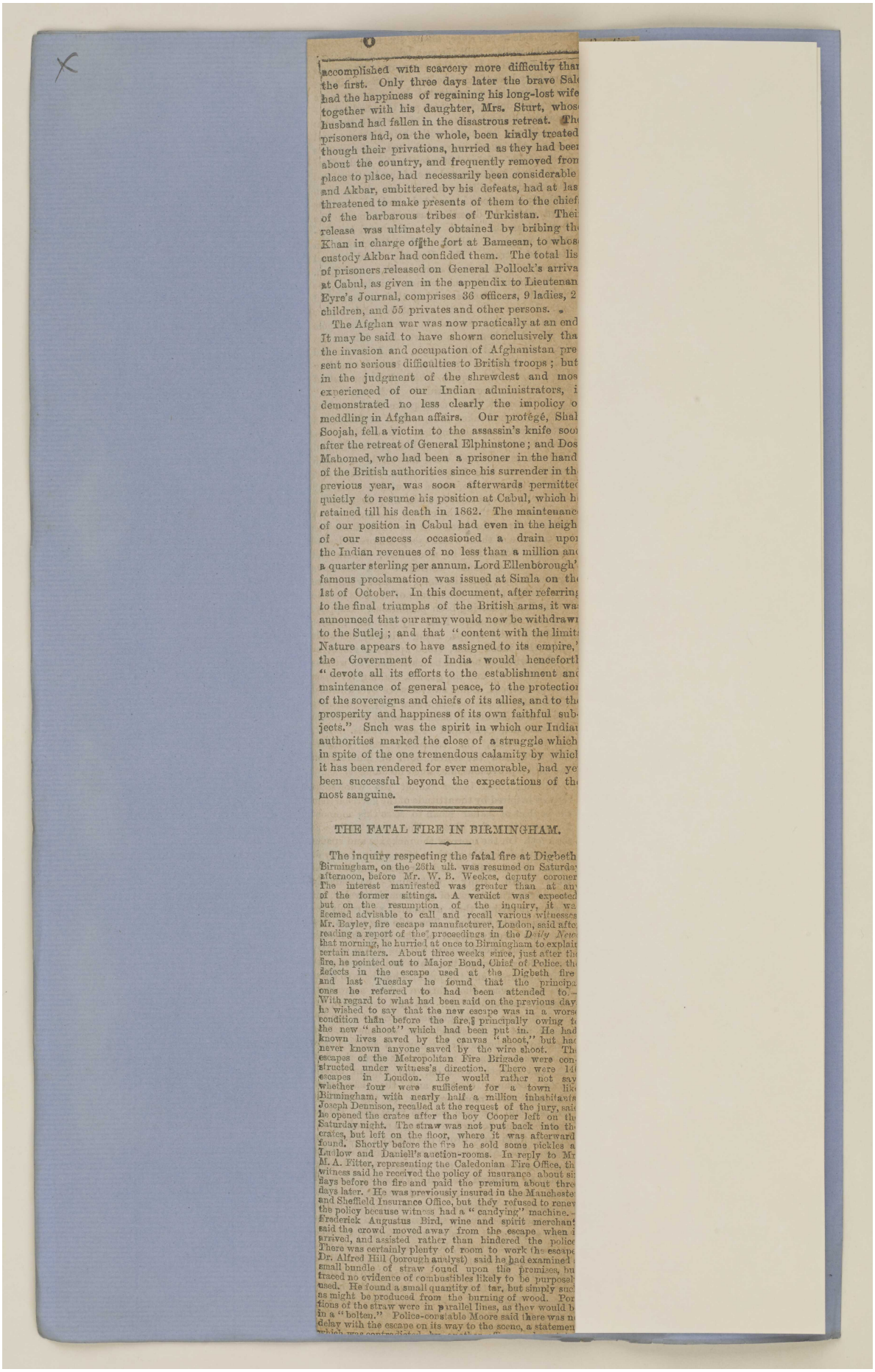

accomplished with scarcely more difficulty than the first. Only three days later the brave Sale had the happiness of regaining his long-lost wife together with his daughter, Mrs. Sturt, whose husband had fallen in the disastrous retreat. The prisoners had, on the whole, been kindly treated though their privations, hurried as they had been about the country, and frequently removed from place to place, had necessarily been considerable and Akbar, embittered by his defeats, had at last threatened to make presents of them to the chiefs of the barbarous tribes of Turkistan. Their release was ultimately obtained by bribing the Khan in charge of the fort at Bameean, to whose custody Akbar had confided them. The total list of prisoners released on General Pollock's arrival at Cabul, as given in the appendix to Lieutenant Eyre's Journal, comprises 36 officers, 9 ladies, 2 children, and 55 privates and other persons.

The Afghan war was now practically at an end. It may be said to have shown conclusively that the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan presented no serious difficulties to British troops; but in the judgment of the shrewdest and most experienced of our Indian administrators, it demonstrated no less clearly the impolicy of meddling in Afghan affairs. Our protégé, Shah Soojah, fell a victim to the assassin's knife soon after the retreat of General Elphinstone; and Dost Mahomed, who had been a prisoner in the hands of the British authorities since his surrender in the previous year, was soon afterwards permitted quietly to resume his position at Cabul, which he retained till his death in 1862. The maintenance of our position in Cabul had even in the height of our success occasioned a drain upon the Indian revenues of no less than a million and a quarter sterling per annum. Lord Ellenborough's famous proclamation was issued at Simla on the 1st of October. In this document, after referring to the final triumphs of the British arms, it was announced that our army would now be withdrawn to the Sutlej; and that "content with the limits Nature appears to have assigned to its empire," the Government of India would henceforth "devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, to the protection of the sovereigns and chiefs of its allies, and to the prosperity and happiness of its own faithful subjects." Such was the spirit in which our Indian authorities marked the close of a struggle which in spite of the one tremendous calamity by which it has been rendered for ever memorable, had yet been successful beyond the expectations of the most sanguine.

THE FATAL FIRE IN BIRMINGHAM.

The inquiry respecting the fatal fire at Digbeth Birmingham, on the 26th ult. was resumed on Saturday afternoon, before Mr. W. B. Weekes, deputy coroner. The interest manifested was greater than at any of the former sittings. A verdict was expected but on the resumption of the inquiry, it was deemed advisable to call and recall various witnesses. Mr. Bayley, fire escape manufacturer, London, said after reading a report of the proceedings in the *Daily News* that morning, he hurried at once to Birmingham to explain certain matters. About three weeks since, just after the fire, he pointed out to Major Bond, Chief of Police, the defects in the escape used at the Digbeth fire and last Tuesday he found that the principal ones he referred to had been attended to.—With regard to what had been said on the previous day he wished to say that the new escape was in a worse condition than before the fire, principally owing to the new "shoot" which had been put in. He had known lives saved by the canvas "shoot," but had never known anyone saved by the wire shoot. The escapes of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade were constructed under witness's direction. There were 14 escapes in London. He would rather not say whether four were sufficient for a town like Birmingham, with nearly half a million inhabitants. Joseph Dennison, recalled at the request of the jury, said he opened the crates after the boy Cooper left on the Saturday night. The straw was not put back into the crates, but left on the floor, where it was afterward found. Shortly before the fire he sold some pickles at Ludlow and Daniell's auction-rooms. In reply to Mr. M. A. Fitter, representing the Caledonian Fire Office, the witness said he received the policy of insurance about six days before the fire and paid the premium about three days later. He was previously insured in the Manchester and Sheffield Insurance Office, but they refused to renew the policy because witness had a "candying" machine.—Frederick Augustus Bird, wine and spirit merchant, said the crowd moved away from the escape when it arrived, and assisted rather than hindered the police. There was certainly plenty of room to work the escape. Dr. Alfred Hill (borough analyst) said he had examined a small bundle of straw found upon the premises, but traced no evidence of combustibles likely to be purposely used. He found a small quantity of tar, but simply such as might be produced from the burning of wood. Portions of the straw were in parallel lines, as they would be in a "bolten." Police-constable Moore said there was no delay with the escape on its way to the scene, a statement

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"Foreign Standard"
Sept. 30th

THE INDIAN CRISIS.

THE MILITARY DEMONSTRATION.

RUSSIA AND THE AMEER.

(By Eastern Telegraph.)
(from our special correspondent.)

CALCUTTA, Sunday.

The preparations for the campaign are being pushed forward energetically, and no time whatever is being lost.

The 8th Cavalry marched from Mooltan on Friday morning, the Artillery followed yesterday, and the European and Native Infantry march to-morrow. The 26th Infantry will arive by rail from Lahore to-day, the 19th Cavalry are proceeding from the same place by regular marches. The troops are to assemble at Dehraghazikhan, *en route* to Quettah. Candahar is believed to be the eventual destination. The Commissariat department is collecting supplies for 10,000 men. The river steamers are held back for taking troops across the Indus and for conveying heavy baggage, although it is generally believed that the advance will be made to Candahar and perhaps on to Herat. The declared immediate object is to strengthen the garrison of Quettah. The Government profess to expect that the military demonstration will bring Shere Ali to terms without actual war; the popular and more probable belief is that he will resist to the last what he cannot but regard as a menace to his independence.

(By Great Northern Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)

ST. PETERSBURG, Sunday.

The *Exchange News* of to-day says:—

"If we desired to give the simplest definition of the Eastern Question we should say it was a question of rivalry between Russia and England. Whether it is necessary for us to engage in a struggle because of such rivalry we do not know, but we do know that the struggle exists. Twice within the memory of the present generation that struggle has forced Russia to fly to arms, and twice it has ended unfavourably to her. If it comes to armed interference on England's part, Russia will hardly leave the Ameer undefended, and Afghanistan may probably play the same part that Servia played in the unfortunate war just terminated."

SIMLA, Sept. 29.

General Sir Neville Chamberlain has arrived here.

ST. PETERSBURG, Sept. 23.

With reference to the telegrams and articles published by the English papers ascribing the stoppage of the British Mission to the counsel of Russia, it is pointed out in official quarters that when the first news of the event arrived here the Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally.

It is added that the belief expressed by these papers of Russian complicity in the matter may have arisen from the following considerations:—During the Russo-Turkish war various reports were received to the effect that England was making attempts to create difficulties for Russia in Central Asia. The English Mission of Sir Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar was avowedly undertaken with this purpose, and even in Bokhara it was alleged that English agents were at work. In order to counteract the effect of these movements, Russia took various measures, and contemplated sending several expeditions to reconnoitre the neighbouring territories. However, as soon as the Berlin Congress held out the prospect of bringing about a peaceful solution of the question, all these measures were countermanded. In any case, it is added, the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the Anglo-Indian Mission is groundless. Such conjectures are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

THE AFGHAN CRISIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

Sir,—The crisis to which the Anglo-Afghan question has attained is the most momentous that has occurred within the present generation, and on the manner in which it is dealt with depends the whole fabric of the English supremacy in Southern Asia. The series of articles which have been recently appearing in your columns throws light on the historical and geographical facts that form the basis of the relations that must subsist between India and Afghanistan. You have supplied the necessary data; it is now time that our true policy should be enunciated, both as regards Afghanistan, the immediate subject under discussion, and as regards Russia—the dark shadow that looms, indistinct but ominous, behind the Ameer of Cabul. It is unnecessary for me to dwell upon the danger to India from Russian schemes in Cabul either for the purpose of embroiling that State with us, or of securing diplomatic and commercial stations for Muscovite officers within its territory. That danger is generally admitted, and in India among the native population it is the foremost thought of the day. Nor are Englishmen backward in expressing the same belief. During forty years apprehension at Russia's designs has been steadily acquiring consistency, and the warnings of such intelligent foreign critics as Arminius Vambery have been added to the prophetic utterances of many a countryman of ours since Macnaghten first directed attention to "the great game in Central Asia," as he tersely put it. Those apprehensions are proved by the Russian mission to Cabul to be far from chimerical, and their justness is confirmed by Shere Ali's subsequent action in refusing to receive our representative. It is impossible for any one to persist in shutting his eyes to the fact that Russia does menace our hold on India. Difficult, and perhaps impossible, as she would find the task, Russia might, at least, cause us such loss in preserving our Indian Empire against attack from within and without, that the greatest of wars to nip the danger in an incipient stage would be preferable.

There is no doubt that Lord Lytton and the majority of the Indian Council recognise the gravity of the occasion, and are resolved to take the most vigorous measures for effecting a permanent settlement of the relations between Simla and Cabul. Their acts announce their opinions, and in those acts of prompt and resolved decision the country will take the liveliest satisfaction. Lord Lytton may rest assured that Englishmen of almost every shade of opinion will afford him and his advisers their passionate support in any measure calculated not only to bring Shere Ali to his senses, but also to settle our standing with Cabul for ever, and to repulse every pretension Russia may advance to station consuls and political agents south of the Oxus. But in the valuable telegrams which your Indian Correspondents have so energetically remitted to you, there is cause for concern, as well as for the more agreeable sentiments of pleasure and approval. There is doubt and hesitation somewhere, be it at home or out in India, that threaten to nullify those acts of vigorous policy which must, if persisted in, solve the Afghan question once and for ever. With three months before us available for military operations, by the admission of every one, and with the whole winter on the testimony of others, if only British troops be employed, with three armies of the total strength of between 30,000 and 40,000 fighting men, converging on as many portions of Afghanistan, what is the meaning of the sentence "that the advance will probably be put off to the spring?" The assertion has been repeated in so many quarters that it is only right and proper that Englishmen should realise the full significance of that little sentence.

It has also been stated that the Afghan crisis has advanced to so intricate and important a stage that it passes out of the realm of Asiatic politics into that of Imperial. I have no objection to the phrase if it means that a whole and perfect policy is to be followed in Western Asia in conjunction with a re-arrangement of our relations with Cabul. If such be the case, I highly approve the statesmanship that will make our action in Asia Minor, in Persia, and in Cabul, identical for the preservation of Southern Asia from the hostile influence of Russia. But there is too much reason to fear that Imperial policy in this case is intended to be a debasing shuffling-off of responsibility, a weak trifling with questions of life and death to us as a ruling Power, and a desire to obtain by compromise and vacillation half concessions from the Ameer and from Russia, which will herald the decline of our prestige and power among the peoples of India.

If such be Imperial policy in dealing with the Central Asian question, I vastly prefer the Indian policy. What Indian policy is may be seen

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from the military preparations along the frontier, and what its effects must be can be perceived by those who will only regard the matter in the face, in the troubles already breaking out within the borders of Cabul, as well as in the satisfaction that the Indian nation is demonstrating at the proofs Lord Lytton has given of his resolve at least to punish to the fullest extent the insult offered to his Envoy. In the Afghan question the country must insist on Indian policy shaping Imperial. The former policy is a practical one, and the latter is only theoretical, if it does not place itself in harmony with the various policies necessary in Cabul, Teheran, and Armenia. But unfortunately this crisis finds us at home with disunited ranks to support the active policy inaugurated by the present Viceroy, in consequence of Russia's persistent schemes in Cabul and Central Asia generally, and the existence of that disunion is demonstrated by the insertion of that qualifying sentence to the effect that the advance into Afghanistan will be put off for more than six months. "There is a rift within the lute" somewhere, and it must be removed. The English nation will never tolerate a similar attitude towards Russia in the Afghan question that it did when Kars and Batoum were in a weak moment surrendered as the price England paid for postponing a war with Russia. "Peace with honour" is all very well, and no one can feel more satisfaction than I do whenever the country avoids a war; but the sacrifice of national interests, even to accomplish the hopeless task of propitiating the Russian people and Government, is not the way to recommend the blessings of peace to Englishmen. False timidity, and an unjustifiable apprehension of the risks of a great war, as the supposed outcome of a great policy, in Central Asia, are at work at home striving to paralyse those statesmanlike instincts which have impelled the Anglo-Indian authorities to resent in the promptest manner the outrage an Afghan ruler has dared to commit upon an English Governor General, and to exact from him the amplest reparation.

More than a week has elapsed since the refusal of the Governor of Ali Musjid to permit the Chamberlain Mission to enter Cabul, but, although the question is declared to be in the hands of the home Government alone, no Cabinet Council has yet assembled to concert how best to give support to Lord Lytton during the present trying crisis, no measure has been adopted to emphasise the fact that England's Imperial policy is identical with the vigorous Indian policy of the present Viceroy. In this crisis of our fate in Asia, where the news is spreading in all directions that Shere Ali has bade us loud defiance, the melancholy fact is observable that the Cabinet appears to be apathetic to the danger. With a strong and united Conservative party in office, with the vast majority of the country at its back, and with the Indian nations on the tiptoe of anxiety and expectation to know what we shall do in vindication of our reputation, it is lamentable to perceive tokens that there is a want of union in the Cabinet that threatens not only to magnify the crisis by encouraging both Shere Ali and Russia, but that must infallibly wreck the Government against the indignation of the country the moment it perceives that where it expected strength there was weakness, where union, discord. England must not stoop so low as to equivocate in her Asian policy for the sake of acquiring nominal concessions elsewhere, and whether the declaration come sooner or later on the part of the nation, it must infallibly be pronounced that the true policy towards Cabul in the first place, and towards the Russians in the second place is, after all, the bold and consistent policy which Lord Lytton has ever followed, and which he is now ably working out in military dispositions that rival those adopted by Warren Hastings in a somewhat similar crisis in Central India a century ago. The Government must not hesitate in its policy towards Cabul through any craven fears of accepting too much responsibility. England will sanction and support a strong policy at any cost; but it will condemn and resent a policy of compromise and vacillation, more especially when attended by increased armaments and expenditure. To put the matter plainly, the nation will acquiesce in the inconveniences of a shilling income tax when there is necessity to support our interests and our honour; but it will turn on and repudiate the Administration that imposes upon it a sixpenny tax, while it abandons points of value to the enemy, and shirks the responsibility of its situation in all critical moments.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
September 28. ANGLO-INDIAN.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Sept: 30th

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SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

Telegrams from India give further details of the military preparations which are being made by the Indian Government, who, it is announced, will make Lahore their headquarters for the winter, and will not return to Calcutta. Sir Neville Chamberlain arrived at Simla on Saturday. The *Times* correspondent at Calcutta says that it is believed that General Abramoff has returned to the headquarters of General Kauffmann, but that two Russian officers still remain at Cabul. A despatch from Simla in the *Daily Telegraph* states that the vernacular press of Northern India is nearly unanimous in praise of the Viceroy's Cabul policy, and specially approves the employment of native nobles in the Cabul mission. The Russian papers continue to discuss Afghan affairs, and a semi-official statement which has been telegraphed asserts that there is no ground for the assumption that the Russian Government had any part in the decision of Shere Ali to reject the British mission. Such conjectures, it is added, are merely the outcome of the antagonism which existed between England and Russia during the late war.

On Saturday the *Telegraph*, obviously acting on official inspiration (for no sane journalist would say as much out of his own head), told the public that Shere Ali's defiance and the war which it will probably force on us are really matters on which we should congratulate ourselves. It is a stroke of luck, in fact. To-day the taller and more solemn ministerial flunkey (recently engaged) repeats the same assurance. "War, if war we are to have, will be a troublesome and a costly affair. It promises, nevertheless, to be well worth its cost in the end. We may even be glad at the opportunity now granted us of settling our relations with Afghanistan." It will probably cost some fifteen millions sterling (the last war cost thirteen), and if in the end we break up Afghanistan, we shall find ourselves face to face with Russia, with the whole border in the condition of some of the European provinces of Turkey. Nevertheless, we are fortunate in being compelled to bring about that most promising state of things. If Russia has so compelled us, let us give to her our thanks. "Whether the insolent conduct of Shere Ali has or has not been instigated by Russia is more than we can say certainly. We will forgive her freely if she has rendered us this service, whatever may have been the motive that has prompted her to it."

GENERAL CHAMBERLAIN.

Lieutenant-General Crawford Chamberlain, of the Bengal army, who is mentioned by the Indian papers as the probable commander of any force destined for service in Afghanistan, is the younger brother of Sir Neville Chamberlain, the present Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, and the envoy depute whose mission to Cabul has been cut short so prematurely. General Crawford Chamberlain has seen a good deal of service in his younger days, including the Afghan war, but nothing like so much as his distinguished brother. The latter's military career began also with the Afghan war, when he was almost a boy, and during it he gained a high reputation for personal gallantry, being wounded no fewer than six times, on several occasions in single combat. Soon afterwards made commandant of a regiment of irregular cavalry, Sir Neville Chamberlain rose, by what was in those days very rapid promotion, to the command of the Punjaub frontier force, with the local rank of brigadier, he being still a regimental captain and brevet lieutenant-colonel. This force, which numbered nearly eleven regiments of cavalry and infantry, guarded, and still guards, the line of the North-west frontier, and is independent of the control of the army head-quarters, the commandant being immediately under the orders of the Government of the Punjaub, and virtually a commander-in-chief. For many years after our first occupation of the Punjaub, and on first coming into contact with the wild frontier tribes beyond the frontier—who from the time of Alexander the Great downwards have never acknowledged a master—the "Punjaub Irregular Force," as it was called, was engaged in almost constant warfare with the enemy; and the brigadier commanded in person in numerous actions against these gallant foes, characterized in many cases by very hard hand-to-hand fighting. The outbreak of the Mutiny found Brigadier Chamberlain still in command on the frontier, but on the death of Colonel Chester, the Adjutant-General of the Army, who was killed in the first action before Delhi, Brigadier Chamberlain was summoned to replace him. Shortly after reaching the camp he was severely wounded while leading in person an attack on the enemy in one of the numerous actions fought before the walls of the city; and for the rest of the siege the current duties of the Adjutant-General's office were performed by Lieutenant (now Lieutenant-General) Sir Henry Norman, the Assistant Adjutant-General of the Army. On the fall of Delhi Brigadier Chamberlain resigned his post, returning to the command of the Punjaub frontier force, and while still in that capacity was selected to command the troops which undertook the Umbeyla campaign of 1863. The hard fighting this force went through, and the anxiety which the severe check it received at first caused in England, leading to the despatch in haste of Sir John Lawrence to India as Governor-General, will still be remembered. Here, again, General Chamberlain was severely wounded, we believe for the eighth time, and the successful completion of the campaign fell to be carried out by Sir John Garvock. This was Sir Neville Chamberlain's last active employment—unless the dignified retirement of his present position as Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army can be so designated—until he was summoned to undertake the abortive mission to Cabul. Sir Neville Chamberlain entered the service young, and although somewhat crippled by his numerous wounds, his forty years of service sit lightly upon him. Few men of his age are so active and young-looking, and, from his long and distinguished service on the border, probably no English name is better known or more respected throughout Afghanistan; and if the choice of the right person for envoy could have secured its success the late mission might have had a different issue.

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THE FINANCIAL OUTLOOK OF THE AFGHAN WAR.

A FEW days since we insisted that it would be a disgrace and a wrong if India is made to pay for a war which, if it comes, will be nothing less than a war against Russia on the Indian border; and not only so, but a war springing immediately from the gross mismanagement of the Eastern Question here in London. We might have added, and ought to have added, that India cannot pay for such a war, rightly or wrongly, without absolute financial collapse. To-day Mr. Fawcett treats of this subject in a letter to the *Daily News*, which, though written very temperately, is a most forcible one. In the first place, he cites the opinion of Lord Lawrence that whereas the former war in Afghanistan cost us thirteen millions, to make another war safe a much greater expenditure must be faced. "The cost would inevitably prove enormous." And such is the financial condition of India at the present time that by such a war "a fatal blow would be given to the already over-burdened finances of India." Further taxation is impracticable. Two successive Governors-General have emphatically declared that to impose additional taxation in India will "produce the most serious discontent," and "is a political danger the magnitude of which can scarcely be exaggerated." Mr. Fawcett then argues that by the Government of India Act, 1858, it is decreed that, "except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues." And Mr. Fawcett argues, and all India can fairly follow him, that this is not a case of actual invasion and sudden emergency; and that Afghanistan *is* beyond the external frontier of her Majesty's Indian possessions. Further, Mr. Fawcett reminds the country that—

When the Government of India Bill was passing through Parliament Lord Derby distinctly stated that if Indian troops were employed with Imperial objects the charge should be borne by England; and if for Indian objects, the charge should be borne by India. It has been affirmed by the Governor-General of India that before leaving England he agreed with the present Government to treat Afghan affairs not simply as an Indian question, but in accordance with a scheme of Imperial policy; and this view of the matter was endorsed last year by the Minister representing India in the House of Commons, who declared that our frontier policy in India is "mainly dependent for its solution on the policy of her Majesty's Government."

Nor can any reasonable man, not a Government official or a ministerial partisan, for a moment doubt that this last sentence precisely describes the situation. Upon all this Mr. Fawcett maintains that it would be as unjust as it would be impolitic to make the Indian people bear the cost of the war which now appears inevitable. That this is our own opinion we have already said. To burden India with the cost of this war would be a wrong of which every Englishman should be ashamed; and it is one that would inevitably bring its own punishment: and that a heavy one.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, telegraphing yesterday, says that public interest, both European and native, is concentrated on the critical state of affairs upon our North-west frontier. The Government will make Lahore their head-quarters for the coming winter, and will not return to Calcutta, and the Foreign Office has received orders to form a camp at Lahore. This, the correspondent says, looks as if the Viceroy entertained no hopes of peace. He continues:—

The Commander-in-Chief is energetically engaged in massing the forces required for the separate commands and in strenuously pushing forward the commissariat, siege train, and other military preparations. It is well to remember, however, in order to avoid misconceptions as to the possibility of immediate results, that an Afghan campaign cannot in any circumstances resolve itself into a military promenade. That the Ameer, be his resistance ever so determined, must in the end succumb to the force brought against him the authorities entertain no shadow of doubt; but, in order to achieve uninterrupted success—for we cannot afford to run the slightest risk of even the appearance of a momentary check—the whole campaign must be carefully and deliberately planned beforehand, and a successful issue rendered absolutely certain by the consolidation of large military reserves. Accurate information as to the Ameer's actual strength is wanting; but it is well known that in addition to irregular levies, who form a fighting material by no means to be despised, he also possesses a standing army, drilled and disciplined after European models, and well equipped with the very rifles and other arms with which former Governments in India were wise and generous enough to provide him. This, however, is a condition of things which the Government will have little difficulty in measuring and adequately dealing with. A very much more difficult question has to be encountered in the possible hostile attitude of the border tribes. All the mountain passes leading down from the Cabul highlands to the Indus Valley are in the possession of these Pathan mountaineers, some of whom, like the Khyberees, owe direct allegiance to the Ameer, and all of whom are animated by a hatred of ourselves more or less active in character. Now, the faintest mistake in tactics or error of judgment might excite into a blaze of warfare, raging along our whole frontier of 800 miles, the suspended hostility of these various tribes. The consequences of this state of things would be that we should be forced to carry on an arduous mountain campaign with a formidable opponent, while engaged on all sides in a guerrilla warfare of a most harassing and exhausting description. It has been estimated that these tribes can easily turn out 100,000 fighting men, and even in time of peace the Government are forced to secure the frontier from their periodic irruptions by a chain of about twenty forts and ninety small military stations, held and garrisoned by some 25,000 troops and over 10,000 military police. A successful intrigue or effectual pressure by the Ameer might convert all these tribes into active confederate allies, more especially if he could hold out prospects of successful raids on Indian territory, and so excite their greed for plunder and lust for revenge for past reverses suffered at the hands of the English. This is the special danger which the Government has now to guard against, and which requires that great circumspection and deliberation should be used; but though it is an argument for delay, it is a greater argument still that this state of things should, once for all, cease to exist, and we may thank the Ameer, and more especially Russia as the *causa causans*, for affording us this opportunity of consolidating the defences of our Indian Empire by a strategic and military rectification of our frontier. We are now furnished with the most ample justification, in the conduct of Russia herself, for taking such immediate action as will be pregnant in the future with lasting results, and so guarding against all disastrous consequences which otherwise might have flowed from her systematized intrigue and aggressive movements in Central Asia and her present threatened interference at the very threshold of India. We have been now driven into what will probably be a costly war entirely against our will and all our endeavours to avoid it. This occasion, therefore, will now be seized in order to secure for ourselves the various passes piercing the mountain ranges along the whole frontier from the Khyber to the Bolan, and further strategic measures will be adopted to dominate entirely the Suliman range and the Hindoo Koosh. These hostile steps are still dependent on the conduct of the Ameer. The Government are anxious to avoid acting harshly, and will still allow him a *locus penitentiæ* prior to commencing active hostilities. In any event, I doubt whether the attempt to invade Afghanistan on a

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large scale will be made before spring. No soldier would advise that we should encounter the terrible hardships of a mountain winter campaign. We can thoroughly well afford to wait, and can then deliberately mass by the commencement of spring such an overwhelming force as will render successful resistance impossible. All appearance of ill-considered hurry is to be deprecated. Some slight danger exists from the tone of expectation awakened in England and reflected here that Government may feel pressed to endeavour to satisfy this expectation by precipitating military movements earlier than complete preparation would warrant.

Two Russian officers, it is said, still remain at Cabul, but it is believed that General Abramoff has returned to the headquarters of General Kaufmann. With respect to the stoppage of the British mission, the correspondent says :—

The reasons which actuated the Viceroy in pushing forward the mission without waiting longer for the Ameer's leave to pass were that information had been received that the Ameer had no intention of ever receiving it, but was merely playing in a derisive and insolent manner with the expectation of the Government. The tenour of his language was :—"If I choose to receive a mission, I will myself invite it; but meanwhile it must await my pleasure at Peshawur." This tone of course the Viceroy could not brook. Indeed, if he had it would have been remembered against us for all time, as there is no description of reply which Orientals so thoroughly admire as one of accepted insolence. Great danger, too, was incurred by further delay, as the Ameer has been intriguing with the Khyberees to break faith with us, and the risk of their desertion had to be considered. In these circumstances the Government wisely decided to push on the mission and put to the test the question of the good faith of the Ameer, and thus have the matter definitely decided.

The Russian journals continue to discuss the Afghan question. The *Russki Mir* is of opinion that the defeat sustained by Lord Lytton will be severely felt by Lord Beaconsfield, and speaks of the Ameer, "a mere Asiatic Khan," having been "independent enough to box the ears of the proud Englishman and to shake the authority and prestige of the Indian empire." The *Novoye Vremya* says that if Shere Ali goes to war with England he requires a Russian alliance to cover his rear; but the Russian journal says "there is nothing in such an alliance to compromise our relations with England. Did not England think herself entitled to aid and assist Turkey, immediately after her defeat by our troops, and is this not an exact counterpart to the Russian alliance Shere Ali reckons upon as a guarantee for the neutrality of the Khanates under our control?" The *Novoye Vremya* also foresees that the blow inflicted on England's position in Asia will enable the Liberal Opposition to renew their attacks upon the Beaconsfield Administration. The St. Petersburg correspondent of the Berlin *Post* says that the Russian Government will allow Bokhariots, Khirghiz, and Turkomans to aid and assist the Afghans in the impending war. There is no one in Russia, he goes on to say, who will not be delighted at the insatiable British lion breaking his teeth in the vain attempt to tear and worry the Afghans; but the Ameer acted independently, and it was only the malice of English scribblers which imputed to Russia the guilt of hounding him on against Great Britain. The *Nord* says that there is at present no Afghan question at St. Petersburg, and it would be gratuitous clumsiness and imprudence of English policy to create one. Russia, at peace with England, is in no way desirous of attacking or disquieting British rule in India. She has no idea of involving it in a conflict with the Ameer, which would be a very bad move, for the scheme, even if ultimately crowned with success, would not fail to be costly and hazardous.

The *Fremdenblatt* of Vienna asserts that the Anglo-Afghan difficulty is nothing else but the triumph of Russian diplomacy over that of England. No thinking man (it says) will admit that Russia contemplates the invasion of India. Russia's object is twofold—firstly, to plunge England into serious complications, which she will succeed in doing; and, secondly, to leave only one road for Central Asiatic Indo trade through the Bamian Pass, north of Cabul. Millions which hitherto found their way to India by the Turkestan valleys would thus go to Russia. This result, peacefully obtained, would certainly be preferable for Russia to the most popular of wars. But that the accomplishment of this double aim may very well lead to war is a fact we do not feel inclined to deny.

"Times" October 1st

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

(By Telegraph.)

(From our Correspondents.)

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, Sept. 30.

A few months ago, before the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish War, Colonel Maieff, topographer Petroff, and some other members of the scientific geographical staff were despatched by the Russo-Turkestan Government to the basin of the Upper Amoo and the region adjoining the north-western slopes of the Hindoo Koosh. Their explorations, referring chiefly to the road to Derbent, the Amoo fords of Kara Kumor, Kelif, and the Hissar territory, have been recently embodied in maps. The preparations commenced a short time ago for an expedition to the petty Khanates intervening between the Amoo Darya and Afghanistan proper seem to be at a standstill.

The Berlin *Montagsblatt*, the most popular German Liberal weekly, says :—

"Peace, which was considered safe since the diplomatic success of the Congress, is again imperilled by the affront England has had to endure at the hands of the Ameer of Cabul. Shere Ali having refused to receive an English Embassy when he is sumptuously entertaining Russian emissaries, the conclusion is forced upon us that the arrow shot at British self-esteem was a weapon of Russian manufacture. Had this occurred a little earlier, the St. Petersburg Government might have found it easier to deal with Turkey and England at or before the Congress. The humiliation sustained is bitterly felt by the English. Great Britain will no doubt consider it a duty she owes to herself and the safety of her Indian Empire to obtain ample satisfaction. No doubt this is a problem more readily proposed than solved; and as it will require the whole might of England to be employed in the East, the course of European affairs will probably be influenced by what has happened."

VIENNA, Sept. 30.

The difficulty with Afghanistan is followed here with close interest day by day. All the leading newspapers, both Austrian and Hungarian, give copious extracts from the articles in the chief English journals, accompanying them frequently with their own comments, which leave no doubt that the seriousness of the conflict is thoroughly understood, as well as the complications which it may possibly lead to. It is seen that these might eventually affect the Eastern Question nearer home, and, therefore, the interests of Austria, which have by the Bosnian occupation become even more closely bound up with it than before.

We have received the following telegrams through Reuter's Agency :—

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

PARIS, Sept. 30.

Private advices received here state that the British Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg has presented to the Imperial Chancellery a note from the English Cabinet inquiring in what way the Russian Government proposed to reconcile General Stolieteff's mission to Cabul with its previous engagements, by which Russia agreed to renounce all political influence in Afghanistan. The reply to this note was to the effect that Russia was always disposed to respect existing engagements, and that the mission of General Stolieteff, although decided upon at a time and in circumstances which now no longer existed, was merely intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of Afghanistan.

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AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Referring to a letter from Colonel Callander, in your issue of the 27th, regarding a pass to the south of the Khoord Cabul Pass, which might be used for turning the latter, it may be mentioned that on the retirement of the British troops from Cabul in 1842, a mountain path—the Goshpundurrah—to the south of the Khoord Cabul, was successfully used for this purpose by a considerable force under the late Sir Robert Sale.

It consisted of the mountain train—1st Bengal Light Cavalry, 1st and 2d Brigades, 1st Infantry Division, detachment 3d Irregular Cavalry, Broadfoot's Sappers and Miners, and the Corps of Jezailchees—and leaving Cabul (without baggage or camp equipage) on the morning of the 12th October—the day the main body moved to Bootkuak—marched straight to Khoord Cabul by the above path, arriving in the afternoon without having been discovered by the enemy, and having turned the pass.

Yours obediently,

41, Colville-terrace, W., Sept. 30. F. MACKENZIE.

THE AFGHANS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The old assumption that the Afghans are of Jewish descent has again cropped up and is re-asserted, though with somewhat diminished pertinacity, by Mr. Wheeler in *The Times* of to-day. Error, it is said, is immortal, and this particular one, though often scotched, has not yet been killed. The supposed Jewish origin of the Afghans is based upon two grounds—the claim of the Afghans themselves that they are descended from King Saul; and, secondly, their supposed Jewish physiognomy. Upon one or both of these grounds a conjecture has been formed, "that they are the descendants of the ten tribes whom the King of Assyria carried away to the city of the Medes." That the Afghans claim a descent from Saul is certain; but the value of that claim can only be fairly judged by those who are well acquainted with old Mahomedan genealogies, and know their utter worthlessness. If, however, the claim were worthy of consideration, it is still inconsistent with the notion that the Afghans are descendants of the lost ten tribes. Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and that tribe was not one of the lost ten. There remains the question of feature. This no doubt has its weight, but cannot prevail against the more important question of language. We hear frequently of men "of Jewish countenance," and "of Hebrew cast of features" for or against whom no claim or charge of Jewish descent can be urged. It is admitted that the Afghan language has no trace of Hebrew origin. This is a great step gained. Where, then, did the Afghan language come from? The too ready answer is that "they changed their language." But nations do not change their language as a man changes his clothes. The conditions under which a change of language occurs are well understood. One is, that a body of conquerors or emigrants settle among a people more numerous than themselves, as the Normans or the French Protestants in England. The minority are in course of time absorbed by the majority, and they become of one language. If the Afghans were originally Jews, they must have been either emigrants or conquerors; they must have been a minority of settlers in a far more numerous nation. What was that nation? What has become of it? Not one trace of it is to be found. The Afghans alone speak the Afghan language, and that language has no trace of Hebrew in it. If the claim were set up for a particular khail or clan of Afghans, it would be intelligible and hard to refute. But as the matter stands, the emigrant Jews, after settling in a strange country, must have adopted the language of their more numerous hosts, a work of years, aye, of centuries, and then have utterly destroyed them. This supposition is too incredible, and no resemblance of physiognomy can make it probable, and no more reasonable explanation can be given of the supposed change of language.

JOHN DOWSON.

September 27.

LONDON, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1878.

The detailed account of the military strength and of the geography of Afghanistan which we give this morning from the records of the Russian Central Staff Office at St. Petersburg forms a curious comment on the ignorance professed in official quarters in Russia as to Afghan affairs generally. If we were to judge from some of our telegrams of yesterday, we should be tempted to the conclusion that Russia was only just aware of the existence of such a country as Afghanistan. For a precise knowledge of what has been going on there, and still more for any attempts to influence the order of events, Russia, it would seem, is about the last place to which we ought to look. But the minute particulars about Afghanistan, military and geographical, which we now present from Russian official sources, show that the modest diffidence of St. Petersburg is out of place. From the same quarter we now learn, with equal surprise, that England has been at work in Central Asia with a view of creating difficulties for Russia, but, though a counter-movement was contemplated by Russia, it was never actually carried out, and the orders for it were countermanded as soon as it appeared likely that peace would follow from the meeting of the Berlin Congress. A telegram of this kind, coming from St. Petersburg, bears necessarily something of an official character. It must have been submitted to official eyes, and must have been approved before it was sent off. If it is not quite a message from the Russian Chancellerie, it is, at least, a statement which the Russian Chancellerie is willing that the world should accept. It is worth while, therefore, to look at it a little more closely than we should otherwise do, the rather since it conveys in some parts an imputation on recent English policy in Central Asia. Let us see, then, first, the conduct on our part which seems to have induced Russia to think of sending expeditions to reconnoitre beyond her own borders. The charge is not made in very precise terms. We hear chiefly of various reports received during the Russo-Turkish war, giving information of what English agents were doing to cause embarrassment to Russia in Central Asia. The mission of Sir DOUGLAS FORSYTH to Kashgar is the one solid basis of fact on which the whole structure of suspicion is raised, but, as the mischievous purpose of this mission was avowed, it may be thought enough to justify the use made of it. What we did openly in Kashgar during the Russo-Turkish war we might very well be supposed capable of doing in Bokhara, or wherever else the chance offered. We could not complain if Russia believed the various reports she received of our hostile manœuvres when her informants could point to Sir DOUGLAS FORSYTH'S mission in confirmation of their truth. There is one point, however, in which the chain of evidence is incomplete. The unity of time is wanting. The Russo-Turkish war broke out in the spring of 1877. Sir DOUGLAS FORSYTH'S mission to Kashgar was in 1872. After this it is almost superfluous to add that Sir DOUGLAS FORSYTH'S mission was of a purely commercial character, and had no reference whatever to Russia or to Russian affairs. As for the doings of our agents in Bokhara, whether in 1872 or in 1877, it may be enough to say that we never had an agent in Bokhara, and that no one can know this better than Russia does.

Let us see next the so-called counter-movements which Russia confesses, not, indeed, to having made, but to having contemplated and prepared to make. If we accept the Russian account of them, the whole matter was simple enough, and absolutely harmless in its results. Whatever Russia may have intended to do, she gave up even the intention the moment she was relieved from the prospect of a war with England. It is difficult, however, to reconcile the facts of the case with the statements of the St. Petersburg telegram. Native Russian agents were busy at Cabul as long ago as 1875, attempting to set the AMEER against England, and they have been there ever since. The special mission of General STOLJETOFF to Cabul was resolved on in March. It was not, however, until the latter part of July that it actually reached Cabul, bringing with it, we believe, a letter from the EMPEROR himself to SHERE ALI. As for the further measures contemplated by Russia and abandoned by her, it is necessary in forming our judgment about them to look exactly at the dates. The information we have received points to the conclusion that these measures were designed, not when an Anglo-Russian war was thought imminent, but when peace between the two countries had practically been secured, and that the orders with reference to them were not countermanded until last August—that is to say, not until some weeks after the Berlin Congress had done its work. One point remains still to be noticed. When the first news arrived at St. Petersburg of the stoppage of the English mission to Cabul, the Russian Ministers—so, at least, the St. Petersburg writer assures us—had no more precise information on the subject than the public generally. It is quite possible that this statement may be true in the letter. The telegram we published at the beginning of last week may very well have been the source from which the information of all parties at St. Petersburg was derived, and, if so, the question of priority between the official and non-official world is hardly worth disputing over. But the meaning of the statement goes very far beyond this. It implies, not only that nothing in point of fact was known, but that there was nothing special which could have been known. Now, we hardly think that the temper and purpose of SHERE ALI could have been matters of as much mystery to agents at Cabul who were in actual communication with him as they were to the world outside, or

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that the earliest possible notice about them was not duly sent off to head-quarters at St. Petersburg. As for the repulse of the English mission, the whole facts were so fully given by our Calcutta Correspondent that not much could be added. There is no room, so far, for any secrecy in the matter. Our very complaint is of the open nature of the insult we have suffered. What we do not see so obviously, and what we can only infer, is the influence that was at work with SHERE ALI and which induced him to refuse us a passage. We are much mistaken if the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs does not know a good deal more about this than he has thought fit to reveal. When the train has been laid and the match lighted, the real business has been done. We may admit that as to the details of the explosion the Russian Ministers for War and Foreign Affairs knew no more than the rest of their countrymen. Evidence limited to this can hardly count for much; and the evidence offered by the telegram we published yesterday goes no further. The final assurance, that Russia had no part in the decision of SHERE ALI to reject the Anglo-Indian mission, we will not venture to contradict. But before accepting it we must pare it down a good deal and reduce it to its real dimensions. If it had said that Russia has had no part in exciting SHERE ALI to hostility against England, we should, of course, know that it was incorrect. If it means only that it was not at the instigation of Russia that SHERE ALI gave us the latest proof of his hostility, we make no question that it may be true. The repulse was so ill-timed and so unwise in every way that the AMEER'S foreign advisers may claim to be acquitted from having suggested it. It has left us more free than we were before to act in our own interest, and has given a direction to our Afghan policy which may prove to be of downright service to us. In these circumstances, we will not seek to fix Russia with a guilt which she herself repudiates.

We publish this morning the reply of Russia to an English note inquiring how General STOLETOFF'S mission to Cabul can be reconciled with the engagement of Russia to renounce all political influence in Afghanistan. The conduct of Russia in this matter is, on the face of it, not easily to be explained. The plan of the mission, which was formed last March, may be justified by the relations then existing between the Russian and the English Governments. War tears up all treaties and cancels all promises. We must make a large allowance, therefore, for what is done when war seems imminent. But, as we have already stated, it was not until the end of July that the Russian Mission, with its letter from the CZAR, reached SHERE ALI. The defence offered for it is curious. It was decided on in circumstances which no longer exist, and it was never meant to be anything but an act of courtesy to the AMEER. If the latter statement is correct, there is no need for the former one; while if the former one is needed as a justification, the latter one hardly can be correct. However, since Russia admits the engagement by which we hold her to be bound, and professes her disposition to respect it, we need not go further into the past. Her duty, on her own showing, is now clear, and we may fairly call upon her to put her professions into practice. It is by the acts of her Government that she will be judged, and not by the violent language of her irresponsible fire-eaters.

THE MILITARY STRENGTH OF AFGHANISTAN.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, SEPT. 28.

The following observations on the military strength and geography of Afghanistan are extracted from the records of the Russian Central Staff Office at St. Petersburg:—

"Afghanistan is portioned out among many semi-independent tribes, each of which has a separate ruler and a standing army.

"Cabul and Candahar have a considerable regular force, consisting of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. The greater part of these troops is distributed over rural garrisons, and under the control of the local governors. The regular Cabul force, which does not seem to have been increased in the 30 years intervening between 1838 and 1868, is as follows:—Infantry (Djasaltchi), 2,500 men; regular cavalry, 3,000; irregular cavalry, 10,000; artillery, 45 guns. Besides these there were, in times of peace, one regiment of infantry at Candahar, one regiment at Ghuznee, one regiment and five guns at Kale-i-Gilsai, one regiment of infantry, one of rifles, and five guns at Kuram, and a force of full 10,000 men, with three batteries, at Balkh. The regular troops are maintained and reinforced by conscription, irregulars being called in as time and circumstances require. In Cabul the troops receive pay and provisions, a practice which can hardly be said to obtain with any degree of regularity in the provinces. The infantry are armed partly with matchlocks, partly with excellent modern rifles, the gift of the British Government. They also carry swords and kindjals. The Djasaltchi, or rifles, are armed with long solid muskets, rested on a forked support when firing, while the cavalry boast a large variety of weapons. The infantry are, many of them, arrayed in cast-off English uniforms, bought up by special agents of the Cabul Government at Peshawur and Scinde. Some regiments wear uniforms of European cut, made of Afghan cloth—the coats are brown, the trousers white. The troops quartered in country towns generally live upon the people. All the Afghan troops endeavour to imitate the Anglo-Indian forces in their tactics, drill, and commissariat service; but in this respect the success of the Cabul military is small in comparison with that of the Herat men.

"The Herat regular force was originally organized by Sultan Djan, and consists of five regiments of infantry of 500 men each, five detachments of cavalry, one in each district, of 450 men each, and eight guns. The whole forms a total of about 5,000. Young men of the peasant class are liable to conscription at an age when they may almost be regarded as children. The cavalry being the more national force, its recruits are supplied by the district authorities. There is a Commander-in-Chief, subject to the personal commands of the Sovereign. The artillery is under the direction of a special commander, the Toptchi Bashi. The regiments are divided into companies. Officers' titles are taken from the English army; the Djernal, Koronel, and Midjir answering respectively to the General, Colonel, and Major. The Sovereign has a special adjutant called Adjutant Bashi, a post occupied in the days of Sultan Djan by a Russian ensign, Prince Vatchnadse. Discipline is exceedingly strict. Commanders have unlimited power, and may kill subordinates with impunity. The soldiers live in special houses with their families, and receive pay, food, uniforms, and arms from the Government. The cavalry, too, get pay from the Government, but have to find their own arms and horses. The infantry are provided with flintlocks, modern rifles, the crooked Afghan sword, and kindjals from 1ft. to 1½ft. long. The uniform is of light sky-blue cotton, after the English pattern, with ample folds, stand-up collar, and metal buttons. The trousers are of white cotton, very tight and short. They wear a sort of slipper on their naked feet, black Persian hats when on duty, and red flat hats in undress. In the case of recruits these hats are yellow. All the different regiments wear the same uniform. The cavalry are distinguished by the national Afghan dress, and armed with pikes, matchlocks, kindjals, and crooked swords. Drill, as a rule, is intrusted to Anglo-Indian deserters, and carried on in accordance with English rules. There is a great deal of regimental service going on, with a fair degree of success in tactics and manœuvring capacity. The word of command is given in English.

"The small Usbek Khanates in Northern Cabulistan also have standing armies, the strength of which some time ago may be seen from the following list:—

	Infantry. Men.	Cavalry. Horses.	Artillery. Guns.		Infantry. Men.	Cavalry. Horses.	Artillery. Guns.
Maimene	100	1,500	—	Cabulistan—			
Shibbergan	1,500	2,000	—	Navasai	500	200	—
Aktcha	—	200	—	Lendai Sind	—	—	13
Balkh	10,000	2,500	—	Dyar	400	50	—
Kylm	—	—	10	Babusi	500	200	—
Kundus	—	—	6				

All these troops are liable to take the field at the summons of the Ameer of Cabul, their feudal lord and sovereign. In addition to these regulars there is a militia—a numerous force in a country every male inhabitant of which is ready to take up arms at a moment's notice. As was proved in 1839, one eighth of the entire population may be assembled, fully equipped, and sent out with the utmost despatch. By the side of the general levy there is a special militia, called Defteri, whose members have their names registered in time of peace, and are in receipt of a small salary, or a certain quantity of corn, or else enjoy the free use of canal water. The strength and division of the militia is the subject of the following table:—

	Horse.	Infantry.		Horse.	Infantry.
Cabul	21,000	10,000	Gesaraiz—		
Candahar	12,000	6,000	Seidnat	4,000	—
Herat	8,000	10,000	Pusht Kug	5,000	3,000
Lash (Sistan)	500	5,000	Yekikholin	1,000	300
Khulm	3,000	3,000	Desandji	400	1,200
Balkh	2,500	1,000	Sur Djingeli	500	800
Ser Pul	2,000	2,000	Firus Kugi	3,750	6,400
Kundus	2,000	—	Kiptchak	—	400
Aktche	200	—	Taimun	1,200	10,000
Andkui	1,500	600	Total	95,350	61,200
Shibbergan	2,000	500			
Maimene	1,500	1,000		156,550	

"Almost every town and village in Afghanistan is surrounded by a brick wall, and may be easily converted into a defensive position. There is also a large number of small towers distributed over the country, for the protection of passes, ravines, and village grounds. Some of these towers, thanks to their advantageous situation, are formidable enough to check the march of European troops, though none could hold out against a regular siege.

"The most important fortress in the western parts is Herat, enclosed within a square wall, each side 4,200ft. in length. The wall is of brick, 35ft. high, and stands on ground artificially raised. It is protected by a moat, and on two sides by a glacis, constructed by the English in 1838. Six gates, defended by brick towers, lead to the city. There is also a citadel, Tchagar Bag, in the south-eastern corner of the city, likewise built of brick. The town is provided with water by the Cheri Rud river. Ferra, another fortress near the Persian frontier, is built on the same plan as Herat, but only half the size. The walls of this place are of a very solid sort of brick. Ferra protects the road from southern Persia to Afghanistan.

"Northern Afghanistan is defended by the fort of

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Maimene, situated on a small river, in a mountainous region. Its wall is 5ft. thick and 12ft. high. The moat is shallow.

"On the eastern frontier there is Jelalabad, a place of respectable strength, but now abandoned. The citadel of Cabul is likewise a strong place, and accessible only by a winding path. The citadel can hold out against a prolonged siege, and commands the town, which has no walls.

"In the interior of Afghanistan the most important fort is Ghuznee, the citadel of which was accounted unconquerable before its capture by the English. Candahar is a large but weak fortress, being commanded by adjacent heights. The place has no glacis and an insignificant moat. It is easy to cut off the water supply. The citadel occupies the northern part of the town.

"All the important roads of Afghanistan lead from east to west, and are merely tracks, without the slightest attempt at assisting nature. In the more open parts, however, they are serviceable for vehicles and field artillery. Taking Herat as a starting point, we have a whole network of roads leading respectively to Meshed, Merv, Maimene, Candahar, and Sistan.

"The road from Herat to Meshed leads through the open and accessible valley of the Cheri Rud. Water, provisions, and fodder are to be found in abundance. Beyond Kussan the road, which has been repeatedly trodden by large armies with vehicles and siege artillery, crosses the Persian frontier. Itinerary from Herat to Kussan :—1, Herat ; 2, Shechivan Mimisak, 36 versts ; 3, Rause Nak, 24 versts ; 4, Kussan, 30 versts—total, 90 versts.

"The road from Herat to Merv, a very well known track, leads through a practicable pass into the valley of the Murgab, and further on to the borders of Turkoman Steppe. Itinerary :—1, Herat ; 2, Pervane ; 3, Kokh-Robat (pass) ; 4, Kushk Assiab ; 5, Tchel Dekhter ; 6, Kara Tube ; 7, Kale Tchommeni Beg (fort) ; 8, Kale Khousa Khan (frontier of Turkoman territory) ; 9, Merv. The distances are unknown.

"From Herat to Maimene there are two roads as far as the river Murgab. The western road, which is the shorter and more practicable of the two, leaves the Herat and Merv road at Kushk Assiab and traverses a well-watered and cultivated country. There is plenty of food for man and beast. The pass is narrow, but easily surmounted. Itinerary :—1, Herat; 2, Pervane, 18 versts ; 3, Kokh-Robat, 18 versts (pass); 4, Kushk Assiab, 42 versts ; 5, Tchungursk, 42 versts ; 6, Turshik, 42 versts; 7, Mingal, 24 versts (220 tents) ; 8, Murgab, 24 versts (250 houses) ; 9, Kale Veli, 42 versts (230 houses, fort) ; 10, Tcharshembe, 18 versts (380 houses) ; 11, Kaisar, 18 versts ; 12, Maimene, 48 versts—total, 336 versts.

"The other road, striking to the east, crosses the hills by a difficult pass close to the snow line. The road further on traverses two ravines (Derbend) on the river Murgab, and surmounts the steep hills of Telkgezar. Horsemen perform the way in four days ; camels take eight. The road is recommended by immunity from robbers.

"From Herat to Candahar you pass along the spurs of the hills through a barren country. There is little water, and the little there is is not always good. The road is even and easily traversed by carriages and artillery. Itinerary according to Conolly :—1, Herat (passage of the Cheri Rud River) ; 2, Mir Daud Khan, 36 versts ; 3, Mir Ullakh, 36½ versts ; 4, Djamburan, 18 versts ; 5, Klutch, 42 versts ; 6, Larubur Kerise, 46½ versts ; 7, Gunni Murg, 42 versts; 8, Vashir, 75 versts; 9, Lur, 51 versts; 10, Girishk (passage of River Gilmend), 48 versts ; 11, Khous Mydat Khan, 69 versts ; 12, Candahar, 35 versts—total, 499 versts. Itinerary according to Blaramberg :—1, Herat ; 2, Mir Daud, 24 versts ; 3, Shabid, 36 versts ; 4, Ruins of Idriskent, 36 versts ; 5, Sabsevar, 66 versts; 6, caravanserai Imoret, 30 versts ; 7, Djedje, 36 versts ; 8, Risc, 36 versts ; 9, town of Ferra, 24 versts ; 10, village Khurmalik, 42 versts ; 11, village Bekva, 60 versts ; 12, village Dilaram, 36 versts ; 13, caravanserai Shurub, 60 versts ; 14, fortress Girishk, 72 versts ; 15, fortress Kischki Nochud, 60 versts ; 16, town of Candahar, 60 versts—total, 678 versts. Itinerary according to Ferrier :—1, Herat ; 2, Shabig, 48 versts ; 3, Ardreskian, 54 versts ; 4, Kash Dshaberan, 78 versts ; 5, Ab Khurme, 85 versts ; 6, Shah Ges, 78 versts ; 7, Hadshi Ibrahim, 36 versts ; 8, Vashir, 78 versts ; 9, Mahmud Abad, 72 versts ; 10, Girishk, 30 versts ; 11, Hap Tchogan, 42 versts ; 12, Kishk Nuthud, 47 versts ; 13, Candahar, 36 versts—total, 684 versts.

"Of these roads the second, which leads by the town of Herat, though a little longer than the first, is better watered, and considered the more eligible. The two other roads are nearly parallel. At Girishk the three roads meet.

"The way from Herat to Sistan leaves the Candahar-Ferra road at the town of Lash, near the Lake of Khamun. It connects Herat with southern Persia, but is scantily provided with water. From Lash, which is 84 versts from Ferra, there is a road on each side of the lake. Near the mouth of the river Gilmend the two roads join the track leading along the river to Girishk. The western road also joins the way to Kirman in Persia.

"In East Afghanistan Candahar is the issuing point of the principal roads, being connected with Cabul, Sistan, and India. The road from Candahar to Cabul, one of the best in Afghanistan, is easily traversed in summer. In winter the gorge of Sher Degan, on the watershed between the Cabul and Gilmend rivers, is choked with snow for four months, and passable only for pedestrians. The defile is two versts long, and in some localities only 170 feet broad. The way was trodden by the English in 1839 and 1841. Itinerary :—1, Candahar ; 2, Mechmedi Kale, 15 versts ; 3, Heil-i-Akchun, 23 versts ; 4, Shekhar-i-Sofa, 21 versts ; 5, Djaldak, 42 versts ; 6, Kale Gilsai, 20 versts ; (after two intervening marches) 7, Mamin Kale, 66 versts ; 8, Goldjan ; 9, Mukker, 18 versts ; after two intervening marches) 10, Yargatti, 63 versts ; 11, Ghuznee, 27 versts (pass); 12, Svara, 33 versts ; 13, Hyder Heil, 22 versts ; 14, Sheih Abad, 11 versts ; 15, Cabul, 66 versts—total, 490 versts.

"Itinerary of other roads from Ghuznee to Cabul :—1, Ghuznee ; 2, Sheshgou, 13½ versts ; 3, Geftasia, 8½ versts ; 4, Hyder Heil, 10½ versts ; 5, Sheih Abad, 9½ versts ; 6, Maidan, 18½ versts ; 7, Mahur, 12½ versts ; 8, Cabul, 14 versts —total, 87 versts.

"1, Ghuznee ; 2, Tengi Shir, 12 versts ; 3, Sheshgou, 7½ versts ; 4, Seid Abad, 35½ versts ; 5, River Lohar, 6 versts ; 6, River Cabul Darya, 15 versts ; 7, Arandi, 27 versts ; 8, Cabul, 21 versts—total, 124 versts.

"An extensive road traverses the whole of Afghanistan from west to east, proceeding from Herat to Badakshan by Maimene, Balkh, and Kundus, with the branch road to Cabul. The Maimene-Khulm section of this road leads to a densely populated and well-watered district, and is practicable for artillery of heavy calibre. Itinerary :—1, Maimene ; 2, Kafir Kale, 30 versts ; 3, Chair Abad, 18 versts ; 4, Robat Abdulla Khan, 42 versts ; 5, town of Shibbergan, 42 versts ; 6, town of Aktche, 30 versts ; 7, town of Meilik, 24 versts ; 8, town of Balkh, 42 versts ; 9, town of Masar, 12 versts ; 10, town of Khulm, 48 versts —total, 288 versts.

"At Khulm the road forks, the one branch leading south to Cabul, the other east to Badakshan. Itinerary from Khulm to Cabul :—1, Khulm ; 2, Hasreti Sultan, 27 versts (defile) ; 3, Geibak, 27 versts ; 4, Hurrem, 52½ versts ; 5, Rui, 23½ versts ; 6, Duab, 27 versts ; 7, Bagdja, 27 versts ; 8, Kegmerd, 15 versts ; 9, Sigan, 22½ versts ; 10, Bamian, 33 versts ; 11, Kalu, 30 versts (Pass of Hadshihaks) ; 12, Guldjatui, 20½ versts ; 13, Gerden Divar, 29½ versts ; 14, Ser Tcheshme, 24 versts; 15, Rustem Heil, 25½ versts ; 16, Kalei Kasi, 22½ versts ; 17, Cabul, 14½ versts—total, 412 versts.

"Though the principal caravan road from Central Asia to India, this track is not without difficulties, and in winter obstructed by snow in the Hadshihaks gully. Yet heavy artillery up to 18-pounders have been moved along this road ; 6-pounders meet with no obstacle. Near this important path the Hindu Kush is traversed by two other passes, the Irak and the Pushti Hadshihaks. Another road across the Hindu Kush to Cabul issues from Kundus, and leads along the Pendjir.

"There is no lack of communications between Afghanistan and India. Proceeding from Cabul, Ghuznee, and Candahar, these roads cross the intervening hills by more or less practicable defiles, and reach the Indus valley after traversing a good deal of stiff country. Of the five roads from Cabul to Peshawur on both banks of the Cabul Darya, the following is the most frequented. Itinerary :—1, Cabul ; 2, Butchak, 9½ miles ; 3, Kurd Cabul, 10 miles ; 4, Tesip, 13 miles ; 5, Asarent, 8½ miles ; 6, River Kata Seng, 4¾ miles ; 7, Djigdelin, 7½ miles ; 8, River Surchab (bridge), 13 miles ; 9, River Sefid Seng (bridge), 9¾ miles ; 10, town of Fechtabad, 12 miles ; 11, town of Sultanpur, 7½ miles ; 12, town of Djellalabad, 9 miles ; 13, Ali Bohan, 6¾ miles ; 14, Tchar Dig, 14 miles ; 15, Gasernou, 11⅜ miles ; 16, Dakka, 9 miles (beginning of the Khyber defile) ; 17, Lendi Hane, 9 miles ; 18, Ali Meedjid, 13⅜ miles (end of defile) ; 19, Kadam, 10 miles ; 20, Kalser, 7 miles ; 21, Peshawur, 8¾ miles—total, 194¼ miles, or 291 versts.

"The road from Cabul to Kogat does not present any particular hardship to caravans, but being infested by robbers is much avoided. It is the shortest cut between the Indian district of Kogat and Cabul and Ghuznee. Itinerary :—1, Cabul ; 2, Sheih Abad, 66 versts ; 3, Tantchi Vardak, 7½ versts ; 4, Gisarek, 27 versts ; 5, Hushi, 15 versts ; 6, Hasre (Utcha Murga) 27 versts (Pass across Sefid Kug) ; 7, Rokian, 30 versts ; 8, Ali Heil, 9 versts (Pivar Defile) ; 9, Chebib Kale, 27 versts ; 10, Kale-i-Kuram, 24 versts ; 11, Sadde, 24 versts ; 12, Bogsai, 20½ versts ; 13, Tal Biland Heil, 31½ versts ; Indian frontier—14, Kogat, 126 versts—total, 434½ versts, or 289 miles. The distance to Calabag on the Indus is about the same.

"The road from Ghuznee to Dere Ismail Khan, 485 versts, or 323 miles in length, is one of the principal commercial thoroughfares between India and Afghanistan. From Ghuznee it follows the River Gomul to the Guailer defile, and thus reaches the Indian plain. The road lies through formidable hills, and in some places is so narrow as hardly to admit of loaded camels passing along. There is plenty of snow in the winter. Another road from Dere Ismail Khan goes through the Tchiri defile ; a third road reaches the Gomul valley by the Derbend ravine. The latter is joined by the road from Dere Gazi Khan.

"The road from Candahar to Shikarpur, one of the three principal commercial highways of India, is the one by which the English marched in 1839. It is a serviceable road enough, but has little fodder in the Bolan defile, which is 90 miles long. Caravans suffer from the border tribes. It intersects a portion of Beloochistan. Itinerary :—1, Candahar ; 2, River Argestan, 31 versts; 3, Fort Futtelah, 46 versts ; 4, Klutch, 37 versts ; 5, Fort Hodscha Atran, 20 versts (steep ascent) ; 6, Shadisic, 18 versts ; 7, Techa Oba, 24 versts ; 8, town of Quetta, 30 versts (source of River Cori, Pass Devengi) ; 9, Kurkleki, 2 versts (Bolan Pass) ; 10, Kitra Versts, 60 versts ; 11, town of Dader, 35 versts ; 12, Bakh, 54 versts; 13, Shikarpur, 165 versts—total, 520 versts.

"Between the two latter there are several other roads, formerly trodden by whole armies, but at present abandoned, and only visited at rare intervals by couriers and fast caravans. The principal of these leads from Dere Gasi Khan, through the Sakhi Sarvar defile to Bori and Candahar. It is famous for the passage of Sultan Baber's army in 1805.

"There is hardly any water communication in Afghanistan. The rivers are torrents easily forded in summer. Only a few of them carry rafts. The only exception is the Gilmend, navigable for steamers from Girishk to where it falls into Lake Khamun. It has a depth varying between seven and ten feet, its breadth sometimes reaching 14,000 feet."

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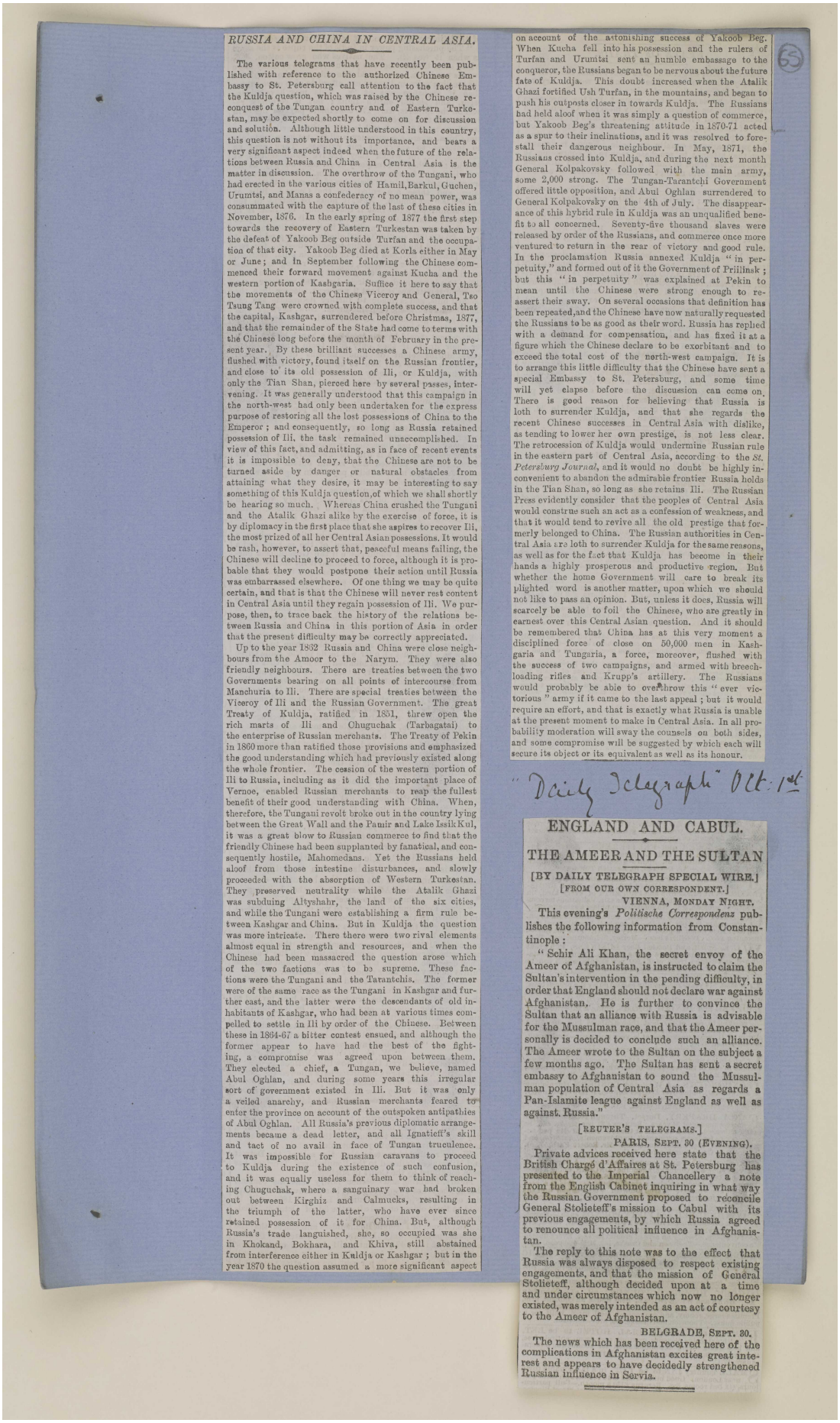

RUSSIA AND CHINA IN CENTRAL ASIA.

The various telegrams that have recently been published with reference to the authorized Chinese Embassy to St. Petersburg call attention to the fact that the Kuldja question, which was raised by the Chinese reconquest of the Tungan country and of Eastern Turkestan, may be expected shortly to come on for discussion and solution. Although little understood in this country, this question is not without its importance, and bears a very significant aspect indeed when the future of the relations between Russia and China in Central Asia is the matter in discussion. The overthrow of the Tungani, who had erected in the various cities of Hamil, Barkul, Guchen, Urumtsi, and Manas a confederacy of no mean power, was consummated with the capture of the last of these cities in November, 1876. In the early spring of 1877 the first step towards the recovery of Eastern Turkestan was taken by the defeat of Yakoob Beg outside Turfan and the occupation of that city. Yakoob Beg died at Korla either in May or June; and in September following the Chinese commenced their forward movement against Kucha and the western portion of Kashgaria. Suffice it here to say that the movements of the Chinese Viceroy and General, Tso Tsung Tang were crowned with complete success, and that the capital, Kashgar, surrendered before Christmas, 1877, and that the remainder of the State had come to terms with the Chinese long before the month of February in the present year. By these brilliant successes a Chinese army, flushed with victory, found itself on the Russian frontier, and close to its old possession of Ili, or Kuldja, with only the Tian Shan, pierced here by several passes, intervening. It was generally understood that this campaign in the north-west had only been undertaken for the express purpose of restoring all the lost possessions of China to the Emperor; and consequently, so long as Russia retained possession of Ili, the task remained unaccomplished. In view of this fact, and admitting, as in face of recent events it is impossible to deny, that the Chinese are not to be turned aside by danger or natural obstacles from attaining what they desire, it may be interesting to say something of this Kuldja question, of which we shall shortly be hearing so much. Whereas China crushed the Tungani and the Atalik Ghazi alike by the exercise of force, it is by diplomacy in the first place that she aspires to recover Ili, the most prized of all her Central Asian possessions. It would be rash, however, to assert that, peaceful means failing, the Chinese will decline to proceed to force, although it is probable that they would postpone their action until Russia was embarrassed elsewhere. Of one thing we may be quite certain, and that is that the Chinese will never rest content in Central Asia until they regain possession of Ili. We purpose, then, to trace back the history of the relations between Russia and China in this portion of Asia in order that the present difficulty may be correctly appreciated.

Up to the year 1862 Russia and China were close neighbours from the Amoor to the Narym. They were also friendly neighbours. There are treaties between the two Governments bearing on all points of intercourse from Manchuria to Ili. There are special treaties between the Viceroy of Ili and the Russian Government. The great Treaty of Kuldja, ratified in 1851, threw open the rich marts of Ili and Chuguchak (Tarbagatai) to the enterprise of Russian merchants. The Treaty of Pekin in 1860 more than ratified those provisions and emphasized the good understanding which had previously existed along the whole frontier. The cession of the western portion of Ili to Russia, including as it did the important place of Vernoe, enabled Russian merchants to reap the fullest benefit of their good understanding with China. When, therefore, the Tungani revolt broke out in the country lying between the Great Wall and the Pamir and Lake Issik Kul, it was a great blow to Russian commerce to find that the friendly Chinese had been supplanted by fanatical, and consequently hostile, Mahomedans. Yet the Russians held aloof from those intestine disturbances, and slowly proceeded with the absorption of Western Turkestan. They preserved neutrality while the Atalik Ghazi was subduing Altyshahr, the land of the six cities, and while the Tungani were establishing a firm rule between Kashgar and China. But in Kuldja the question was more intricate. There there were two rival elements almost equal in strength and resources, and when the Chinese had been massacred the question arose which of the two factions was to be supreme. These factions were the Tungani and the Tarantchis. The former were of the same race as the Tungani in Kashgar and further east, and the latter were the descendants of old inhabitants of Kashgar, who had been at various times compelled to settle in Ili by order of the Chinese. Between these in 1864-67 a bitter contest ensued, and although the former appear to have had the best of the fighting, a compromise was agreed upon between them. They elected a chief, a Tungan, we believe, named Abul Oghlan, and during some years this irregular sort of government existed in Ili. But it was only a veiled anarchy, and Russian merchants feared to enter the province on account of the outspoken antipathies of Abul Oghlan. All Russia's previous diplomatic arrangements became a dead letter, and all Ignatieff's skill and tact of no avail in face of Tungan truculence. It was impossible for Russian caravans to proceed to Kuldja during the existence of such confusion, and it was equally useless for them to think of reaching Chuguchak, where a sanguinary war had broken out between Kirghiz and Calmucks, resulting in the triumph of the latter, who have ever since retained possession of it for China. But, although Russia's trade languished, she, so occupied was she in Khokand, Bokhara, and Khiva, still abstained from interference either in Kuldja or Kashgar; but in the year 1870 the question assumed a more significant aspect on account of the astonishing success of Yakoob Beg. When Kucha fell into his possession and the rulers of Turfan and Urumtsi sent an humble embassage to the conqueror, the Russians began to be nervous about the future fate of Kuldja. This doubt increased when the Atalik Ghazi fortified Ush Turfan, in the mountains, and began to push his outposts closer in towards Kuldja. The Russians had held aloof when it was simply a question of commerce, but Yakoob Beg's threatening attitude in 1870-71 acted as a spur to their inclinations, and it was resolved to forestall their dangerous neighbour. In May, 1871, the Russians crossed into Kuldja, and during the next month General Kolpakovsky followed with the main army, some 2,000 strong. The Tungan-Tarantchi Government offered little opposition, and Abul Oghlan surrendered to General Kolpakovsky on the 4th of July. The disappearance of this hybrid rule in Kuldja was an unqualified benefit to all concerned. Seventy-five thousand slaves were released by order of the Russians, and commerce once more ventured to return in the rear of victory and good rule. In the proclamation Russia annexed Kuldja "in perpetuity," and formed out of it the Government of Prilinsk; but this "in perpetuity" was explained at Pekin to mean until the Chinese were strong enough to reassert their sway. On several occasions that definition has been repeated, and the Chinese have now naturally requested the Russians to be as good as their word. Russia has replied with a demand for compensation, and has fixed it at a figure which the Chinese declare to be exorbitant and to exceed the total cost of the north-west campaign. It is to arrange this little difficulty that the Chinese have sent a special Embassy to St. Petersburg, and some time will yet elapse before the discussion can come on. There is good reason for believing that Russia is loth to surrender Kuldja, and that she regards the recent Chinese successes in Central Asia with dislike, as tending to lower her own prestige, is not less clear. The retrocession of Kuldja would undermine Russian rule in the eastern part of Central Asia, according to the *St. Petersburg Journal*, and it would no doubt be highly inconvenient to abandon the admirable frontier Russia holds in the Tian Shan, so long as she retains Ili. The Russian Press evidently consider that the peoples of Central Asia would construe such an act as a confession of weakness, and that it would tend to revive all the old prestige that formerly belonged to China. The Russian authorities in Central Asia are loth to surrender Kuldja for the same reasons, as well as for the fact that Kuldja has become in their hands a highly prosperous and productive region. But whether the home Government will care to break its plighted word is another matter, upon which we should not like to pass an opinion. But, unless it does, Russia will scarcely be able to foil the Chinese, who are greatly in earnest over this Central Asian question. And it should be remembered that China has at this very moment a disciplined force of close on 50,000 men in Kashgaria and Tungaria, a force, moreover, flushed with the success of two campaigns, and armed with breech-loading rifles and Krupp's artillery. The Russians would probably be able to overthrow this "ever victorious" army if it came to the last appeal; but it would require an effort, and that is exactly what Russia is unable at the present moment to make in Central Asia. In all probability moderation will sway the counsels on both sides, and some compromise will be suggested by which each will secure its object or its equivalent as well as its honour.

"Daily Telegraph" Oct: 1st

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

THE AMEER AND THE SULTAN

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, MONDAY NIGHT.

This evening's *Politische Correspondenz* publishes the following information from Constantinople:

"Schir Ali Khan, the secret envoy of the Ameer of Afghanistan, is instructed to claim the Sultan's intervention in the pending difficulty, in order that England should not declare war against Afghanistan. He is further to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia is advisable for the Mussulman race, and that the Ameer personally is decided to conclude such an alliance. The Ameer wrote to the Sultan on the subject a few months ago. The Sultan has sent a secret embassy to Afghanistan to sound the Mussulman population of Central Asia as regards a Pan-Islamite league against England as well as against Russia."

[REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.]

PARIS, SEPT. 30 (EVENING).

Private advices received here state that the British Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg has presented to the Imperial Chancellery a note from the English Cabinet inquiring in what way the Russian Government proposed to reconcile General Stolieteff's mission to Cabul with its previous engagements, by which Russia agreed to renounce all political influence in Afghanistan.

The reply to this note was to the effect that Russia was always disposed to respect existing engagements, and that the mission of General Stolieteff, although decided upon at a time and under circumstances which now no longer existed, was merely intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of Afghanistan.

BELGRADE, SEPT. 30.

The news which has been received here of the complications in Afghanistan excites great interest and appears to have decidedly strengthened Russian influence in Servia.

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Private advices received at Paris from St. Petersburg state, in answer to a note from the English Cabinet, inquiring in what way the Russian Government proposes to reconcile General Prince Stolietoff's mission to Cabul with its previous engagement to renounce all political influence in Afghanistan, that that mission, although decided upon at a time and under circumstances now no longer existing, was merely intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of Afghanistan.

Last night's *Politische Correspondenz* publishes information from Constantinople to the effect that Schir Ali Khan, the secret envoy of the Ameer of Afghanistan, is instructed to claim the Sultan's intervention in order that England should not declare war against Afghanistan; further, to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia is advisable for the Mussulman race, and that the Ameer personally is decided to conclude such an alliance. It is added that the Sultan has sent a secret emissary to Afghanistan to sound the Mussulman population of Central Asia as regards a Pan-Islamite league against England as well as Russia.

Great interest is stated to have been excited at Belgrade by the news of the complications which have arisen in regard to Afghanistan, and Russian influence in Servia is said to have been decidedly strengthened.

IT ought not to be without shame and penitence that a body of Englishmen find themselves directly summoned by Russian journals to renew their campaign against the interests of their own country. The *Novoye Vremya* "foresees that the blow inflicted upon England's position in Asia will enable the Liberal Opposition to recommence its attacks upon the BEACONSFIELD Administration." In these few words—obscure as may be their source, and mistaken their definition—lurks, we think, a severer condemnation of the course recently pursued by some among us than any which public reprobation at home could inflict. The Muscovite journal, expressing, no doubt, the opinion held by many of the Czar's subjects, puts on one side all humanitarian pretensions in the late agitation. It probably feels that, if the barbarities committed by Russians and Bulgarians were so calmly regarded by our philanthropists, their emotion about the original massacres cannot have been very genuine. It equally leaves aside, as exhausted, all talk of sympathy with Russia as a "holy" and "sisterly" Power. The St. Petersburg newspaper goes straight to what it believes to be the "root of the matter," and says, in effect, to its British friends, "Now is your time again! The Afghan crisis is an excellent opportunity for a fresh attack upon the strongholds of office. Defame and embarrass your QUEEN'S Government; pick holes in all they do; depreciate and damage them day after day, and you may, perhaps, recover—together with our contemptuous gratitude and amid those disasters to your country for which we pray—the coveted command of administration for which we suppose you ready to do all this and more." Such is a fair paraphrase of the language which certain English statesmen have taught Russian writers to address to them, and we say again that nothing should more sharply open their eyes to the mischief wrought by the easy treason of factiousness. No doubt this time the Russian *mot d'ordre* will not be obeyed. An instinct, stronger than vanity or rancour, is teaching the leaders of our late pro-Russian section that the country would not tolerate any renewal of an anti-national agitation. The danger is felt to be too real; the affront is recognised as too studied and defiant; and people understand the Imperial bearings of this question better than they comprehended the confused relations of the Eastern Question as seen from the stand-points of Bulgaria and Batoum. Those consequently who might secretly agree with the Russian journal that the opportunity is tempting for another anti-patriotic outcry are silent, or else discuss minor matters in the situation, such as the financial problems involved, or the recent measures of Lord LYTTON. But, indeed, we would fain believe that a majority of the small crowd who applauded the insane cry of "Perish India!" have found themselves, after all, too much Englishmen to feel like Russo-Afghans, just as the majority of the nation, early in the century, refused to be the tools of Napoleonic ambition. More than one example of such commendable repentance has already been afforded, and to those who are still hesitating, anxiously waiting to see whether Lords BEACONSFIELD and LYTTON will bring the country well through this business, we would address a word of warning. The English public man who should show himself factious, or make his course in the present crisis depend upon the success or disaster of our arms, might as well retire at once from politics. For such a person there would be no future in Parliamentary life; for it is not now a question of Turkey in Asia, but of England in Asia, and the recollection of past misadventures in this frontier region inspires the nation, not with any feeling of pusillanimity, but with an earnest desire to make an end of such perturbations, and grapple with the real evil, Russian encroachments near our Indian confines.

Perhaps, however, during these days of preparation, it may be worth while to point out that nothing in the policy of Lord LYTTON lies open to the charge of aggressiveness or rash activity. It has been no desire for territory, no renewed traditions of the DALHOUSIE period, which brought on this grave situation. SHERE ALI Khan had experienced only favour and friendship at our hands, and, indeed, owes his throne to British support. The rifles with which his levies will be armed were supplied by us; his treasury has been replenished with English gold; and the Indian Government asked nothing more from him than that he should perform his part as an independent and loyal ruler of the gateway-kingdom of the peninsula. The necessity for securing this by means of a closer intercourse was forced upon us entirely by Russian action. The despatch of the Czar's agent to Cabul, contrary to the clearest pledges, and the reports of what had passed at his reception, and afterwards in Durbar, obliged the Viceroy to take immediate steps for a plain understanding, which might and would, however, have still proved amicable if SHERE ALI had not already yielded to the suggestion of the Muscovite Emissary. It is worth remembering that one of the most violent of the Russian journals admits all this, thereby transferring to the Czar's Government complete responsibility for what may ensue. "The English," says the *Ruski Mir*, "intended to cement a new and solemn alliance with the Ameer, previous good relations with that potentate being, in their opinion, disturbed by the appearance of a Russian Embassy at Cabul. But, instead of meeting them half-way, the Ameer, only an Asiatic Khan, has been independent enough to box the ears of the proud Englishman and to shake the authority and prestige of the Indian Empire." Thus even in Muscovite quarters it is not pretended that we ever sought anything beyond our frontiers except security for peace and allegiance within them, while the appearance of the Czar's agent at Cabul, with armed columns behind him on the Oxus, was a palpable menace to that security, and indubitably so intended. Never, therefore, was there a clearer justification for action than that which Lord LYTTON can show; and if our Empire, with its vast value to civilisation and humanity, is to be defended at all, everybody possessing the least spirit or patriotism will agree that it must be defended upon the Viceroy's lines. We hope, therefore, that such idle protests as Mr. LOWE has recently raised in print against what he styles "Imperialism," and such recapitulation of past calamities elsewhere as seems designedly published in the hope of inspiring fear and feebleness, may be the only signs of obedience to the Russian journal's invitation. This is no ordinary crisis. The tranquillity and security of the Empire have been assailed under combinations which demand that unanimous support should be given to the QUEEN'S Representative. The flame lighted by this insolent defiance may spread we know not where. Circumstances have abruptly revealed only one of the political torpedoes laid outside our frontier for the injury of English policy; but others may possibly explode in unsuspected places, and one of the best means of preparation for what may come upon us will be the old and noble union which England was wont to present against any clear national danger. Thus far such a united feeling is shown, and its effect is already seen in the language of all the best organs among the Continental press, which speak with respect and admiration of the spirit exhibited throughout the country. It is seen also in the guarded tone adopted by the official and semi-official journals of the Czar, which, although allowed to publish ill-mannered comments upon the topic, are evidently directed to abstain from any open challenge of our power. The farthest licence at present granted these writers is that they may hint at the right and the intention of Russia to wage "unofficial war" against us, "covering the rear" of SHERE ALI, as the *Novoye Vremya* says, and "allowing Bokhariots, Khirgiz, and Turkomans," as another Russian newspaper observes, "to aid and assist the Afghans in the impending war." It is sufficiently certain, nevertheless, that no such

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repetition of Servian tactics will be endured by her Majesty's Government; and that our enemies will have to declare themselves openly, whoever and wherever they may be.

By this time it is possible enough that the head of the Russian Mission has already been withdrawn from Cabul. There are indications that such may be the case, and that only subordinate agents remain at present in the Ameer's capital; so that before our demand is made for the recall of the interloping ABRAMOFF or STOLETOFF—for the very name of the Czar's emissary appears dubious—we may be met with the answer that he has left Cabul in the regular course. This is the response which the *Nord* foreshadows in writing as follows: "If the Russian Envoy withdraws, which we will not yet take upon ourselves to affirm, it will evidently be under the regular conditions of the return of these kinds of embassies when once their mission is accomplished, and not at the summons of England. There is at present no Afghan question at St. Petersburg, and it would be gratuitous clumsiness and imprudence of English policy to create one. Russia, at peace with England, is in no way desirous of attacking or disquieting British rule in India." But it was the same Muscovite organ which recently confessed that the expedition of KAUFFMAN and the errand of the Cabul Envoy were both conceived to "disquiet" British India in the expectation of war, and would still prove useful during peace, as diverting attention from Russian proceedings in Bulgaria and Kurdistan. It is such palpable prevarications as these—and those yet more painful examples of ill-faith in higher circles which have been furnished by Khiva, Livadia, and the last broken pledge of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF regarding Afghanistan—which degrade the journalism and diplomacy of Russia to the moral level of Pathans, and forbid Europe to rank her among really civilised Powers. To speak in one breath about the educating influence of England in Asia, and that of the Czar's Generals, is to compare the nineteenth century with the Dark Ages, or GENGHIS KHAN with AKBAR. If the Russians themselves provoke such a contrast, it will be their own fault when it is put to proof by the logic of events.

THE AFGHAN AT HOME.

Amongst his own people, says a writer who knows the country well, the Afghan chief knows no restraint. Nothing is safe from his shameful cupidity, and, indeed, were it not for their love of country, wild independence, and pride, nothing would keep the Afghans together as a nation. "They know this and lament it, for they say that if they were only united they would be the conquerors of the world. Yet they pride themselves on their turbulent independence and anarchical life." The Afghan hates control, and would much rather suffer wrongs at the hands of those stronger than himself and live in the hope of being some day able to exercise the same power over those who are weaker, than submit to a regular government, with equality of rights and codes of laws. Twice during the few months that a British mission spent at Candahar, in 1857-58, rumours reached the city that civil war had broken out at Cabul, but in both cases the reports resolved themselves into eruptions of old feuds between the chiefs. On one occasion the belligerents were near relatives of the Ameer himself, and by their armed bands daily fighting, plundering, and murdering, all the approaches to the capital, as well as the suburbs, were thrown into desperate alarm, and all traffic ceased. The authorities could do nothing, for it was understood that where there were two parties in a quarrel the whole city—civil, religious, military, and industrial—would be split into two factions, and half range itself on either side. And for suppressing a formidable *émeute* the Ameer has no adequate forces. The private feud, therefore, is allowed to run its course, the public interests to suffer by the total interruption of trade and the plunder and murder of citizens. Dr. Bellew, referring to an event of this kind, declares such incidents to be of daily occurrence among all classes. The anger or revenge of the Afghan once aroused, murder can alone allay the passion, "for mercy they know not, and forgiveness would be considered a shameful weakness." The necessity of seeking revenge is instilled into them from their mother's arms, and as soon as they are of an age to do so they patiently and perseveringly hunt up the enemies of their house, travelling with religious ardour from place to place, and year to year, in the one hope of some day taking their adversary unawares.

An incident of Candahar life will illustrate the actual authority possessed by the Sirdars within the limits they are supposed to administer, and also the elements of mischief and local disturbance which are always at hand in the cities of Cabul. As it is at Candahar, so is it at Ghuzni, at Herat, at Khilat-i-Ghilzai; so in miniature is it at every minor town and village; till even in the hamlet of a hundred people we find the military sentry exercising absolutely despotic powers. A Hindu boy had been seized by force by some Mohammedans who intended to make a convert of him, but the lad's co-religionists, mustering in force, besieged the chief with petitions for his intervention. The chief, who was also the heir-apparent to the Cabul throne, consented at last to listen to the case, and on receiving a bribe permitted the boy to escape from his jailers. The Mohammedans were furious, and when the heir-apparent next appeared in public he was grossly insulted by the religious chiefs, the Mollahs. In punishment for this all the religious and legal preceptors of Candahar were banished *en masse* from the city; and the order went forth that they were not on any account to be admitted for a week. The very next day, however, the holy men appeared in a body at the gate of the city and demanded entrance. The troops on guard at once fraternised with them, and the Mollahs entered in triumph. Once inside the gate, the mob lost all control over itself, and amidst cries of "Death to all infidels!" surged through the streets in quest of a victim, the chief magistrate being the first. His house was thoroughly reduced to ruins and the lives of the Europeans then in the city were placed in danger, until the heir-apparent's body guard cleared the rabble from the streets. That chief himself dared do nothing, for though a few of his soldiers were sufficiently under command to charge an unarmed mob at his orders, the bulk of the troops, he knew, as well as all the population, would certainly side with the priests against him. He accordingly waited for proposals from the offended doctors of the law, and agreed to them as soon as they were made.

Not less remarkable than this want of real power is the shocking exercise of force. Avarice is a natural vice with the Afghan, and to obtain another's goods at the least possible cost, or at none at all, is the constant aim of those in authority. Whatever they require they take at their own price, sometimes even without any pretence at concealment of the tyranny. At other times a farce of justice is played off upon the unhappy owners of the wares in question, who, beside being robbed, are therefore also befooled. If, for instance, a consignment of horses passes within the immediate jurisdiction of a Sirdar, the whole drove is brought in for his inspection. Selecting those he prefers, he has them placed on one side; and, after expatiating in a loud voice upon their defects and general worthlessness, asks a courtier what he thinks would be a fair price for the lot. The courtier, after much hesitation and critical digression, suggests about a tenth of the real value, adding, however, that as the Sirdar is famous from one end of the earth to the other for his liberality to traders, it is just possible he may condescend to give a few shillings more. Others reply in the same strain, some raising the sum by trifling amounts, others in the same way lowering it, so that the invariable outcome of all the opinions is that a tenth of the animal's value is given as a fair price. With this opinion the Sirdar himself at last agrees, and the wretched horse dealers retire from the great man's presence with a smile of thanks on their faces, but hearts full of curses.

A frequent artifice is to declare the currency to be depreciated, to call it in at half its former worth, and then immediately afterwards to issue it at its original value. In a single year, if the Sirdar has expensive tastes, or there is an extraordinary demand on the public funds, this will happen once a month. Monopolies are established of any article that may be found to be temporarily in large consumption. The excessive prices asked at once bring down the demand, and the trade is strangled. As soon as it is found to be unremunerative, the monopoly is abandoned for another, and so in turn every branch of trade and manufacture suffers from the grasping avarice of the temporary chief. An

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inordinate and excessive greed for money is a prevailing trait in the ordinary character of the Afghan, and place and power are only valued in proportion to the facilities they offer for amassing wealth. The ruler of a city, when famine threatens, has been known again and again to buy up all the available grain, and, hoarding it up until the mortality from starvation drives the survivors to his granaries, will then reap a golden harvest. The poor, compelled to feed on grass and weeds, besiege the Palace with clamorous appeals for help, but they cry in vain. The troops, who in such times have enough to do to keep the peace, have to be well fed, but pay day is postponed on the pretext of the sufferings in the city requiring all available funds, and when it does at last arrive the wretched soldiers find their rations charged for at famine rates. On one occasion, when some travellers had feasted their escort on a roast sheep, the paymaster deducted the cost of the meal from the pay of the partakers, but as it was not easy to find out how many had shared in it, the calculation was based on the assumption that every five men in the army had eaten a sheep, and the deduction was extended over the whole force. The gross injustice was at once resented, and large numbers began to desert from the array; but, after a few had been recaptured and hanged, the appearance of order was restored.

Constant outbreaks of insubordination, resulting in murders and military executions, kept the cantonments in excitement for a long time, but eventually the soldiers seemed to be tired of disaffection. Meanwhile, no serious effort had been made to quell the mutiny; for, with the whole army insubordinate, and a civil population never under control, repressive measures on a large scale were obviously impossible. Nor is the disaffection astonishing. Indeed, the wonder is, as a recent writer says, that the people or the army do not combine and overthrow the authorities at every cause for discontent. But their clan jealousies and utter want of unanimity are, we are told, their chiefs' safeguards. As a rule, the soldiers are only paid three times a year, at intervals of four months, and even then they receive only about a fifth of what is actually due. All kinds of deductions are made, in the first place by the Sirdar, for their arms, food, clothing, &c., and in the next, by their officers, who take a commission upon all their pay and a percentage over. Even then the miserable remnant is made over to the men not in cash but in grain, or even, as is often the case, in orders upon a village which has been backward in its revenue. The result may be imagined when a posse of armed ruffians visit a locality in the name of the State and collect what they consider their dues. As a matter of fact, the soldiers look to this legalised plunder as one of their regular sources of emolument, and perhaps but for it would not tolerate as they do the gross exactions of their officers and the Sirdar. The effect upon the country may be easily understood. But not so apparent is the policy which underlies this seemingly reckless sacrifice of the loyalty of the army. It is true that the soldiers are grossly robbed by their superiors, but they have, at the same time, permission to recoup themselves as best they can from the villagers. The result is that the rural population and the troops at headquarters are eminently hostile to each other, and can never combine for any political movement, while the soldiers thus alienated from the civilians are compelled, for their very existence, to support the power which arms them against their countrymen, and from which they derive their own despotic and barbarous privileges of plunder and murder. The Afghan soldiers, says Dr. Bellew, "are truly the most lawless set of villains to be found in the country. They oppress the people in every way with absolute impunity, and cattle lifting, burglary, and the kidnapping of children are carried on by them daily both in the city and the suburban villages. But when it is considered that the soldier's full pay is only about nine shillings a month, and that he seldom receives a third of it, it is not remarkable that he should seek the means of subsistence elsewhere."

Tyranny and cupidity are not, however, the only weaknesses of Afghan rulers, for the present Ameer has himself set the example of poisoning relatives, murdering obnoxious individuals generally, and, if rumours current in India be well founded, in torturing sons into imbecility. That a certain humour often accompanies these acts does not justify them, and in the following instance, a typical one of the relations of the governors and the governed in Cabul, it is impossible not to discern a complete paralysis of social and domestic order. A rich man died, leaving one child, a daughter of nine years. The relatives met to decide on the disposal of the effects of the deceased, but, being unable to agree, carried the case to the Sirdar. The magistrate ordered the child to be produced with all her wealth, and, on their appearance, ordered the one to his harem, the other to his treasury, informing the thunderstruck relations that, as he had made up his mind to marry the orphan, her riches would constitute her dowry, and they might go. Drunkenness, although their religion forbids all stimulants, is a fashionable vice among the aristocracy of Cabul, from the Royal family downwards; and, besides the various wines produced from the local grapes—nearly every noble has his own wine press on the premises—a large trade in European alcoholic liquors is carried on. The amusements of the upper class are debauchery and field sports. Of the former it suffices to say that the abominations of all Mohammedan countries seem to be naturalised and exaggerated among the subjects of the Ameer. With regard to their field sports, we have in a recent issue given a sketch of its chief forms; but it remains to add that whatever the game in view may be the Afghan sportsman compasses its destruction in the laziest manner possible. In shooting they never think of taking a flying shot, but prefer the more deliberate, and easy "pot," and, indeed, when the occasion offers, the sportsman goes out to his ground, and ensconcing himself in a shady corner, waits for game to pass the muzzle of his gun, even though the vineyards all round him may be, as they usually are, resonant with the cries of the partridge and quail. When after antelope, the Afghan always sits down and stops till the quarry comes past him, either in its natural course or driven by beaters. In many exercises, however, they excel, and when therefore they express surprise and disgust at the undignified exertions taken in their amusements by Europeans, they are only giving utterance to the feelings that possess every Oriental when he sees an Englishman tramping after game rifle in hand, and enduring cheerfully all the fatigue that comes in the day's work. The Afghan does not recognise the virtue of activity. Nor, considering that a rotund paunch is held to be respectable, could it well be otherwise? Violent exercise has the tendency to reduce obesity, and therefore, to the Oriental mind, to lower a person's claims to the respect of others.

In war only, public or private, is the latent energy of the Afghan character evoked, and to compass his revenge, to bring down his quarry in a man-hunt, all the vindictive activity of the people is brought into exercise. No length of tedious march or patient ambuscade deters the Afghan from his revenge, and even in cold blood they carry out themselves, and applaud in others, acts of retributive justice, as they call it. The hideous practice of allowing private persons to exact vengeance for injuries received has been an Eastern custom from time immemorial, and flourishes to-day in Afghanistan in all its revolting simplicity. Thus, two men happening to quarrel, one wounded the other, and the wounded man, refusing to submit to amputation, died. His brother, as next-of-kin, at once claimed the privilege of putting the homicide to death, and at a formal council held the claim was admitted as sound. The subsequent exaction of the penalty is thus described by a European writer: "About noon there was a great crowd and tumult of voices outside the citadel gate, but, as we knew what was to take place, we did not go out to see the ceremony. Presently the din was hushed, there was a momentary pause of complete silence, and then a sudden outburst of applause. We hardly needed to be told what had happened, but soon after Faramuz Khan came in, in perfect ecstacies of delight at the brutal sight he had just witnessed and applauded. He told us that after the judge had pronounced the prisoner guilty, he consigned him to the care of the avenger, who at once stepped forward, and, unsheathing his knife, threw down his brother's homicide, and kneeling on his chest, with a sonorous Bismillah-a-rahman-a-rahim (In the name of God the most merciful and gracious), cut his throat from ear to ear as he would have done that of a sheep." The chiefs, it will be seen, have no claim to the respect of those over whom they are placed, nor do they command their respect. And from them the examples spreads downwards to the lowest, of looking at all who are weaker than themselves as their prey, and all equals as their enemies.

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"Pall Mall Gazette" 1st October (67)

THE BILL FOR THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE Government apparently does not think the question where and by whom the frontier line of the empire shall be drawn important enough to justify the summoning of a Cabinet Council. But the methods of communication with one another provided by the Postmaster-General are as open to them as to the rest of the QUEEN'S subjects; and a judicious use of them would enable them to at once lay to rest the impression, which their silence is allowing to gain ground, that the cost of the Afghan war is to be borne by India. It is hard to believe that this is or has been even for a moment the intention of the Cabinet; but the persistence with which the ministerial journals avoid all reference to the financial side of the question in its relation to Englishmen is suspicious. If we are wrong in supposing that the Government have ever seriously thought of making India pay the bill, we tender them an apology beforehand; but, as they seem in no hurry to disclaim the notion, it would be unwise to refrain from saying plainly what such a decision would mean.

To throw the burden of the Afghan war upon India would be the meanest policy conceivable, if it were not also the maddest. It is almost saved from being disreputable by the gravity of the danger incurred in following it. England is a very wealthy country; India is a very poor country. England is very lightly taxed; India is very heavily taxed. England, as Mr. FAWCETT pointed out yesterday, can raise £12,000,000 yearly by a 6*d.* income tax and hardly feel the burden; India by the same expedient could only raise £1,200,000, and it would be raised at the risk of an insurrection. England is steadily paying off her debt; and the only reason why she does not pay it off more quickly is that her people prefer to spend their money in other ways; India has of late been steadily adding to her debt, and seems likely to go on adding to it, merely to meet what may be called her daily expenses. England commands so vast an area of food supply that the price of the necessaries of life scarcely vary from year to year; India is so frequently visited by famine, and even now has such an imperfect system of carriage from province to province, that only an effort on the part of the Government—extraordinary in the demand it makes on their resources, but ordinary in the frequency of its recurrence—can prevent millions of her people from dying of starvation. These are the pictures which the two countries severally present; and yet it is rumoured that, having looked at each, the Government propose to treat the Afghan war as a matter of purely Indian concern. The meanness of such a course lies in this—that it would be a distinct evasion by the richer country of a liability which is in the strictest sense her own. This is not a question of helping or not helping India to bear her own burdens; it is a question of forcing her by dint of superior strength to undertake a burden which is not hers. No one pretends that if the Afghan question only concerned Afghanistan, if the only danger to be apprehended were the hostility of a barbarous ruler or the raids of a frontier tribe half-brigands and half-soldiers, it would be necessary to insist upon sending a mission or to provoke such a refusal as that which has now to be dealt with. If there were no Russia standing behind the Ameer, he might have been left to sulk until such time as it pleased him to invite the mission which the Indian Government would then have had no special desire to send. The Afghan war has been brought upon India by Imperial policy; it will be waged in pursuance of Imperial requirements and to ward off an Imperial danger; and by every consideration of justice it ought to be paid for out of the Imperial treasury. In the days when an invasion of England from France was expected, the Government did not leave it to the counties of Kent or Sussex to bear the cost of the fortifications constructed to defend the coast. Yet any reason which can be assigned for making India bear the cost of invading Afghanistan would have been equally valid for this purpose. It was in Kent or Sussex that the landing of the enemy would be attempted; therefore, as Kent or Sussex would be the gainers by the security the forts afforded, let Kent and Sussex pay for building them.

The madness of applying this principle to India is perhaps more wonderful than its meanness. After all, it does not need very much courage to do a shabby thing, but it does show courage of a certain sort to do a fool-hardy one. Whatever India borrows has to be paid for first or last by the taxation of the people of India; and about the people of India one thing is perfectly well known, and another shrewdly suspected. What is known is that they are very poor; what is suspected is that they are not inalienably contented under our rule. Why is the insult which the Ameer has offered to the Government of India a matter that must be dealt with thus summarily? Why do men who "know the country" declare it to be a quarrel that must be taken up at once? For this reason—that we cannot afford to let our Indian subjects think us weak. If they once get to hold this opinion of us, no Indian expert

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dares to say what consequences may not follow. Afghanistan must be invaded as soon as the season allows because there are so many people in India who will keenly sympathize with the Ameer, will rejoice in the slight which he has put upon us, and will eagerly welcome every tittle of evidence which goes to show that we are unable to resent it. We recognize this fact by the promptitude of our military measures; but of what avail will it be to recognize it in one aspect if we shut our eyes to it in the other? These same people whose opinion of our strength we think of so much importance are the people from whom the revenues of India are raised—raised, as we know, with difficulty, raised at the cost of much privation to the taxpayers, raised consequently at the constant and inevitable risk of exciting discontent and ill-will. To make India pay the bill, or any part of the bill, for the invasion of Afghanistan would certainly make increased taxation necessary. It would be wanted to pay the interest on the inevitable loan; for there is no margin in the existing imposts out of which to meet either this or any other addition to current expenditure. But between the existing and the new taxes there would be this serious difference: the existing taxes are in a great degree levied to maintain the civil government, which, however much disaffected natives may dislike it, does give them almost immeasurable advantages in return for what they pay; but the new taxes would be levied to pay the cost of subduing an independent race with which they sympathize, in the interests of masters whom they do not love. Altogether, no better text could be given to a preacher of disaffection.

Is it permissible to ask ourselves what the Empress of India may think on this subject?

The circumstance that on more than one occasion feigned epistles have been said to have been "picked up" near this or that place, to give an air of truth to them, does not deter us from the statement that the following letter was found this morning in the neighbourhood of Printing House-square:—

Dear ——. Herewith a hint or two for to-morrow's leader on the Afghan question.—Yours ever, M. C.

Russian mission appears at Cabul. Viceroy instructed to conceive a British mission. Viceroy conceives it. Viceroy obtains private information that Ameer has no intention of receiving it, but was merely playing in a derisive and insolent manner with the expectation of the Government. (See your correspondent's last telegram.) Viceroy on this publicly announces imposing mission will be sent. Lay stress here on the fact that the Viceroy, knowing that his mission would be insulted, considered that a protracted delay after the insult would have a good effect. Mission is therefore sent and insulted, and preparations made to commence hostilities in the spring. This interval will be used by British officers to conciliate frontier tribes. Russian agents and Ameer's officers will also try to conciliate them, but will fail on account of unreliability of hill tribes. Besides, the weather better in spring than in winter. Massing of troops at Quetta and Thull during the winter and six months' inactivity favourable to our prestige among semi-independent Indian States, as repose conveys an idea of strength. Continue to deprecate hurry. You cannot dwell too much on the weather. Say you cannot feel certain whether Russia instigated Shere Ali or not. If she did, nothing could be more fortunate—repeat again why it is fortunate. Close (as you are a good fellow) with the usual assurances that whether Russia incited the Ameer or not, whether we go to war or not, whether the hill tribes are for us or against us, the prestige of the country cannot suffer, for it is entrusted to skilful and far-sighted hands.

P.S.—We have not settled yet whether England or India will pay the cost of the war, but I will let you know to-morrow.

(Very private).—P.S.S.—Throw cold water upon rumours of dissensions in the Cabinet. S. and N. have been troublesome, but Stanley and Hardy are come to London to settle details with the D. of C. We must soon put out a feeler to see how the cat jumps about the Euphrates Valley Railway. I expect trouble with Northcote about this.

The *Turkestan Gazette* says that the Russian troops which were concentrated at Djama, on the Bokharian frontier, are on their way back to Tashkend. The telegraphic communication between Samarcand and Djama is to be continued to Kattakurgan, as a prolongation of the line which proceeds from Tashkend viâ Khodjend, Tiube, Djsak, and Samarcand. "It is very remarkable," observes the *Gazette*, "that the Ameer of Afghanistan, when he learned the intention of the Russian commander-in-chief to lay down a line of telegraph as far as the Amou-Darya in the event of an advance of the Russian army, expressed his readiness to place as many telegraph-posts as might be required at the disposal of the Russian engineers. He further promised that during the whole period of the stay of Russian troops within the frontiers of his country he would supply them with provisions and forage; and he collected large supplies of clover, rice, barley, and mutton at Scharkitabie and Tchiraktcha for this purpose. He has thereby proved his wish to render great services to Russia. . . . . Simultaneously with the arrival of General Kaufmann at Samarcand, there came an extraordinary mission sent by the Ameer to salute the Russian representative. Among the members of the mission were the Beys Schachrysiaba and Saadinu, as representatives of the Bey of Keryman; also special representatives of the Ameer Durbun-Biy, the Ameer Prachmetulla Mirachur, the Ameer Shere Ali, and the Alimbeg Permantchy, who is highly respected by his people. General Kaufmann will send a Plenipotentiary with an autograph letter to the Ameer, thanking him for this special mark of distinction. The first step has thus been taken for entering into direct relations with Afghanistan, which may be of great service to us. . . . . The last report received from General Stoletoff, the envoy to Cabul, came from Haihek, in Northern Afghanistan, where he was received with great honours."

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IRRESOLUTION ON THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—The first thing that strikes every one, as it struck Sir Charles Dilke, in reviewing Central Asian affairs, is the complete ignorance of the Government of all that has for so long a time been going on beyond the Oxus—an ignorance which is simply due to our weakness in not from the first insisting on having our agents in Afghanistan, as agreed to by Shere Ali. Ignorance is always in the end a most costly indulgence, and may even prove the destruction of a people. Over and over again Mr. Grant Duff has warned us of the necessity of having our agents everywhere in Asia, especially as a protection against Russian intrigues. The more pressing error of the Government, however, and the one with which public opinion can more practically deal at present, is their delay in advancing on Cabul. It cannot be put down to want of preparation. Sir Neville Chamberlain's letter to Faiz Mohammed Khan, at the fort of Ali Musjid, proves that the Government anticipated opposition, and were prepared for it. In this letter, which has been strangely overlooked, Sir Neville wrote :—"I expect to receive a reply not later than September 18, so please to understand that the matter is most urgent. At the same time it is my duty to inform you in a frank and friendly manner that if your answer be not what I trust it will be, or if you delay to send an early reply, I have no alternative but to make whatever arrangements may seem to me best for carrying out the instructions I have received from my Government." This means that he would force his way; and all the telegrams received since the 24th of September prove how thoroughly prepared the Government of India was to force its way if necessary. There is something wanting, therefore, to explain the abandonment of this transparent intention to force the Kyber, and the peremptory, instantaneous dissolution of Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission. Had the Government, in one of the usual cold fits of timidity which always follow hard on its warm fits of resolution and costly preparation, really recalled the mission before it was repelled? It looks uncommonly like it. Of course the public only heard of its being repelled; and so the prompt dissolution of the mission, and the reports of troops being pushed forward to Quettah, Thull, and the Kyber Pass, looked at first as if the Government had resolved for once to show the courage of its words and convictions. But suddenly there came a lull in the preparations for what seemed an immediate advance, and the ministerial organs began to talk of negotiations and waiting until the spring, as, indeed, the inspired Calcutta telegram in the *Times* of the 23rd inst. had already suggested; and then, through the obscurer channel of the Overland Mail, this remarkable letter from Sir Neville Chamberlain to the Afghan commissioner at Ali Musjid. The explanation, therefore, that now suggests itself is not that the Government is resolute, but that it has once again shown its usual irresoluteness of purpose. The movement of troops really belongs to the time when it had determined that Sir Neville should advance to Cabul at all hazards; while the dissolution of the mission, instead of being in consequence of, really preceded the dramatic incident of its repulse. It will be remembered that it was about the middle of September that the papers began to talk of a special mission, or a message sent by M. Giers from St. Petersburg to explain away the presence of the Russian agent at Cabul; and it was even said that the promise had been made to recall him. If the above be the true explanation of the news from India, Cavagnari's baffled attempt to obtain a safe-conduct for the mission into Afghanistan was indeed a most providential outrage on the keenest susceptibilities of Englishmen. But it is just such irresoluteness as this on the part of the Government—which first showed itself in recalling the fleet which it had ordered into the Dardanelles, again, later, in accepting all the "projects" of the "Schouvaloff-Salisbury Memorandum" after declaring its determination to stand by the "Salisbury Circular," and finally, as it would appear, in precipitately recalling a mission it had carefully prepared to assert our rights in Afghanistan,—it is such timidity of purpose which is taking all heart out of the Conservative party in England and of the nation and of English-speaking people everywhere: and if Englishmen once begin to hold down their heads before the world, it will be comparatively a small thing that a most powerful Administration brought itself to destruction and disgrace; for with our prestige will have perished both our empire and our commerce, an acceptable and well-pleasing sacrifice to the insensate emotions and impulses of the school of "large maps," and "Perish India!" politicians.—I am Sir, your obedient servant,

September 30. IRAN.

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

According to a telegram from Simla published by the *Daily News* the Indian army is enthusiastic at the prospect of speedy employment, and the spirit of the native troops is admirable. The despatch contradicts a statement that the Indian Foreign Office was ignorant of the approach of the Russian mission to Cabul. The first news of the mission was, it is stated, sent to the Home authorities on the 7th of June, and every successive stage of its advance was duly reported. A Paris telegram states that news has been received from St. Petersburg that, in answer to a note from the English Cabinet, inquiring in what way the Russian Government proposed to reconcile General Stoletoff's mission to Cabul with its previous engagement to renounce all political influence in Afghanistan, the Russian Government replied that that mission, although decided upon at a time and under circumstances now no longer existing, was merely intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of Afghanistan. Last night's *Politische Correspondenz* publishes a statement from Constantinople that Schir Ali Khan, the envoy of the Ameer of Afghanistan, is instructed to claim the Sultan's intervention in order that England should not declare war against Afghanistan, and to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia is advisable for the Mussulman race. The course of events in India continues to be closely watched by the German and Austrian press.

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The tone adopted by the Russian press on the subject of the continued occupation of the Chinese province of Kuldja is curiously illustrative of Russian policy in Asia. It will be remembered that in 1871, after Yakoob Khan's successful campaign against the Dungans, the Russians, fearing lest the ruler of Kashgar should continue his advance to Kuldja, occupied that city and the surrounding district, at the same time giving the Chinese Government a solemn pledge that they would surrender it as soon as a sufficient Chinese force had been brought to restore order. The Chinese part of this engagement has now been fulfilled. The army of Tso Tsung-tang, fresh from its victories over the forces of Yakoob Khan, is now waiting at the frontier for the order to march in and take possession. But the Russians show a decided disinclination to move, and the Russian press loudly opposes the promised restoration. "If Kuldja were to be surrendered to China," says the *St. Petersburg Journal*, "Russian rule in the Eastern part of Central Asia would be undermined. . . . . The surrender of Kuldja to China would be another triumph to England, and the Manchus would hold their heads still higher. In fine, Russian influence in Central Asia would be shaken." And therefore the deliberate promise given seven years ago should be broken and another province snatched by fraud from an ally. Fortunately, the Chinese Government appears to appreciate the position, and has despatched a large additional force in advance of the envoy, Chung How, who is to negotiate with the intruders. It is further reported that Chung How will be instructed to remonstrate vigorously against the continued encroachments of Russia in Manchuria. For some years he has held the post of Governor of Moukden, the capital; and it was probably on account of his personal knowledge of this part of the impending question between the two countries that he was appointed envoy. By this time the Chinese Government must have learned to recognize the truth of the saying of Yakoob Khan, that "the Russians are a restless and crooked-minded people."

"Times" October 2nd

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The news from Peshawur which appeared in *The Times* of the 23d inst., telling us that the Ameer of Cabul had refused to receive the proposed Mission on its way to his capital, and had forced Major Cavagnari to turn back from Ali Musjid, is no doubt a serious rebuff to the Government of India, more particularly as the Mission had actually started. It seems to me to have been a serious mistake organizing a Mission to Cabul before we had ascertained whether Ameer Shere Ali was prepared to receive our overtures or not, and a still greater mistake despatching the Mission until we had received his consent to our doing so. Had these precautions been observed, the affront which we have met with would not have appeared to be so flagrant as it now does. But, however vexatious is the Ameer's conduct in this matter, it ought not to lead us to force our Mission on him, still less should it induce us to declare war against him. It appears to me to be contrary to sound policy that we should resent our disappointment by force of arms; for by doing so we play the enemy's game, and force the Afghans into a union with the Russians.

We ought not, indeed, to be surprised that the Ameer has acted as he has done. From the time of the Treaty of 1857 the late Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan refused to allow us to have a Mission at Cabul, or even to send one there as a temporary arrangement, solemnly assuring us that such a step would lead to mischief, and not to peaceful relations with the Afghans. We accepted his excuses. In 1869 the present Ameer affirmed the same policy. Whatever may be his own faults and shortcomings, he has never concealed from us his views on this subject. What occurred at the meeting in Peshawur towards the end of 1876 between the Ameer's agent and Sir Lewis Pelly has not actually transpired, but I believe that our wishes on the subject of a Mission to Cabul were at that time reiterated, though in vain.

The old policy was to bear with the Afghans as far as we could reasonably do so, and to endeavour by kindness and conciliation to bring about friendly relations, gradually leading them to see that their interests and ours did not conflict. Of late, however, we have seemed to think that we understood the interests of the Afghans better than they did themselves. We appear to think that we can, in short, force our policy on them without their taking offence at such conduct.

What are we to gain by going to war with the Ameer? Can we dethrone him without turning the mass of his countrymen against us? Can we follow the policy of 1838-39 without, in all probability, incurring similar results? If we succeed in driving Shere Ali out of Cabul, who can we put in his place? And how are we to insure the maintenance of our own creature on the throne, except by occupying the country? And when is such an occupation to terminate?

I have no doubt that we can clear the defiles and valleys of Afghanistan from end to end of their defenders, and that no force of Afghans could stand against our troops when properly brought to bear against them. The country, however, consists of mountain ranges, for the most part broken up into rugged and difficult plateaux, where brave men standing on the defensive have considerable advantages; and when we force such positions we cannot continue to hold them.

The cost of invading such a country will prove very great, and the means for so doing must be drawn from elsewhere. The country held by the Ameer can afford neither the money nor the transport, nor even the subsistence in adequate quantity for the support of the invading army. It is impossible to foresee the end of such a war, and in the meantime its prosecution would utterly ruin the finances of India.

Such are the political and military considerations which lead me to raise my voice against the present policy towards Ameer Shere Ali. Are not moral considerations also very strong against such a war? Have not the Afghans a right to resist our forcing a Mission on them, bearing in mind to what such Missions often lead, and what Burns's Mission in 1836 did actually bring upon them?

I have heard it contended that no nation has a right to isolate itself in this way and refuse to have intercourse with its neighbours. This may be a reasonable objection among civilized nations, but ought not to apply, I submit, between civilized Governments on the one hand and barbarous peoples on the other.

No doubt, Ameer Shere Ali has aggravated his offence by the mode in which he has resisted our overtures, more particularly in the threat of his Mir Akhor at Ali Musjid to shoot Major Cavaghari if he did not turn back. But we should not bear too hardly on the Ameer on this account. I have no doubt that if we promise to give up forcing a Mission on him he would make any apology that we could reasonably call for. I urge that we were wrong in the outset in our policy towards the Ameer in many instances which could be pointed out, and therefore ought not to be over hard on him in accepting his excuses. I insist that there will be no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with him; whereas, by pressing on him our own policy, we may incur most serious difficulties, and even disasters.

The last telegrams from India are that three considerable bodies of troops are to be concentrated, one at Quetta, one at Thall, on the River Koorum, and the third in reserve at Mooltan, as what are called "precautionary measures." I should call them very offensive measures. The same impulses which have brought us into the present complications and troubles will almost certainly lead us to still more decisive movements unless very speedily checked by the people of England.

Yours faithfully,
LAWRENCE.

Stone-house, St. Peter's, Isle of Thanet, Sept. 27.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1878.

We print this morning a letter from Lord LAWRENCE on the subject of our relations with Afghanistan. No reasonable man would wish to make up his mind on a question of such moment without hearing all that can be said on it by men who have a right to speak. Lord LAWRENCE's vast Indian experience and his acknowledged weight of character unquestionably give him such a right. The fact that his judgment is given against the policy of Lord LYTTON in relation to Afghanistan is a very important one, and it is entitled to full weight even when it is dissociated from the reasons on which it is ostensibly

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based. But the reasons themselves are good or bad in virtue of their intrinsic soundness, and must be estimated entirely apart from the fact that it is Lord LAWRENCE who puts them forth. If eighteen months or two years ago a sudden change had been effected in the policy of the Indian Government towards Afghanistan, Lord LAWRENCE'S argument would be unanswerable. "The old "policy," he says, "was to bear with the "Afghans as far as we reasonably could do so, and "to endeavour by kindness and conciliation to "bring about friendly relations." It is not our fault that the old policy has had to be abandoned. We are not concerned at the present juncture to defend all the steps taken by Lord LYTTON and his predecessors in their protracted negotiations with the AMEER, but it is manifest that the old policy has been changed, so far as it has been changed, not by any alteration in our friendly disposition towards SHERE ALI, but by the proof which he himself has afforded that he rejects our friendship and prefers the alliance of a Power whose interests, to say the least, are not identical with ours. This result, which in the face of recent occurrences can hardly be gainsaid, may have been brought about by blunders on our part. If so, the blame, when the time comes for retrospect, must be distributed among all those who are found to have incurred it. But the pressing question of the moment is not to ascertain what has brought us to the present pass, but to determine what is to be done in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Lord LAWRENCE asks what we are to gain by going to war with the AMEER. Very little, perhaps, even supposing war to be determined upon. But we must ask in rejoinder, what is the alternative? We have received an affront to which it is impossible tamely to submit. Lord LAWRENCE has little doubt that if we refrain from forcing our Mission on the AMEER—which would in present circumstances be a somewhat humiliating concession—he would make any apology we could reasonably call for. Even so, however, we should still be in a very embarrassing position. Russia, in defiance of repeated pledges, would probably be represented by an Envoy at Cabul, whose influence may already be traced, as we learn this morning from Vienna, in SHERE ALI'S relations with the SULTAN, while the Indian Government would have to depend for its relations with a proud and wayward neighbour on the agency of native residents—a mode of communication which has again and again proved unsatisfactory and misleading. We are ready, as we have all along been, to come to terms with the AMEER, but we can no longer permit him to be in doubt as to the terms which satisfy both our honour and our security, and it is necessary to let him know, if we would not be discredited in the eyes of all India, that we cannot permit him to insult us with impunity.

No nation which respects itself will undertake a war with a light heart. But if it has confidence in the substantial justice of its cause, it will not be deterred from defending this cause by the difficulties which stand in its way. The successful invasion of such a country as Afghanistan would certainly be a difficult task, and its permanent occupation might be even more difficult still. It is not yet certain, however, that either will be necessary. SHERE ALI may change his tone when he finds that our patience is exhausted and that our forbearance is at an end. Meanwhile, we must make him feel that we do not mean to be trifled with. We are still ready to respect his independence so long as he remains on friendly terms with us and keeps clear of Russian intrigues. At present he seems disposed to do neither. He rejects our advances, he entertains a Russian Envoy, and he recommends a Russian alliance to the SULTAN. In such a case Lord LAWRENCE'S plea for the right of barbarous nations to isolate themselves and refuse intercourse with their neighbours is clearly out of court. SHERE ALI does not isolate himself except from ourselves. His rejection of our proffered Mission is an act, not of independence, but of hostility. It is a challenge which we cannot decline; and, as he will not listen to us in a friendly way as we wished and intended, we must force him to listen to us in the only way that is open to us. We quite admit that, as Lord LAWRENCE says, there will be no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with him. We will go even further and say that that is what we wish to do. But the terms, in view of the insult we have received, must now be of our own choosing, not of his; and if he will not grant them, save under the pressure of force, there remains no alternative but to extort them by force. Nor, again, can we be deterred from the task imposed on us by the fear of difficulties, or even of possible disasters. We must do our best to surmount the one and to avert the other; but if we are to submit to insult through fear of the consequence of resenting it, we shall be disgraced both in our own eyes and in the eyes of all our Indian subjects. What military measures may be necessary in order to effect our object it is at present impossible to say: that is a question which will have to be determined by Lord LYTTON and his responsible military advisers. Whether an invasion of Afghanistan in force would be either possible or expedient in face of the coming winter may be open to doubt. But we have sufficient forces assembled or about to assemble at Thal and Quettah respectively to enable us to seize upon the Khoorum Valley and to march upon Kandahar. These operations could be effected without serious difficulty before the winter sets in, and they would probably be sufficient to effect our purpose; but, if not, they would place us in a commanding position for carrying out more important and decisive measures in the spring. Such a demonstration, however, if promptly made, might serve to convince SHERE ALI that we are in earnest, and that our enmity, if further provoked, is likely to prove far more injurious to him than the friendship he has so imprudently rejected. In that case we shall have no difficulty in coming to terms with him, as Lord LAWRENCE urges that we should do, without that permanent conquest of all Afghanistan which Lord LAWRENCE seems to contemplate. But it is necessary to convince the AMEER first, that we are not to be trifled with, and that we will not tamely submit to insult.

It remains for us to deal with the most important of Lord LAWRENCE'S arguments, that, namely, in which he points out the financial difficulties of the policy which events have forced upon us. India is poor, it is urged, and is already overweighted with taxation. Can it bear the additional burden of a costly and hazardous war? "It is "impossible," says Lord LAWRENCE, "to foresee "the end of such a war, and in the meantime its "prosecution would utterly ruin the finances of "India." Now, in the first place, it seems to us unworthy of a great and wealthy Power like England, with an Imperial mission to discharge—and the phrase has a real meaning, though it has been somewhat discredited of late—to let questions of policy wait on questions of finance. It may prove in the end far more costly to defend India against more formidable foes, incited to hostility by weakness and vacillation now, than to chastise SHERE ALI at once for his insolence. Besides, it need not be admitted that the expense of an Afghan expedition, if it proves to be necessary, will or ought to be charged exclusively on the revenues of India. The troops who will be employed are already maintained out of Indian resources; but it will rest with Parliament to determine what proportion of the expense of an expedition beyond the frontiers ought to be borne by India, and what contribution ought to be made towards it out of the Imperial Exchequer. If hostilities are determined upon, it will be the statutable duty of the Government under the Act of 1858 formally to communicate the fact to Parliament; so that if Parliament meets at the usual time, the policy of the Government will have to be submitted to the judgment of both Houses very early in next year. It will then be for Parliament to determine what course should be taken to meet the cost of the war, if war is unhappily forced on us. In such a case the course pursued in regard to the Persian war in 1857 will doubtless be held to furnish an important precedent. Lord PALMERSTON'S Government asked the House to reimburse the Indian Treasury for a portion of the extraordinary expenses of that war. They had given the East India Company a conditional promise of assistance, dependent for its completion, as the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER was careful to explain, on the assent of the House. The arrangement made and ultimately sanctioned by Parliament was that the ordinary expenses of the troops should be defrayed by the Company, but that HER MAJESTY'S Government should defray a moiety of the extraordinary expenses. It is true that the vote was justified by the Government on the special ground that the finances of India had been grievously disturbed in consequence of the Mutiny; but if India was poor then, it is no richer now, and the fact remains that England undertook her share of the expenses of a war in which England was interested on behalf

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of India. If again we are forced into a war on behalf of India, it is probable that Parliament will feel, now as then, that India's interest is England's too, and that we have no right to shrink from a necessary war because India is too poor to bear the expense. It is well to keep out of war if we can, and if we fight, to fight only in a just and honourable cause; but if we once let it go forth to the world that we shrink from a necessary war because India is too poor and England too niggardly or too indifferent to pay for it, we shall soon find that such ill-timed economy is ruinous as well as disgraceful.

TURKEY AND AFGHANISTAN.

VIENNA, Oct. 1.

According to a telegram from Constantinople in the *Politische Correspondenz*, Mussafir Khara, supposed to be a secret agent of the Ameer of Afghanistan, has been there since the middle of this month. His mission is said to be primarily to prevail upon the Sultan to use his influence in order to dissuade England from using any coercive means against Afghanistan; but at the same time his efforts are directed towards persuading the Sultan himself that a Russia alliance at this moment is the best thing for all Mahomedan nations, and that the Ameer is resolved to make common cause with the Muscovite. The telegram adds it is a well-known fact that some months ago the Ameer sent a letter in this sense to Sultan Abdul Hamid. His Majesty, on his side, it is stated, a few weeks ago despatched a secret agent to Central Asia with orders to visit Cabul and the capitals of the other Central Asiatic States, in order to awaken there a feeling of solidarity among all Mahomedans and to bring about a Pan-Islamitic league. The mission from Constantinople referred to is probably that of Hulussi Effendi, a Ulema, who was sent some two years ago, and to whom, at any rate in Constantinople, it is alleged to be due that the conflict between England and Afghanistan, already then ripe, did not at once break out. And this opinion may not be altogether without some foundation; for, however much the political authority of the Sultan in Europe may have been lowered, his *prestige* all over the Mahomedan world has been but little impaired. In proof of this, consider the large sums of money sent him by the Mussulmans of India during the war, accompanied by letters showing clearly how agitation had been produced in India by events passing on the Danube and at Constantinople, an agitation which would have assumed far larger proportions had not efforts been made in Stamboul, out of consideration for England, to calm instead of nourishing it. All this, therefore, as well as the mission from Afghanistan now in Constantinople, is, at any rate, calculated to draw attention to the fact that, in spite of distance, affairs on the borders of India and on the shores of the Bosphorus have more connexion than might at first sight seem, and that the policy followed in the one quarter will undoubtedly react on the other.

CENTRAL ASIA.

BERLIN, Oct. 1.

It appears that the Chinese Government have once more, and this time more urgently, demanded the restoration by Russia of the Kuldja territory. This extensive region was occupied by the Russians during the Mahomedan Tatar rebellion, which led to the expulsion of the Chinese authorities from Kashgar and Kuldja.

"Globe" October 2nd

THE AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.

The Central News Agency says it is informed that the object of Sir Neville Chamberlain's recall to Simla is that he may be at hand to advise with Lord Lytton on certain pressing questions in connection with the Afghan crisis.

General Crawford Chamberlain has expressed his willingness to accept the chief command of the Afghan Expedition.

WEDNESDAY EVENING,
OCTOBER 2.

LORD LAWRENCE'S LETTER.

It is very much to be regretted that Lord LAWRENCE should have written the letter which appears in the *Times* this morning. He was a fairly successful, although not a popular, Governor-General; and as administrator of the Punjaub he conferred inestimable benefits on India. His opinion on subjects connected with India, therefore, carries considerable weight, and it is possible that some impression may be produced by the very decided manner in which he expresses his convictions. There is nothing mysterious, however, in the questions of which he treats. The main facts lie on the surface, and in order to judge them it is not necessary to have a special training, or to be initiated into curious secrets. And we venture to say that of those Englishmen who read the letter and estimate it according to the principles of ordinary good sense, the vast majority will be amazed either at its heedlessness or at its want of candour. For Lord LAWRENCE, in dealing with a large problem, instead of carefully weighing every circumstance bearing upon it, omits from consideration the only governing factor in the question. His contention is that in our whole recent policy towards Afghanistan we have been wrong. We ought not, he thinks, to have despatched a Mission to Cabul; and now that we have sent it, and it has been ignominiously turned back, we ought not to resent the insult by war. The ground of these judgments is that Afghanistan has a perfect right, if she chooses, to shut herself up from intercourse with foreign nations. Lord LAWRENCE appears to be of opinion that a civilised State would not have the same right, but a barbarous people may, he decides, tell its neighbours that they shall not intrude upon it, and may deride and humiliate them if they attempt to make friendly advances. The practical conclusion is that we should in some way or other patch up our quarrel with the AMEER. How we are to do it Lord LAWRENCE does not tell us; but the principles on which we are to rely are solely those of "kindness and conciliation."

It is not too much to say that this reasoning has simply no bearing on the matter in hand. So far as Afghanistan alone is concerned, England has no sort of wish to interfere with her. In any case, we should, of course, like to find new markets for our trade; but if Afghanistan were merely a barbarous State, with no other State behind her of which we had reason to be jealous, there is not a single English politician who would dream of forcing her to enter into relations with us. The one important fact in the case is that Afghanistan is not a country in this position. Behind her is the only Government in the world whose designs at the present moment can be of the slightest danger to us. Russia loudly protests her innocence; never, if we believe her newspapers, was there a nation more unfairly judged. And Lord LAWRENCE is still so much in love with the policy of "masterly inactivity" that he appears to receive her assurances with touching confidence. The rest of the world are less credulous. Not only in England but all over the Continent it is universally believed that Russia is altogether responsible for these Afghan troubles. In defiance of the most solemn pledges she has long been intriguing at Cabul, and the result proves that she has acquired absolute predominance over the mind of the AMEER. How was it possible, under these circumstances, that the Government of India should sit still, and with sublime calmness watch the progress of the plot against it? It was bound to let the AMEER know precisely how matters stood, and to take the precautions suggested by common prudence. The policy of "kindness and conciliation" was all very well so long as he was really isolated; we were not anxious for his friendship while he was not absolutely hostile and did not play into the hands of our rival. But the instant he took a side against us, and consented to become, if possible, an agent for the destruction of our rule in the East, the whole aspect of the question changed. The very principles which induced us to adopt the policy of "masterly inactivity" forced us to enter upon a course of energetic action. Any one who does not see this, and who clings obstinately to a mere for-

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mula, must be blind to the fact that the application of political doctrine varies in accordance with the conditions. He must also have curious notions as to the obligations imposed upon us by the rights in India which have been handed down to us by our predecessors.

So much for the past; the considerations which must determine our future action are not less clear. By all means let us, if we can, come to a peaceful arrangement with the barbarian who has wronged us. But can we? The answer does not wholly depend upon us. For it is obvious that the terms which we shall demand of the AMEER must be of a very stringent nature. He has not only done us an injury, but we have now unmistakable proof of his purposes as well as of the purposes of Russia; and in our own interests we must take care that there shall be no more serious trouble in that quarter. Should he refuse our conditions—which there is little doubt he will do—will Lord LAWRENCE be good enough to say in what way peace is possible? He is sufficiently acquainted with Oriental nations to know how they regard a Power which tamely submits to insult. If we allowed the AMEER to escape without requiring from him ample reparation we should be held in contempt by every people in Asia; and throughout India the belief would grow up that we are afraid of the Power which has so long been advancing upon us, and that our ultimate displacement is a decree of fate. But, says Lord LAWRENCE, the difficulties of an Afghan war are very great, and we suppose there is no one acquainted with the subject who will think his description of them much exaggerated. That, however, is not the question. If we are bound in defence of our rights and our honour to undertake the enterprise, its difficulties can afford no argument for shrinking from it. Lord LAWRENCE is much nearer the heart of the subject when he urges that the finances of India would be ruined by the cost of a war with Afghanistan. He seems to take for granted that the whole of the expense would be thrown upon our Eastern dependency; but he has arrived too rapidly at that conclusion. That India will bear no share of the burden we shall not say; but that she will not be asked to pay the entire bill may, we think, be confidently averred. The war, if war it is to be, will be mainly an Imperial one. It will be undertaken to avenge an insult hurled at England, and to uphold English power. We should, therefore, be acting most unjustly in making India defray the cost, even if India were a rich country; and how far she is from being rich every politician too well knows. Thus the whole case presented by Lord LAWRENCE breaks down. His view is narrow and one-sided; and his statement of it, while injurious to his own reputation as a statesman, will be of essential service to the Government by showing in the most effectual manner how feeble and unsatisfactory are the only arguments which can be urged against its policy.

FOREWARNED BUT NOT FOREARMED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GLOBE.

SIR,—Some five or six years ago Colonel Robarts, of the Bengal Irregular Cavalry, forwarded to the Indian Government certain communications of a very important character. Their subject-matter was the activity of Russian intrigue beyond the frontier, and the colonel claimed to be in possession of very definite information on this head. Several years ago I was personally acquainted with Colonel Robarts at Nowshera and Peshawur, and I know that, owing to peculiar circumstances, he was in a position to obtain much earlier and more trustworthy news from beyond the frontier than generally reached the ears of the Indian political department. If he affirmed that Muscovite trickery was at work among the border tribes and in Afghanistan I should be prepared to attach the fullest credit to the statement. That he forwarded statements to this effect to the Government I have good reason to believe. What has become of them? Were they pigeon-holed at Calcutta, or should we look for them on the shelves of the India Office? Wherever they may be, they ought to be at once given to the light. For we might learn from them not only Russia's line of conduct in the past, but the course we may expect her to follow in the future. Eccentric as Colonel Robarts was in some respects, he always struck me as a remarkably shrewd observer of current events, while his exceptionally close relations with the natives on the border gave him glimpses behind the scenes which were denied to others. It would be of some interest to know whether the colonel's warnings have been fulfilled, and I therefore venture to hope that the missing letters will be hunted up, wherever they may be, and made known to the world.—Faithfully yours,

TRANS-INDUS.

October 1.

LORD LAWRENCE AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times* prints a letter from Lord Lawrence on the subject of our relations with Afghanistan, and remarks:—"The fact that his judgment is given against the policy of Lord Lytton in relation to Afghanistan is a very important one, and it is entitled to full weight even when it is dissociated from the reasons on which it is ostensibly based. But the reasons themselves are good or bad in virtue of their intrinsic soundness, and must be estimated entirely apart from the fact that it is Lord Lawrence who puts them forth. If eighteen months or two years ago a sudden change had been effected in the policy of the Indian Government towards Afghanistan Lord Lawrence's argument would be unanswerable. It is not our fault that the old policy has had to be abandoned. We are not concerned at the present juncture to defend all the steps taken by Lord Lytton and his predecessors in their protracted negotiations with the Ameer, but it is manifest that the old policy has been changed, so far as it has been changed, not by any alteration in our friendly disposition towards Shere Ali, but by the proof which he himself has afforded that he rejects our friendship and prefers the alliance of a Power whose interests, to say the least, are not identical with ours. This result, which in the face of recent occurrences can hardly be gainsaid, may have been brought about by blunders on our part. If so, the blame, when the time comes for retrospect, must be distributed among all those who are found to have incurred it. But the pressing question of the moment is not to ascertain what has brought us to the present pass, but to determine what is to be done in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Lord Lawrence asks what we are to gain by going to war with the Ameer. Very little, perhaps, even supposing war to be determined upon. But we must ask in rejoinder, what is the alternative? We have received an affront to which it is impossible tamely to submit. Lord Lawrence has little doubt that if we refrain from forcing our mission on the Ameer—which would in present circumstances be a somewhat humiliating concession—he would make any apology we could reasonably call for. Even so, however, we should still be in a very embarrassing position. Russia, in defiance of repeated pledges, would probably be represented by an Envoy at Cabul, whose influence may already be traced, as we learn this morning from Vienna, in Shere Ali's relations with the Sultan, while the Indian Government would have to depend for its relations with a proud and wayward neighbour on the agency of native residents—a mode of communication which has again and again proved unsatisfactory and misleading. We are ready, as we have all along been, to come to terms with the Ameer, but we can no longer permit him to be in doubt as to the terms which satisfy both our honour and our security, and it is necessary to let him know, if we would not be discredited in the eyes of all India, that we cannot permit him to insult us with impunity."

THE MISSION TO CABUL.

The *Daily Telegraph* observes that "if the reply of the Czar's Government to the Note addressed by the British Cabinet upon the Cabul question has been at all correctly reported in the telegram from Paris published yesterday, it must be called evasive and incomplete. The real truth is that the Mission to Cabul is the direct, foreseen, and inevitable consequence of the schemes which Russia has unfalteringly pursued since 1856. We have never contested—indeed, we have always admitted—her right to adopt a conquering policy if she pleases; but it is not the less undeniable the right of nations menaced by the part she has deliberately chosen to resist her encroachments. Unless the fact that she has gone out of her way to seek a position whence she could disturb British India be fully recognised, we never shall have recourse to the needful counteracting measures. How any doubts can still linger in the minds of statesmen is a matter most difficult to comprehend; but so long as Russia has such ardent friends and eager apologists in this country she will rightly estimate their services as an encouragement to proceed. Her aim has been patent for many years. The results predicted by cool and well-informed men have occurred, none save the unteachable or prejudiced can be blind to the full significance of Russian advances in Central Asia. They mean, as they always meant, hostility to England, who is supposed to be vulnerable in the East. They are intended to divide our strength and create disturbances, or the dread of them beyond the Indus, while they are so planned and conducted as to bring the offensive power of Russia nearer and nearer to the British frontier. The object is not an invasion, but a formidable diversion, undertaken with the hope that we should be either deterred from upholding our interests on the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, or prevented from doing so by the Anglo-Russian party, which has accepted or been the dupe of Muscovite professions, although these have been discredited as soon as uttered. Not even the ingenuity of faction can explain away the Russian Mission to Cabul; and those who, in whatever shape, now lend their aid to promote the schemes of Russia will be guilty of treason to the British Empire."

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TURKEY AND AFGHANISTAN.

According to a telegram from Constantinople in the *Politische Correspondenz* (says a *Times* telegram from Vienna), Mussafir Khara, supposed to be a secret agent of the Ameer of Afghanistan, has been there since the middle of this month. His mission is said to be primarily to prevail upon the Sultan to use his influence in order to dissuade England from using any coercive means against Afghanistan; but at the same time his efforts are directed towards persuading the Sultan himself that a Russian alliance at this moment is the best thing for all Mahomedan nations, and that the Ameer is resolved to make common cause with the Muscovite. The telegram adds it is a well-known fact that some months ago the Ameer sent a letter in this sense to Sultan Abdul Hamid. His Majesty, on his side, it is stated, a few weeks ago despatched a secret agent to Central Asia with orders to visit Cabul and the capitals of the other Central Asiatic States, in order to awaken there a feeling of solidarity among all Mahomedans, and to bring about a Pan-Islamitic league. The mission from Constantinople referred to is probably that of Hulussi Effendi, a Ulema, who was sent some two years ago, and to whom, at any rate in Constantinople, it is alleged to be due that the conflict between England and Afghanistan, already then ripe, did not at once break out.

"Daily Telegraph" Oct. 2nd

IF the reply of the Czar's Government to the Note addressed by the British Cabinet upon the Cabul question has been at all correctly reported in the telegram from Paris published yesterday, it must be called evasive and incomplete. Lord SALISBURY is said to have inquired through our Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg in what way the Russian Court proposed to reconcile the Mission of General STOLETOFF to the Afghan capital with the previous engagements by which Prince GORTSCHAKOFF agreed to renounce any political influence in Afghanistan. The response of the Russian Chancellery was, it is stated, to the following effect. Russia "is always disposed to respect existing arrangements, and the Mission of her Envoy, though decided upon at a time and under circumstances which no longer exist, was merely intended as an act of courtesy towards the Ameer." It would be paying a bad compliment to the diplomatic sagacity of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF to regard this as an accurate version of his answer. So far as the first portion goes, it is, of course, satisfactory to find that the Czar's Minister admits the binding force of his explicit declaration that "Afghanistan would always lie outside the sphere of Russian influence." But the rest of the reply is painfully inconsistent with facts and dates, and, what is more, contradicts its own terms. The Muscovite Envoy arrived at Cabul towards the end of July, but so far from being swiftly followed by orders of recall in consequence of the altered aspect of European politics, no countermanding instructions appear to have been despatched until long after the Berlin Congress had settled a peace. As to the reason given for the Mission, it is, to say the least, strangely inconsistent with all that the official journals of St. Petersburg have been instructed or permitted to publish about this business. We were informed in those closely-superintended columns that since England had declined to guarantee the conduct of the Cabul ruler towards the border Khanates under Russian control, it had been found incumbent to deal with SHERE ALI directly without further regard to British susceptibilities. No doubt Prince GORTSCHAKOFF would decline to be held responsible for the statements of certain Russian organs; but others are notoriously inspired, and such discrepancies seem to betoken either some embarrassment or some tergiversation at the Northern capital. Moreover, if the Mission was despatched simply out of politeness, how could it be affected by the "times and circumstances" which, in the same breath, are said to have since altered? Furthermore, why is it that a mere Embassy of compliment should have inspired SHERE ALI with so desperate a policy as suddenly to affront and defy the great Power with which his State is co-terminous? If this be only a coincidence, how extraordinary it must be considered, and how anxious a friendly Government ought to show itself to dissipate the undesirable but inevitable conclusion which all Asia would naturally draw! We have as yet no assurance of any such amicable anxiety, but only smooth and superficial explanations with which it would be manifestly impossible for her Majesty's Ministers to rest content, supposing that they adequately represent the Russian reply to our application. It is consequently due to the reputation of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF for serious statesmanship to observe that such a version cannot for a moment be regarded as an accurate summary of the reply which would be forthcoming to the British Note.

Nor ought it to be concluded upon the strength of this obviously imperfect announcement that Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Government could be content with a single question concerning the Russian Mission to Cabul. The march of two or more columns under General KAUFFMAN to the Amu Daria—and perhaps beyond it—was to all appearance intimately connected politically with the violation of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF'S pledge, and could hardly be excluded from the category of subjects upon which the British Ministry must desire some enlightenment. We now learn from the *Turkestan Gazette* that the division of Muscovite troops which had concentrated on the Bokhara frontier is returning to Tashkend. There is at least another column to be accounted for, which was said to have marched in the direction of the ferries leading to Balkh; and this movement was certainly not regarded as hostile by SHERE ALI, for the same authority relates with complacency that the Ameer offered to supply telegraph posts for the field-wire of the expedition; and had collected lavish stores of clover, rice, and mutton for the troops of the Czar. We gather, moreover, that an Embassy from SHERE ALI waited on General KAUFFMAN at Samarkand, accompanied by representatives of the surrounding provinces; and so little is the Russian official organ in Asia inclined to treat this intercourse as mere politeness that it says, "Thus the first step has been taken for entering into direct relations with Afghanistan, which may be of great service to us." All these matters clearly belong to the field of inquiry which her Majesty's Ministers would have to open up with the Russian Government, and the opinion which must be pronounced upon the reply of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF will depend upon the frankness with which they have been explained. Beyond doubt in view of possible complications with any Power measures of a precautionary kind are justified, even though they bear a quasi-hostile character. But they must be measures the effect of which ceases with the danger. No Government has a right to prepare against the contingency of hostilities counter movements which shall have the results of warfare after peace is established. It is no sufficient *amende* for Russia to point out that the mine which has exploded upon our Indian frontier, shattering all hope of friendly relations with SHERE ALI, was laid, and its slow-match fired, in days when it seemed possible that the moment of explosion would find Russia and England at war. Machinations of this sort must be of a nature admitting immediate control, if the two countries are to preserve mutually amicable feelings; and it is one of the gravest charges against the Czar's Government that no arrangements seem to have been made for such control. The scheme was conceived, the train laid and lighted, *coute que coute*, and it would be impossible to tolerate such an elucidation as that which with casual regrets assures us that nothing really was meant except an exchange of courtesies with the Ameer, and that Russia is always "disposed" to respect her engagements. With regard to this disposition, it will be tested, we may remark, very promptly in the case of the Chinese province of Kuldja. In 1871, the Russians—much, we must allow, to the benefit of good order—occupied that district upon the strength of a treaty with China to yield it up so soon as the Pekin Government should be in a position to hold and administer its territory. By reconquering Kashgaria and Tungaria, the Chinese are now qualified to resume their own property; but the Russians demur to surrender it, demanding a monstrous indemnity. The *St. Petersburg Journal* flatly advises the Czar's Government not to keep its engagement, pointing out the importance of Ili and Kuldja to their Central Asian frontiers, and arguing that the tribes of the Tian Shan and its vicinity will think such quixotic integrity as the restoration of this Chinese State a sign of weakness rather than of virtue. It remains to be seen, by this latest example, how far the Russian Court is influenced by such immoral suggestions, and "disposed to respect existing engagements" when they have become inconvenient.

The real truth is that the Mission to Cabul is the direct, foreseen, and inevitable consequence of the schemes which Russia has unfalteringly pursued since 1856. We have never contested—indeed, we have always admitted—her right to adopt a conquering policy if she pleases; but it is not the less undeniably the right of nations

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menaced by the part she has deliberately chosen to resist her encroachments. Unless the fact that she has gone out of her way to seek a position whence she could disturb British India be fully recognised, we never shall have recourse to the needful counteracting measures. How any doubts can still linger in the minds of statesmen is a matter most difficult to comprehend; but so long as Russia has such ardent friends and eager apologists in this country she will rightly estimate their services as an encouragement to proceed. Her aim has been patent for many years; her writers, generals, and men of science have openly avowed the designs she has in view; they are set down plainly in deeds; and, if indifference or levity were at all pardonable in 1866, it is absolutely without excuse in 1878. The conquest of the Khanates would have been deprived of all sense if it had not been intended to serve the purpose of approaching Cabul; yet, when this ulterior end was repeatedly pointed out, the warning voices were scoffed at and disregarded. Now the results predicted by cool and well-informed men have occurred, none save the unteachable or prejudiced can be blind to the full significance of Russian advances in Central Asia. They mean, as they always meant, hostility to England, who is supposed to be vulnerable in the East. They are intended to divide our strength, and create disturbances or the dread of them beyond the Indus, while they are so planned and conducted as to bring the offensive power of Russia nearer and nearer to the British frontier. The object is not an invasion, but a formidable diversion, undertaken with the hope that we should be either deterred from upholding our interests on the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, or prevented from doing so by the Anglo-Russian party, which has accepted or been the dupe of Muscovite professions, although these have been discredited as soon as uttered. Not even the ingenuity of faction can explain away the Russian Mission to Cabul; and those who, in whatever shape, now lend their aid to promote the schemes of Russia, will be guilty of treason to the British Empire.

SHERE ALI AND THE KORAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH."

SIR,—In the present critical condition of Anglo-Indian politics with regard to Afghanistan, recriminations, of whatever kind, will prove valueless and superfluous, inasmuch as they are now too late to remedy the grave mistakes committed on that line of British policy. I beg leave, however, to discuss in a brief and succinct form my views on those measures which are now inevitable to efface the gross insult which Shere Ali Khan has offered to England by rejecting in a manner so offensive the mission of Sir Neville Chamberlain.

Shere Ali has not only rudely offended England, to whom he is indebted for many kindnesses—nay, to whom he owes even his throne, for without the English subsidies given to him formerly he would not have been able to secure his ascendency among his turbulent, avaricious subjects—but he has also sinned against the prescripts of the Koran. That "holy book" of the Mohammedans very clearly says, "La zevalun f'il sefirun"—"Do no injury to the Ambassador." Shere Ali was, moreover, regardless of the prophet's words, "Akramu ed dhaifun ve lau kana kafirun"—"You must honour the guest, be he even an infidel." Sir Neville and his representative were entitled to a good reception on the part of the Ameer for being Ambassadorial, in spite of being Christian. This consideration ought to be kept prominently in view before the Mohammedan subjects of the Queen, who will certainly not approve of the behaviour of their co-religionist, whatever be their political tendencies.

That Shere Ali has besides acted as foolishly as possible needs scarcely any further comment. Although instigated by Colonel Stolietoff, the Russian Envoy in Cabul, it is, nevertheless, very likely that he will have to bear himself the serious consequences of his rash and imprudent behaviour. Considering the exhausted condition of the Russian army and of the Russian Exchequer, I greatly doubt whether he will be backed in a contest with England by his new friends from the North. Such an eventuality would mean a reopening of the Eastern Question, and even then the Ameer would be the worse of it, for whatever turn the issue of that gigantic fight would take, he would certainly not be the man who would be replaced upon the throne in the Bala Hissar of Cabul.

I must confess that the recent news from Afghanistan, although I was in part prepared for such an issue by the disastrous wavering of the English policy heretofore with regard to Afghanistan, came upon me so suddenly as to be a surprise; and I will, with your permission, postpone the expression of my views on the prospects of England beyond the Suleiman range for a subsequent letter.—Yours truly,

A. VAMBERY

Budapest University, Sept. 26.

CABUL FRONTIER TRIBES.

THE WAZIRIS.

Of the importance at this juncture of the hill-men on the Afghan frontier, all the latest news from India agrees to assure us. Such assurance, perhaps, was hardly needed, since, from the first, we have drawn attention to the strange concurrence of circumstances that has given these wild tribes so large an influence in the affairs of their powerful neighbours. That this influence will be exerted against the British some have been found to assert, but these prophets of evil have all the weight of past experience and the opinions of political officers on the frontier opposed to them. So much has been already done with the tribes that we believe more to be possible. That the hill-man should occasionally outrage all the conventionalities of Western ethics is not remarkable. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly a triumph of administration that he should have been so often and for such long intervals enlisted on the side of order. Take one powerful federation as an example.

We have only to see the Waziri on his own hills to understand why the character of the man must be startling in its incongruities—a wild tangle of contradictions. And indeed, the landscape he has looked upon from his birth is more full of surprises. Rocks so black and dreary and uncouth that the native calls them "hell stones," overlook valleys such as Cashmere itself may not rival. In the shade of heavy-fruited vines that enmesh with their luxuriant sprays the wild mulberry that supports them the leopard lurks in ambush for the unwary traveller. One hour the sunlight is lying warm, and clear, and calm upon the painted plains and the sombre hills; and in the next there sweeps up from the north a dust storm, filling all the space from hill to hill with a dense dun murk, darkening the midday air to gloomiest twilight, and hushing every voice of nature. Or the sun has set in a glory of mellow light, and in the still heavy air the sound of the lowing of the kine comes along the valley, and the bark of the fox on the distant hills may be heard, when on a sudden the lightning darts along the peaks, and all the mountains, as if in conspiracy, roar out together, echoing the distant thunder, and the placid vale and the hill sides so lately silent are given up in a transport of sudden fury to tumult and uproar. Such is the home of the frontier hill-man and such the scenes among which he has spent his life. No wonder that he is picturesque himself, all strong lights and shadows, bright colours and threatening gloom. His dress, his gestures, his speech are all in unison with nature. He gives names full of strange meanings to all the objects around him, and his daily life is crowded with queer, savage circumstances that make him a most interesting study. Changeful, and sudden in his changes, he resembles in character the strange hybrid animal found among his hills, the "boragga," neither wolf nor dog. In captivity the creature never loses either nature, for after licking its master's hand it will snap a finger off or stop suddenly in its play to worry and kill its playmate. The hill-man is at one time gloomy and inhospitable as the mountain chains about him that refuse to support vegetation and are unvisited by animal life save the kites and vultures that wheel round the peaks. At another he is smiling and bountiful to profusion, like the valleys. And how violent is this contrast may be judged from the two descriptions that follow. One writer (Mr. S. Thorburn), overlooking the hills, says, "One feels as if in the presence of the half bleached bones of some enormous carcase, the ranges stretching away like the close-ribbed back of some huge antediluvian monster. You can almost count the ribs and the joints of the dead thing's spine. The dull clay colour of the mass, together with the solemn stillness which reigns around, help to persuade the spectator that he is in the solitary presence of death." Another writer (Sir H. Edwardes), looking down on the valley, breaks out into rapturous description. "In spring it is an emerald, and in winter its many-coloured harvests look as if Ceres had stumbled against the Great Salt Range and spilt half her cornucopia in this favoured vale. As if to make the landscape perfect, a graceful variety of the sheesham tree, whose boughs droop like the willow, is found here, and here alone, while along the streams and round the villages the thick fruit trees, festooned with the wild vine,

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throws a fragrant shade, beneath which the well-fed Syuds look exquisitely happy, sleeping midway through their beads. Roses, too, abound. Most of the fruits of Cabul are found wild, and culture would bring them to perfection; as it is the limes, mulberries, and melons are delicious. Altogether Nature has so smiled here that the stranger thinks it a paradise; and, when he turns to the people, wonders how such spirits of evil ever found admittance." That compared with the valleys the hill-men should seem "spirits" of evil altogether is not, after such a description, to be wondered at. Would any human race seem in keeping with Paradise? A pious Bishop has told us how, amid other beautiful scenes of nature, only man was "vile," and it may well be that the wild Waziri does not match at all times with his valleys.

But how about the same Waziri on the hills, the "hell stones?" There he has the advantage of the landscape, and the shapely figure in its graceful apparel puts to shame its surroundings of skeleton rock and rib ravines. Nor, descending from the heights, does he as a fact bring down to the pleasant valley levels only the highland savagery, for in his own village, cosily nestled in a fruit orchard, with a stream tumbling through the midst, and corn growing down to the water's edge, he imbibes something of the lowland placidity. The proverbs current among them inculcate a morality as stern almost as that of Buddha, and in many points not radically differing from the ethics of Western civilisation. "Bear witness for God's sake; use a stick for a friend's," is a fine English sentiment; and "God remains though friends go," is eminently orthodox. "Honesty is the best policy," and "Tell the truth and shame the devil," have the exact equivalents among these people. The love of home and its quiet pleasures, the wisdom of deliberation in council and of promptitude in action, the transient nature of joy, the value of knowledge, the disgrace of idleness, of cowardice and ignorance, the pleasures of labour, the dignity of liberality, the reverence due to old age, are all insisted upon in the folk lore of the hill-men, and it is difficult to understand that the people should be utterly bad where nearly all our own virtues are held meritorious and nearly all our vices deprecated. Nor do those who know them best deny to the Waziri and Afridi every good trait. Indeed, there are some—and political officers upon the very frontier we are speaking of among the number—who stoutly defend the hill-men from the charges brought against them by those who judge only by the acts of violence and treachery that become public. In private life the frontier mountaineer is no worse than his neighbours of the Indian plains, and he is a degree better than the Afghans upon the other side. The wild creature is too proud to ask alms, considering beggary as a disgraceful state of life, and yet a beggar seldom leaves his door empty-handed. They form friendships slowly, but when formed they are sincere in them—"be either friendly or angry outright" is a common saying—and however they may act they enjoin on their children and each other the virtues of honesty in thought and aim. In attachment to their native place no people in the world exceeds them, and it is very seldom that a hill-man can be tempted from his home. Sympathy in sorrow with each other is very marked, and in the community of their pleasures they resemble all other Oriental races. In their field work, when, that is, the bounty of nature leaves them any labour to do, the hill-men are helpful to each other among those of their near kin, and it is a matter of common notoriety how readily they show their good-will and instinctive hospitality to strangers, even to Europeans. Some classes of hill-men, whenever they meet a wayfarer, pull out their bannock from their wallet, and breaking off a piece offer it for acceptance, with a friendly grin, and this not according to the circumstances of the giver or the recipient, but habitually and as an expression of practical good feeling. Moreover, every village that can afford it contains, so writes a settlement officer on the frontier, "a guest house, in which any traveller is welcome for a night to board and lodging, the cost being defrayed either by the head men or by the community jointly." To their elders they show an unvarying courtesy, and among their proverbs is one, "If an old man be sitting by and a young one begin talking, turn him out like a dog;" and another in its tender poetry has no equivalent with us: "God himself feels reticent before a white beard."

Such are some of the sentiments that professedly guide the hill-man's life. It is true that they are not in practice so prominent as in theory, but can it be said of all other nations that they "do as they preach?" From the mere fact of the existence of these lofty maxims little, of course, can be inferred as to actual *morale*, but from the practical ethics of everyday life material evidence may be gathered. We have seen that they possess, in common with more civilised races, many of the better traits of character, and in the history of our political relations with them it has been proved that the hill-men are both amenable to discipline and grateful for justice. Our policy along the frontier has been one of conciliation and of a lofty tenderness for the vagaries of the half-savage men we have had to deal with. For no reason that they can allege afterwards in cold blood, they will break away from all the ties they affect to honour, and commit some gross outrage either upon a neighbouring tribe or on British subjects. The deed committed, they hurry back into the dim solitudes of the mountain defiles. But when next they steal out in the hope of getting provisions from the neighbouring market, they find red-coated sentinels at every outlet from their hiding place, and, with the prospect of starvation before them, they come humbly to the authorities and ask pardon. A nominal fine and hostages for a time are exacted, and for a while all goes well again. But at intervals the fit of turbulence comes on again, and each time is met by the same firm procedure, the same eventual forgiveness. In the case of those tribes with whom we have been longest in contact, the invariable justice of our administration has, without a doubt—if the opinions of those most competent to judge and the evidence of facts may be accepted—come to be appreciated by the poor, lawless, superstitious people of the hills.

Thus, taking one district alone—that of Bannu, which, in the scheme of operations now unfolding, will play a prominent part in future events on the frontier—we find how each administrator in succession has left the memory of rigid justice behind him, and how that memory still exercises influence upon the sons of the men they ruled. First, Edwardes, quick in determination and quick to be obeyed, startled the independent people into obedience, snatching as it were their signatures to bonds for good behaviour, and surprising them into concessions to law and order. Then Taylor, of whom it suffices to say that when the Sikh war, which had called him from the district, was over and he returned, the people rejoiced at his return. And then came Nicholson. Of this wonderful man every village along the frontier cherishes a tradition, and is jealous of its reputation as the scene of this or that exploit. And, indeed, if half the stories that are told are true, John Nicholson was certainly the demigod that local superstition now believes him to have been. But his ascendency was gained by exceptional means. When a hill-tribe raided on the country under his charge, he rode straight off on his white mare into the centre of disaffection; the hill-men, hurrying home with their plunder, found to their horror the avenger waiting for them at their own door. When a notorious outlaw was disturbing the border and no reward could purchase his head, Nicholson had his horse brought round, and, riding straight to the man's village, cut him down in front of his house, and brought back the head at his saddle-bow, and set it us on his desk in his court-house as a terror to evil-doers and a taunt to those who had let the ruffian live so long. There was hardly, if native tradition may be believed, a bad character in his district that he had not whipped with his own hand; but so unerring was his justice that he is remembered to this day as a friend and a father. Up and down the frontier the strolling bard takes as his theme to-day Nicholson's brave deeds and manly generosity; and it is not only Europeans, but the wild hill-men also, whom he ruled so strongly and so well, who applaud the justice of the epitaph upon his memorial tablet: "The enemies of his country know how terrible he was in battle, and his friends love to recall how gentle and generous and true he was." His successors, one notably who is still living, have gained the respect of "the excitable impulsive savage," as the border mountaineer has been called; and in the fact that men differing so widely in character should each in turn have acquired influence over the hill-men, speaks eloquently for the wild races they had to deal with. Tact,

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courage, justice, a kindly demeanour, and a strong physique have never, in conjunction, failed to win the hill-men over to peaceful life and to mutual confidence. "Half pastoral, half agricultural, wholly without law, but neither destitute of honour nor virtue," is the character given by one who knew them well to the powerful Waziri tribe. Being the most numerous and the most united of all the frontier clans, they have never lost their independence from first to last. When asked where their country is, they point to the far-off horizon, where, against the azure sky, stand out the snowy peaks of the Safed Koh, but, as a fact, they lord it all along the hundred and fifty miles of mountain fastnesses that extend from the frontier of Tank nearly to Jellalabad. These men have again and again given us proof that they understand the meaning of the word "loyalty," and that the virtues that characterise Englishmen when in power—moderation and justice, firmness and clemency—work like a spell upon their wild, half-ferine nature. We have, therefore, the strong ground for hoping that in the part they will soon have to play the hill-men of the Indian frontier will prove staunch servants; and, from their numbers and influence along the border, they cannot fail to be valuable allies.

"Daily News" - Octr 2d

A FEW days will show whether our Indian VICEROY is prepared to meet with prompt action the insult which he has invited from the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN. That insult, we must repeat, was in no sense a surprise. If our relations with SHERE ALI had been up to the moment of the despatch of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S Mission of the most cordial character, the breach might justly have been described as unforeseen. Some time must have elapsed before a force sufficient to guard against the possibility of failure could have been ready to march across the frontier. There would have been everything to be said for waiting till it should be seen whether SHERE ALI had repulsed our Envoy from a misunderstanding, and would make conspicuous apology and reparation for his own or his officer's insolence when the misunderstanding was removed. But for the last five years the relations of the Indian Government with SHERE ALI have been the reverse of cordial. He refused an English Envoy admission to his territories last year, and roundly declared Lord LYTTON'S proposals to be beyond the pale of discussion. It was a moral certainty that he would not admit this year another Envoy bearing the same proposals. If Lord LYTTON believed in the possibility of a sudden change in the AMEER'S views without there being any change in his circumstances to work a conversion, such a belief was too entirely fanciful to serve as a reasonable basis for action. The refusal was at least so certain that he ought to have been prepared to enforce compliance. If he was not ready, he ought not to have sent his Envoy till he was ready. A man would not hold out his nose to be pulled if he meant to ask for time to go into training before taking satisfaction for the insult. It is impossible that we can sit down tamely under such an affront as SHERE ALI has administered in the sight of all India, and, action being necessary, it is of the utmost consequence on every ground that the action should be prompt. What is a measure of chastisement now will, if delayed, become a measure of occupation and annexation. It is for this reason that we urge immediate action, which will be limited in extent and duration. Delay means time for the Afghan ruler to organize resistance, time for volunteers from Central Asia to flock to his standard, time for the news of the discomfiture of the English Power to spread through the Indian bazaars, time for the discontented to exult over it, while the well-affected cannot silence their sneers by pointing to the spectacle of immediate retribution. Delay means also time for the accumulation of enormous expenses, by no means the most insignificant consideration in this last wretched result of playing at Imperialism. If Lord LYTTON'S "commissariat" is not ready to move before the advent of winter makes movement impossible till next spring, he has been guilty of one of the most wanton acts of folly ever committed by a responsible statesman.

It is not yet too late to hope that the requisite arrangements may be made to permit of the despatch of a sufficient force into Afghanistan before the winter sets in, though there is something ominous in the pleas which the Ministerial organs are urging in favour of delay. Their eloquence in excusing Lord LYTTON by anticipation is as remarkable as their silence upon another point—the question of who is to pay the cost of the expedition. Is it to be discharged by India or by England? This, as we remarked two days ago, when the question was first raised in our columns by Mr. FAWCETT, is not a mere side issue in Lord LYTTON'S new frontier policy. It concerns the security of our tenure of India as intimately as the expedition itself. On no ground, whether of justice, of morality, or of expediency, are we entitled to throw the expense upon India. In point of law it is the national and not the Indian exchequer that is liable. Under the Act of Parliament which prescribes the constitution of the Indian Government we cannot ask our dependency to pay any part of this bill, unless we force a construction upon the terms of the Act which would equally have entitled us to charge India with the cost of the recent transport of native troops to the West. In defraying the cost of this operation out of the national revenues the Government may be held to have already committed themselves against any such SHYLOCK-like construction of our "bond" to the natives of India. In point of honour our obligation to pay for the Afghan expedition is still clearer. We have no more right to ask them to pay for this expedition than we have to charge them with the maintenance of our garrisons at Gibraltar and Malta, or the cost of the occupation of Cyprus, or the performance of our mysterious obligations in Asia Minor. The chastisement of the AMEER, on their own showing, is as much an Imperial affair as any one of these charges or prospective charges upon the English Treasury. After the express declarations already made by the representatives of the Government in Parliament, it would be in the last degree disgraceful to throw the costs of our Imperialism upon a dependent population who cannot be consulted as to its wisdom. But even if we could overcome these foolish scruples of honour and justice, if we could reconcile ourselves to forcing an interpretation of an Act of Parliament in our own favour, and if we could lay the flattering unction to our consciences that we were doing all for the good of India and the glory of England, there is another consideration behind which ought to weigh in this matter. It would not be prudent. It would not be safe. There is no surplus in the Indian Exchequer to meet increased demands. As it is, India has been getting year by year deeper and deeper into debt. The population is so poor that the taxes do not yield sufficient revenue to balance the current expenditure. We have it on the authority of two of the most eminent statesmen who have filled the Viceregal office that the taxation is already as heavy as the people can possibly bear. It cannot be increased without provoking dangerous discontent, without in short leaving hundreds of thousands of the poverty-stricken natives no alternative between starvation and the last resort of desperate men. Enlightened selfishness, as much as considerations of honour and justice, forbids us to impose upon India the cost of an Afghan war. From no point of view is anything to be said in favour of such a course, except from that of the Ministry if they wish to conceal from the nation how costly an affair their Imperial policy is.

It is not creditable to the Government that they have not already, in pursuance of that system of officious communiqués which they have introduced among other concomitants of Imperialism, intimated their views upon this important question. If they cannot succeed, by careful economy and by abstention from theatrical schemes, in providing good administration for India at its own cost, a declaration that the charges of their reckless policy will be defrayed out of the English Exchequer would help to avert some of its apprehended consequences. Two years ago, when there were strong symptoms of hesitation in their foreign policy, Lord DERBY explained it by saying that they were waiting for instructions. Perhaps they are waiting for instructions in this case. There can be no doubt what the instructions from the English people ought to be. There are members of the Cabinet who should be above the necessity of waiting for them. A Cabinet containing two ex-Secretaries of State for India

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should be well informed as to the actual condition of Indian finances, and the danger of throwing them into hopeless embarrassment by additional burdens. Lord SALISBURY and Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE cannot plead ignorance of this danger as a reason why they should not use all their influence to reverse the policy of colleagues whose rashness is stimulated by a supreme indifference to financial details. If their advice is not listened to, we trust that the Council of the SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA will exert their constitutional power of resisting any attempt to add to the debt of India. We trust that they will not only prevent India's being saddled with the cost of the Afghan war, but that they will use every means in their power to prevent such an extension of frontier as Lord LYTTON, acting upon the instructions of Lord BEACONSFIELD, seems to meditate. The English people must awake to the fact that India cannot afford to pay for the contemplated extension, and that the burden must be borne by themselves if it is to be incurred. The belief that there is no valid reason for incurring it at all is sanctioned by the authority of the most trusted servants of the Crown who have given their energies to the administration of Indian affairs. A year ago this was the avowed opinion of Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE himself, at a time when, according to all appearances, an aggressive policy had already been agreed upon between Lord BEACONSFIELD and his nominee, and had actually been initiated by the VICEROY. The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER will deserve ill of his country if he allows his influence to be overborne, and consents to a policy of which he has put his disapproval on record. He knows what would be the dangers of such a policy in India, and he knows also in what condition the English Exchequer is to be charged with unnecessary burdens. The present state of the revenue, as the returns of the last quarter show, does not invite fresh expenditure at the cost of England. Yet if the English people insist on or acquiesce in Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Imperial policy, they must certainly pay for it. India, as a matter of right, ought not to do so. As a matter of fact, she cannot.

THE AFGHANS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

One of the incidents on the occasion of the visit to the Khyber Pass, an account of which appeared in last week's *Daily News*, was that of an old man who invited us into his village, which he said was not far from the mouth of the pass. He had been presented with a couple of empty soda water bottles, and they seemed to his mind to be very valuable articles, so much so that the invitation was the result. He even promised us "Kuch Kana," which might be translated dinner or supper according to the hour of the day; if we would deign to honour his abode with our presence. He was very pressing in his desire for us to go with him. My Pashtoo-speaking friend, who, I may say, was Captain Speedy, then attached to the 10th Punjaub Infantry, and who by the knowledge which he afterwards acquired of the Abyssinian language was of great service as interpreter during the expedition to that country, carried on the conversation with the old man, and the turn it took became interesting as bearing on the character of the people of that country. On Speedy expressing his doubts on this head, and asking if they were not all murderers and robbers, who ought to be frying in *jehenam*, an idiomatic allusion to the under world which is common in conversation among the people of Cabul, the old man looked with astonishment and an air of injured innocence overspread his strongly-marked Jewish features, which struck me forcibly at the time, and he repudiated with force the imputation made against his countrymen. As to danger in going with him, he seemed to ask what we could mean by the supposition. On being asked to mention the name of any person in the pass of good character, he made us laugh by coolly pointing to himself as an individual of unblemished renown. As the two empty soda-water bottles were the most respectable-looking objects which went to make up the full-length portrait of him as he stood before us, the nature of his claims to being a person of good fame may perhaps be realised. We had other reasons for not accepting the invitation than that of the character of those we were likely to meet. So we refused to be his guests. So far as I could judge the man was pleased with such gifts as the two bottles, and his heart seemed to respond, and hence his asking us to come in and see his home and have something to eat. For myself I had no doubts of the man's honesty, although it was evident, from his appearance, that he was a poor man—the value he attached to the "bucksheese" of the bottles was an evidence so far of his position in life. If it could have been done I should not have hesitated to go with him.

The reputation of the Afghans is undoubtedly bad. They have a proverb among themselves, "That a man going to Hindostan may gain wealth, but a man going to Afghanistan may lose his head." The political condition of the country will explain this uncertainty of life, without having to suppose that the race are in heart worse than their neighbours. The tribes, or "Khails," as they are termed, live some of them semi-independent, and some of them wholly independent, of the ruler who occupies the Guddee at Cabul. These tribes quarrel and make war among themselves. They are Highlanders of the Rob Roy type, levying blackmail wherever they have a chance. They are all armed with some weapon or another, the principal article being the "charra," or long sword-like knife, which leaves its sheath on the slightest provocation, and one could scarcely suppose it could return again without doing some deadly damage. In fact it seldom does, when Afghan blood is up, hence these people are inured to a rough and lawless life among their wild mountain homes. Add to this a bad and unstable Government, whose acts are as unscrupulous as the robber bands who infest the country, and the reason for the uncertainty connected with life and property in Afghanistan must be easily recognised.

The race belongs to a high type, and even in their worst acts some good touches may be discerned which should make us hopeful of the country. In the case of the man who stabbed Lord Mayo in the Andaman Islands, if we take the murder which he committed in Peshawur, and for which he was sentenced to be hanged, as a case in point, it was done as a duty, a sort of sacred duty he owed to his clan. He was in a comfortable situation, respected and liked by his master and mistress, and this enviable position, for such situations are much desired by the natives, he threw to the winds, he sacrificed himself for others. Bellew, in his account of the mission which he accompanied into Afghanistan, tells a most remarkable story, which may be quoted as illustrating not only the determination which the race is capable of, but of a sense of honour—such was the word the relator used; and although it is only honour among thieves, there was mixed with it a desire for the honour of the family to which the hero of the story belonged, which would be creditable anywhere. The person who tells the tale was called Khan Gul, and he was one of the actors in it. The whole of his family had at a former period become a band of robbers, which occupation they practised, seemingly on the sly, and their neighbours were kept in the dark about their doings. They had determined on robbing a house at some distance, and, going there during the night, they made a hole through the mud wall. Khan Gul's brother, like Oliver Twist, was passed in; and he began to hand out whatever was within his reach. The people in the house chanced to wake up, upon which the brother tried to make his escape; but while in the act of returning through the hole in the wall those on the inside caught him by the feet. Now began a tug like the "tug of war;" fiercely they pulled to get him out of the hole, but it was useless; those within had one or two holding on to each leg, and the burglar was held as if in a vice. The fear that they would be recognised and detected became at last the dominant feeling; and as they could not possibly pull him out, they determined on an extreme measure, and one so very extreme that it is hard to believe that it could have occurred to any others than these knife-using Afghans. The only plan left to prevent identity was to cut off the head, carrying it away, and leave the body; and the very striking part of this tale lies in the fact that it was done at the suggestion of the man himself, and, as he expressed it at the instant, so that "the honour of the family might be pre-

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served undefiled." This was done; they fled with the head only, leaving all the spoil which had been thrown out, and, as Khan Gul ended the story, he thanked God that the honour of his house had by these means been preserved. There is something heroic in such acts. Neither Agamemnon nor Achilles, as described by Homer, suggest a character capable of such self-devotion.

Among the troops raised during the mutiny were some regiments composed largely of Pathans, or men from the hill country where India borders on Afghanistan, and the deeds of these men I have often heard spoken of by the officers who commanded them as being sometimes magnificent from their daring and brilliancy. It was one of Lord Lawrence's principles, which was acted upon more strictly after the mutiny was suppressed, that there should not be above a certain percentage of Pathans in the irregular regiments, thus by fear paying a respect to their prowess, for it was considered that if a mutiny should take place among such men it might be highly dangerous, and quite another matter to suppress in comparison to that of the old Pandy regiments.

The practical conclusion of all this is not far to seek—let us try as much as we can to make these people our friends. They have no love for their own rulers, but they have a high respect for us; the British name is in repute all over Afghanistan; and they are anxious at all times to enlist as soldiers or to act as servants. Every Afghan we enroll in our service is so far a safeguard to our invading army. There are plenty of men in India who understand these people, and officers like Probyn and Fane are known all over Afghanistan. They would only have to tap their drum anywhere on the frontier, and the idea of fighting under such leaders would bring these rough warriors in, as the fiery cross of old brought the Highland clans to the place of muster.

The men whose names are announced to the various commands of the gathering force on the frontier are all of a character to give us confidence that the army will be in good hands. The Chamberlains are known and tried men. They have passed through the fire and have been found true. General Roberts has the Victoria Cross, won during the mutiny. He has been long in the Quartermaster-General's Department, and is as steady and indefatigable at hard work in that department as he was brave in action. I have lived in camps under his control both in India and in Abyssinia, and know how steady has been his progress. General Stewart is also known to me by experiences in the field. I have marched under the protective power of his wing through the Sovrot Pass to Senape during the Abyssinian campaign, and can speak with respect, not only of his military, but also of his social qualities. General Biddulph's is a still older friendship. I first met him as a gunner in the trenches before Sebastopol. Accomplished in many ways, he will make a good leader of men. There is one officer that it would be satisfactory to see at the head of these generals, and I should not feel astonished at hearing that the Governor of Gibraltar, Lord Napier of Magdala, was on his way to India, accompanied by his old companion in arms, Colonel Dillon, again at his former post of military secretary. If the present Commander-in-Chief in India does not go himself, this is not an improbable arrangement.

The Cabul merchants who trade with India leave their homes about the present time of the year, and come into the Punjaub, by Peshawur, Dera Ishmael, Dera Ghazi Khan, and the Bholan Pass to Shikarpoor, as the hot weather begins to cease. They march along with a line of camels laden with their merchandise, grapes, apples, and other fruits—this being perhaps one of their most important branches of business. The grapes are packed in cotton so that they may not be damaged, and carried in small circular wooden boxes. They also bring chogas, a woollen garment elaborately embroidered, and much desired among Europeans as dressing gowns. The Afghans with these caravans penetrate as far south as Bombay and Calcutta. They are to be seen in most of the bazaars of India, and are easily distinguished from the natives of Hindostan, not only by the costume, but by their size and personal appearance. After disposing of what they bring, they then purchase Manchester cottons, or any goods that are in demand in their own country; and they return in time to escape the hot season in the plains of India.

The Afghans are of course Mohammedans. There are a few Hindoos scattered through Cabul, who live thus far out of Hindostan for the sake of business, which thrives under them, and they get rich, and are often liable to being despoiled by the Afghan authorities. I mentioned the Jewish features of the man who invited us into the Khyber Pass, and this peculiarity of physical appearance is connected with one of the most curious questions relative to the Afghans, which is their tradition of an Israelitish descent. They even call themselves the "Bani Israel," or children of Israel, and according to their own histories, they are descended from Saul, the King of Israel. In addition to this they have many traditions which are common to Jews. They even talk of their nation as having once possessed the Ark of the Covenant, made of Shemshed wood, and that it came from Adam in Paradise. They carried it into battle with them, and when it went before them with a rushing sound they knew that victory was certain. The curious point is, that although there are these Israelitish traditions as to origin, there is an almost total absence of the Hebrew language, which is hard to explain if they are really a portion of the Bani Israel. There are a few words of a Hebrew character which are to be found all over the East, and of course these words are in use in Afghanistan; but that is a different thing from a nation giving up its language altogether. As an instance, although they have traditions of the Ark of the Covenant, it is mentioned in their books in a different name from that of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word is Aron, and they know it as the Taboot-i-Sakina, two terms so totally different that they cannot be explained as having changed from the one into the other. Now it is hard to suppose that such a stiff-necked race as the Jews would have adopted a name from a foreign and heathen tongue for their Sacred Ark. We could suppose that after a long course of mixture with foreigners they lost their own language and found another. There is at the same time some confirmatory evidence in the number of Jewish names which are to be found in Cabul. The Yusuf-zais are the sons of Joseph; Ibrahim, for Abraham; Yacoob, for Jacob, &c. Sulieman is a common name, and it is the distinctive term given to the prominent range of mountains along the west bank of the Indus, out of which, near the centre of the range, there is a prominent peak, known as the Tukht-i-Suleiman, or Throne of Solomon. On this peak, which is not far from Dera Ismael Khan, the Mohammedans believe that Noah's Ark rested after the flood. Pilgrimages are made to this, and on the top they are admitted to a place where they are allowed to touch what they believe is a portion of the Ark, which still remains, and they have a profound feeling of reverence for this sacred relic. Many other details connected with this subject could be given, but as the ten lost tribes have been found in so many quarters of the globe any particulars which would have a tendency to place them in Cabul may only excite a feeling of sceptisism in the minds of the ordinary newspaper reader. Colonel Edwardes, who was at one time our Commissioner at Peshawer, if I mistake not, came to the conclusion that the Afghans were really the lost tribes, and I think he published a book on the subject. I would not venture to endorse this opinion regarding these people, but from what I have heard—I think there must have been some intimate affinity between the races of Afghanistan and those of Palestine at some early date, a resemblance which repeated inroads of the Turcomans, and other Turanian races, has obliterated. Let us hope by the time the war is over and the affairs of Afghanistan are settled, we may get something like reliable information on this head, by which we may understand the matter. If war is a curse there is at times some good which comes from it, and our modern wars generally bring knowledge of the region to us as a slight recompense for many evils.

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"Standard" Oct 2?

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2.

We learn from Bombay that, according to the latest news received there from Simla, an opportunity for making amends has been afforded to the AMEER. Our Correspondent adds that, in any case, the Government will insist on a permanent position being assigned to our troops behind Candahar. The Russian newspapers are still full of articles on this topic. The *Russki Mir* advocates a support of the AMEER on the ground that every success of Russian policy in Asia would be an ostensible defeat of Great Britain. The *Exchange News* considers war unavoidable. The *Golos*, however, thinks that England would not go beyond her present preparations if the AMEER explained that what took place was done with a misunderstanding.

OPINIONS OF THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
BOMBAY, TUESDAY.

The latest news that has been received here from Simla states that an opportunity has been afforded to the Ameer of Afghanistan to make amends for the affront he offered to the British Envoys.

In any event the Government will insist on our troops being cantoned in a permanent position behind Candahar.

(BY GREAT NORTHERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
ST. PETERSBURG, TUESDAY.

The *Russki Mir*, of September 30, says :—

"The critical position of Great Britain in Central Asia should serve as a guide to us. Our procedure in the Asiatic question should consist in supporting the Afghan Ameer against England. Every decisive success of our policy in Central Asia will be an ostensible defeat of Great Britain. Unfortunately, we do not know where our strength lies. Were England in our place, doubtless the very existence of our Indian Empire would be impossible, but the English never hesitate, as we do, before imaginary difficulties, but perseveringly pursue the object they desire to attain."

The *Exchange News* of to-day considers that war is unavoidable. "In the eyes of Englishmen," it says, "Shere Ali is simply the victim of Russian intrigue ; his chief offence lies, not in declining to see the British Ambassador, but in receiving the Russian Embassy, the repulse of the British Envoys being ascribed to Russian influence. If the Ameer is simply a tool in the hands of Russia one would think that England would in such a case prepare for attacking Cronstadt and Odessa instead of Candahar and Cabul."

The *Golos* of to-day considers that England earnestly desires to avoid war with Afghanistan, and that all the warlike preparations she has made would remain but preparations if the Ameer explained that his refusal to receive the British ambassador was merely in fact a grievous misunderstanding, or if without any explanations he succeeded in ridding himself of the Russian Mission in Cabul. The Emir is not so isolated as England supposes. This time he has not acted precipitately, but has calculated the consequences of his refusal ; his position is better than it was in the former Afghan war. The feeling that exists among the semi-dependent Indian tribes, the probability of Persia's friendly neutrality, the relations of the Ameer to the Sultan, who fears his conversion into an Indian Maharajah, and lastly the assurance that in case of war he has nothing to fear from Russia, and can therefore leave the western and northern frontiers of Afghanistan undefended, will greatly increase the military chances of the Ameer in his combat with his enemy.

That England, holding that the insolence of the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN is not unconnected with the presence of a Russian Envoy at the Court of Cabul, should seek for an explanation of the character and objects of General STOLIETEFF's mission, is a perfectly natural proceeding, which should surprise nobody, least of all those partisans of Russia who have been pleased at the "slap in the face" which England has received from SHERE ALI. We cannot too early take measures to prove who is our real enemy in this Afghan business, with whom we have to deal, who it is that has given us this *soufflet*, whom we are making ready to punish. Is it against Afghanistan that we are setting our troops in motion, or is there any Power behind ? Even if we were not justified by the courtesy of nations and by all the axioms of diplomatic etiquette in asking such a question of Russia, we have a special right to do so under the express conventions which exist between the two countries. The relations between England and Russia in regard to Afghanistan are such as do not exist between any other two Powers regarding any other territory in Europe or in Asia. Even in the absence of any understanding defining those relations it is impossible that such a step as that which the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN has taken in putting this open and wanton affront upon the British Government can pass without bringing England into some kind of conflict with Russia. The very explanations and excuses of the Russian Press, in their mixture of *naïveté* with effrontery, are sufficient to prove, what, indeed, all Europe already understands, that in the act of the Afghan ruler the agents of Russia are more or less directly implicated. To contend that Russia has a right to send her Ambassadors to any country she pleases is as superfluous as to argue that this mission to Afghanistan is one of pure courtesy is impertinent. The picture which has been drawn of a noble Asiatic Chief particularly opposing himself to the insidious designs of a treacherous and rapacious Power is a romance which can hardly impose upon any one out of Russia. The case is a very simple one, our judgment upon which is to be guided by no sentimental considerations of the good which Russia or the evil which England may intend for Afghanistan, but by reference to the engagements mutually binding those two Powers in their dealings with that State. It is barely six years since the long series of negotiations between Russia and England on the subject of their relations in Central Asia was concluded, with what we have hitherto been led to believe were certain specific engagements, mutually entered into by the Governments of those countries. On the part of Russia a pledge was given—not less precise or solemn than any of those numerous assurances which have been received from that quarter—that Afghanistan should be regarded as outside the sphere of Russian influence. On the part of England there was an undertaking, interpreted by Mr. GLADSTONE, in 1873, as a "moral assurance," that the British Government would so far make itself responsible for the conduct of SHERE ALI as to answer for his not disturbing the peace of Russia's neighbours and feudatories in Central Asia.

There can be no pretext for saying that we have departed from either the letter or the spirit of our engagement. We have, it is true, refused to maintain a British Envoy at the Court of SHERE ALI, but if by this omission we deprived ourselves of the means of executing the duty with which we were entrusted, we gave by it at least a proof of our singular disinterestedness and scrupulousness. Had the British Government been actuated by the insidious and rapacious designs with which it pleases the Russian Press at present to endow them, they would not have waited till now to send an Embassy to Cabul. They not only had a perfect right to do so, but might even be thought specially bound to do so by their engagement with Russia. Herein lies the material distinction between the two Powers. England, whose dominion immediately borders that of the Afghan ruler, had distinctly made herself responsible to Russia for his good conduct, and, therefore, might legitimately keep an agent in Cabul. Russia, whose dominion at no point touches that of the AMEER, had as distinctly pledged herself to regard Afghanistan as outside the area of her political influence. Nothing has happened, since Prince GORTSCHAKOFF gave his pledge to Lord CLARENDON in 1869, to alter the relations between the two Powers in Afghanistan. The object of the understanding between the two Governments which was

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concluded in 1873 was to secure the peace of Central Asia. At that date it was supposed to be in danger, chiefly from the hostile designs of the Afghan AMEER upon the territory of Bokhara. In his despatch of January, 1873, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF lays special stress upon the necessity of England using all her influence with SHERE ALI "to induce him to maintain a peaceful attitude, as well as to insist upon his giving up all measures of aggression or further conquest." The "material and moral ascendancy" of Great Britain were recognised as giving her a title to a direct interference with the AMEER, with a view to the restraint of his bellicose enterprises against his neighbours, and Prince GORTSCHAKOFF declared that in the assurance that England would exercise this influence lay "a real guarantee for the maintenance of peace." In singular contrast with these amiable sentiments is the language of the Russian organs of to-day, who openly speak of the necessity of giving support to the Afghans, and threaten us with the creation of another Servia on our Indian frontier. What has happened, we may ask again, to render null and void the understanding of 1873? Are we to understand that Russia means, in revenge for her disappointments at Berlin, to revive her old policy of chicane and intrigue in Afghanistan? On this point the official disclaimers are in strange contrast with the offensive language of the *Russki Mir* and the *Golos*—language which would not have been permitted had those disclaimers been sincere.

It cannot be long before we have an answer to the question as to who is our enemy in Afghanistan. In the meantime, we can afford to allow the partisans of Russia such gratification as may consist in witnessing the affront which has been put upon Great Britain by SHERE ALI. If it be true, as the tone of the Russian organs seem to indicate, that Russia has made up her mind to bring to an immediate issue the long contest for the sovereignty of Asia, we are at a loss to understand the terms of the official answer which is reported to have been made to England's demand for an explanation. The mission of General STOLIETEFF, it is said, although decided upon at a time and under circumstances which no longer exist, was only intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN. Such an explanation betrays its insincerity in its ludicrous self-contradictions. If the sending of the mission to Cabul was a measure inspired by the time and circumstances—in other words, by the fear of a rupture between England and Russia on the Turkish question—it was no mere act of courtesy to the AMEER. If a simple act of courtesy had been intended, then there was no necessity for quoting the time and circumstances in its justification. The confession that Russia is disposed to be courteous to the Afghans only when she is troubled by England in Europe is a piece of *naiveté* for which we could scarcely have given credit to Russian diplomacy, but it is one which England will not fail to note as giving the clue to Russian policy in Central Asia. After this explanation of the motives which induce Russia to send her envoys into Afghanistan, we can hardly want any excuse for resenting the rejection of our Ambassador, and for regarding it as a deliberate affront, intended to cover a hostile design. The exchange of courtesies between Russia and Afghanistan is, by the Russians themselves, allowed to be a political act, and as such is clearly a violation of the existing engagement between the two Powers. It is unnecessary to establish any direct connection between the visit of General STOLIETEFF to Cabul and the turning back of General CHAMBERLAIN at Ali Musjid. It is sufficient to know that an act of something less than courtesy towards us on the part of the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN has followed upon the courtesies extended to him by Russia. At any time and in any circumstances it would be imperative upon us to take notice of the insult and to punish the audacity of its perpetrators; but the presence of a Russian agent in Cabul renders it doubly incumbent upon us, for the sake of our own honour and for the interests of our dominion in India, that we should lose no time in exacting a swift and stern reparation.

"Evening Standard" Oct 2

(74)

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

We learn from Bombay that, according to the latest news received there from Simla, an opportunity for making amends has been afforded to the Ameer. Our Correspondent adds that, in any case, the Government will insist on a permanent position being assigned to our troops behind Candahar. The Russian newspapers are still full of articles on this topic. The *Russki Mir* advocates a support of the Ameer on the ground that every success of Russian policy in Asia would be an ostensible defeat of Great Britain. The *Exchange News* considers war unavoidable.

OPINIONS OF THE MORNING PAPERS.

THE INDIAN CRISIS.

It cannot be long, observes the *Standard*, before we have an answer to the question as to who is our enemy in Afghanistan. In the meantime, we can afford to allow the partisans of Russia such gratification as may consist in witnessing the affront which has been put upon Great Britain by Shere Ali. If it be true, as the tone of the Russian organs seem to indicate, that Russia has made up her mind to bring to an immediate issue the long contest for the sovereignty of Asia, we are at a loss to understand the terms of the official answer which is reported to have been made to England's demand for an explanation. The mission of General Stolieteff, it is said, although decided upon at a time and under circumstances which no longer exist, was only intended as an act of courtesy to the Ameer of Afghanistan. Such an explanation betrays its insincerity in its ludicrous self-contradictions. If the sending of the mission to Cabul was a measure inspired by the time and circumstances—in other words, by the fear of a rupture between England and Russia on the Turkish question — it was no mere act of courtesy to the Ameer. If a simple act of courtesy had been intended, then there was no necessity for quoting the time and circumstances in its justification. The confession that Russia is disposed to be courteous to the Afghans only when she is troubled by England in Europe is a piece of *naiveté* for which we could scarcely have given credit to Russian diplomacy, but it is one which England will not fail to note as giving the clue to Russian policy in Central Asia. After this explanation of the motives which induce Russia to send her envoys into Afghanistan, we can hardly want any excuse for resenting the rejection of our Ambassador, and for regarding it as a deliberate affront, intended to cover a hostile design. The exchange of courtesies between Russia and Afghanistan is, by the Russians themselves, allowed to be a political act, and as such is clearly a violation of the existing engagement between the two Powers. It is unnecessary to establish any direct connection between the visit of General Stolieteff to Cabul and the turning back of General Chamberlain at Ali Musjid. It is sufficient to know that an act of something less than courtesy towards us on the part of the Ameer of Afghanistan has followed upon the courtesies extended to him by Russia. At any time and in any circumstances it would be imperative upon us to take notice of the insult and to punish the audacity of its perpetrators; but the presence of a Russian agent in Cabul renders it doubly incumbent upon us, for the sake of our own honour and for the interests of our dominion in India, that we should lose no time in exacting a swift and stern reparation.

The *Times* says:—If hostilities are determined upon, it will be the statutable duty of the Government under the Act of 1858 formally to communicate the fact to Parliament; so that if Parliament meets at the usual time, the policy of the Government will have to be submitted to the judgment of both Houses very early in next year. It will then be for Parliament to determine what course should be taken to meet the cost of the war, if war is unhappily forced on us. In such a case the course pursued in regard to the Persian war in 1857 will doubtless be held to furnish an important precedent. Lord Palmerston's Government asked the House to reimburse the Indian Treasury for a portion of the extraordinary expenses of that war. They had given the East India Company a conditional promise of assistance, dependent for its completion, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was careful to explain, on the assent of the House. The arrangement made and ultimately sanctioned by Parliament was that the ordinary expenses of the troops should be defrayed by the Company, but that her Majesty's Government should defray a moiety of the extraordinary expenses. It is true that the vote was justified by the Government on the special ground that the finances of India had been grievously disturbed in consequence of the Mutiny; but, if India was poor then, it is no richer now, and the fact remains that England undertook her share of the expenses of a war in which England was interested on behalf of India. If again we are forced into a war on behalf of India, it is probable that Parliament will feel, now as then, that India's interest is England's too, and that we have no right to shrink from a necessary war because India is too poor to bear the expense. It is well to keep out of war if we can, and if we fight to fight only in a just and honourable cause; but if we once let it go forth to the world that we shrink from a necessary war because India is too poor and England too niggardly or too indifferent to pay for it, we shall soon find that such ill-timed economy is ruinous as well as disgraceful.

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OPINIONS OF THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

(By Submarine Telegraph.)

(From our own correspondent.)

BOMBAY, Tuesday.

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(By Great Northern Telegraph.)

(From our own correspondent.)

ST. PETERSBURG, Tuesday.

The *Russki Mir*, of September 30, says :—

"The critical position of Great Britain in Central Asia should serve as a guide to us. Our procedure in the Asiatic question should consist in supporting the Afghan Ameer against England. Every decisive success of our policy in Central Asia will be an ostensible defeat of Great Britain. Unfortunately, we do not know where our strength lies. Were England in our place, doubtless the very existence of our Indian Empire would be impossible, but the English never hesitate, as we do, before imaginary difficulties, but perseveringly pursue the object they desire to attain."

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The *Golos* of to-day considers that England earnestly desires to avoid war with Afghanistan, and that all the warlike preparations she has made would remain but preparations if the Ameer explained that his refusal to receive the British ambassador was merely in fact a grievous misunderstanding, or if without any explanations he succeeded in ridding himself of the Russian Mission in Cabul. The Emir is not so isolated as England supposes. This time he has not acted precipitately, but has calculated the consequences of his refusal ; his position is better than it was in the former Afghan war. The feeling that exists among the semi-dependent Indian tribes, the probability of Persia's friendly neutrality, the relations of the Ameer to the Sultan, who fears his conversion into an Indian Maharajah, and lastly the assurance that in case of war he has nothing to fear from Russia, and can therefore leave the western and northern frontiers of Afghanistan undefended, will greatly increase the military chances of the Ameer in his combat with his enemy.

According to a telegram from Constantinople in the *Politische Correspondenz*, Mussafir Khara, supposed to be a secret agent of the Ameer of Afghanistan, has been there since the middle of this month. His mission is said to be primarily to prevail upon the Sultan to use his influence in order to dissuade England from using any coercive means against Afghanistan ; but at the same time his efforts are directed towards persuading the Sultan himself that a Russian alliance at this moment is the best thing for all Mahometan nations, and that the Ameer is resolved to make common cause with the Muscovite. The telegram adds it is a well-known fact that some months ago the Ameer sent a letter in this sense to Sultan Abdul Hamid. His Majesty, on his side, it is stated, a few weeks ago despatched a secret agent to Central Asia with orders to visit Cabul and the capitals of the other Central Asiatic States, in order to awaken there a feeling of solidarity among all Mahometans and to bring about a Pan-Islamitic league. The mission from Constantinople referred to is probably that of Hulussi Effendi, a Ulema, who was sent some two years ago ; and to whom it is alleged to be due that the conflict between England and Afghanistan, already then ripe, did not at once break out.

Lord Lawrence, in a letter to a morning contemporary, says it appears to him to have been a serious mistake organising a Mission to Cabul before having ascertained whether Ameer Shere Ali was prepared to received our overtures or not, and a still greater mistake despatching the Mission until his consent for our doing so had been received. His lordship continues :—Had these precautions been observed, the affront which we have met with would not have appeared to be so flagrant as it now does. But, however vexatious is the Ameer's conduct in this matter, it ought not to lead us—to force our Mission on him, still less should it induce us to declare war against him. It appears to be contrary to sound policy that we should resent our disappointment by force of arms ; for by doing so we play the enemy's game, and force the Afghans into a union with the Russians. We ought not, indeed, to be surprised that the Ameer has acted as he has done. From the time of the Treaty of 1857 the late Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan refused to allow us to have a Mission at Cabul, or even to send one there as a temporary arrangement, solemnly assuring us that such a step would lead to mischief, and not to peaceful relations with the Afghans. We accepted his excuses. In 1869 the present Ameer affirmed the same policy. Whatever may be his own faults and shortcomings, he has never concealed from us his views on this subject. What occurred at the meeting in Peshawur towards the end of 1876 between the Ameer's agent and Sir Lewis Pelly has not actually transpired, but I believe that our wishes on the subject of a Mission to Cabul were at that time reiterated, though in vain. The old policy was to bear with the Afghans as far as we could reasonably do so, and to endeavour by kindness and conciliation to bring about friendly relations, gradually leading them to see that their interests and ours did not conflict. Of late, however, we have seemed to think that we understood the interests of the Afghans better than they did themselves. We appear to think that we can, in short, force our policy on them without their taking offence at such conduct. What are we to gain by going to war with the Ameer? Can we dethrone him without turning the mass of his countrymen against us? Can we follow the policy of 1838-39 without, in all probability, incurring similar results? If we succeed in driving Shere Ali out of Cabul, who can we put in his place? And how are we to insure the maintenance of our own creature on the throne, except by occupying the country? And when is such an occupation to terminate. I have no doubt that we can clear the defiles and valleys of Afghanistan from end to end of their defenders, and that no force of Afghans could stand against our troops when properly brought to bear against them. The country, however, consists of mountain ranges, for the most part broken up into rugged and difficult plateaux, where brave men standing on the defensive have considerable advantages ; and when we force such positions we cannot continue to hold them. The cost of invading such a country will prove very great, and the means for so doing must be drawn from elsewhere. The country held by the Ameer can afford neither the money nor the transport, nor even the subsistence in adequate quantity for the support of the invading army. It is impossible to foresee the end of such a war, and in the meantime its prosecution would utterly ruin the finances of India.

"And noo, ma freens," said the good old Scotch Minister, at the end of his petition for all sorts and conditions of men—"And noo, ma freens, let us pray for the puir Deil. There's naebody prays for the puir Deil." Lord Lawrence seems to look upon the Ameer of Cabul as being in a somewhat similar position as the puir Deil. And certainly it is not often that so very near an approach to unanimity is to be found among us as marks the general utterance in reference to the uncivil potentate. So Lord Lawrence may fairly be admitted as *Advocatus Diaboli*, and very ingenious is the defence he sets up. In the first place, he maintains, the little difficulty in which we find ourselves is entirely of our own creating. If we had not sent any Mission until assured of the Ameer's willingness to receive it, the Mission not despatched could not have been turned away. In the second place, we had no business to send a Mission at all. Lord Lawrence has heard it contended that no nation has a right to isolate itself and refuse intercourse with its neighbours. But this, he thinks, is surely only a penalty of civilisation. The Ameer of Cabul has chosen the better part and remained a barbarian, so his right to stand in the way of the general interests of mankind remains unimpaired. And, finally, if we do go to war with this privileged potentate, Lord Lawrence is very clear that we shall, at all events, gain nothing by it. He has "no doubt but that we can clear the defiles and valleys of Afghanistan from end to end of their defenders," but the country consists of mountain ranges, "where brave men standing on the defensive have considerable advantages, and when we force such positions we cannot hold them." The argument in this latter case is not, perhaps, quite so clear as might be wished. To the ordinary mind it would seem as though the defensive strength of a position was on the whole rather an aid than obstacle to holding it. But that of course is a detail, and one which in such an argument may, perhaps, be passed by. It was no doubt also from momentary forgetfulness that, while pleading that we have been from the first altogether in the wrong and the Ameer of Cabul altogether in the right, he speaks of Shere Ali as having "aggravated his offence by the mode in which he has resisted our overtures, more particularly in the threat of his Mir Akhor at Ali Musjid to shoot Major Cavagnari if he did not turn back." True, Lord Lawrence thinks we "should not bear hardly" on the poor Ameer on this account. But surely, if that potentate's barbarism is to be accepted as full justification of his peremptory refusal to have anything to do with us, it should, *à fortiori*, sanctify the highly barbaric manner in which that refusal has been enforced. The important point, however, of Lord Lawrence's letter is the practical suggestion he makes as a substitute for the course proposed. He has no doubt, he tells us, but that "if we promise to give up forcing a mission" on Shere Ali, he in return will make any apology we can "reasonably" call for. Which, if we are to accept his lordship's contention that no apology whatever is "reasonably" due, is no doubt perfectly correct. The only question is—with all possible respect for Lord Lawrence's authority on Indian matters—how many Englishmen will be found to agree with him on this head ?

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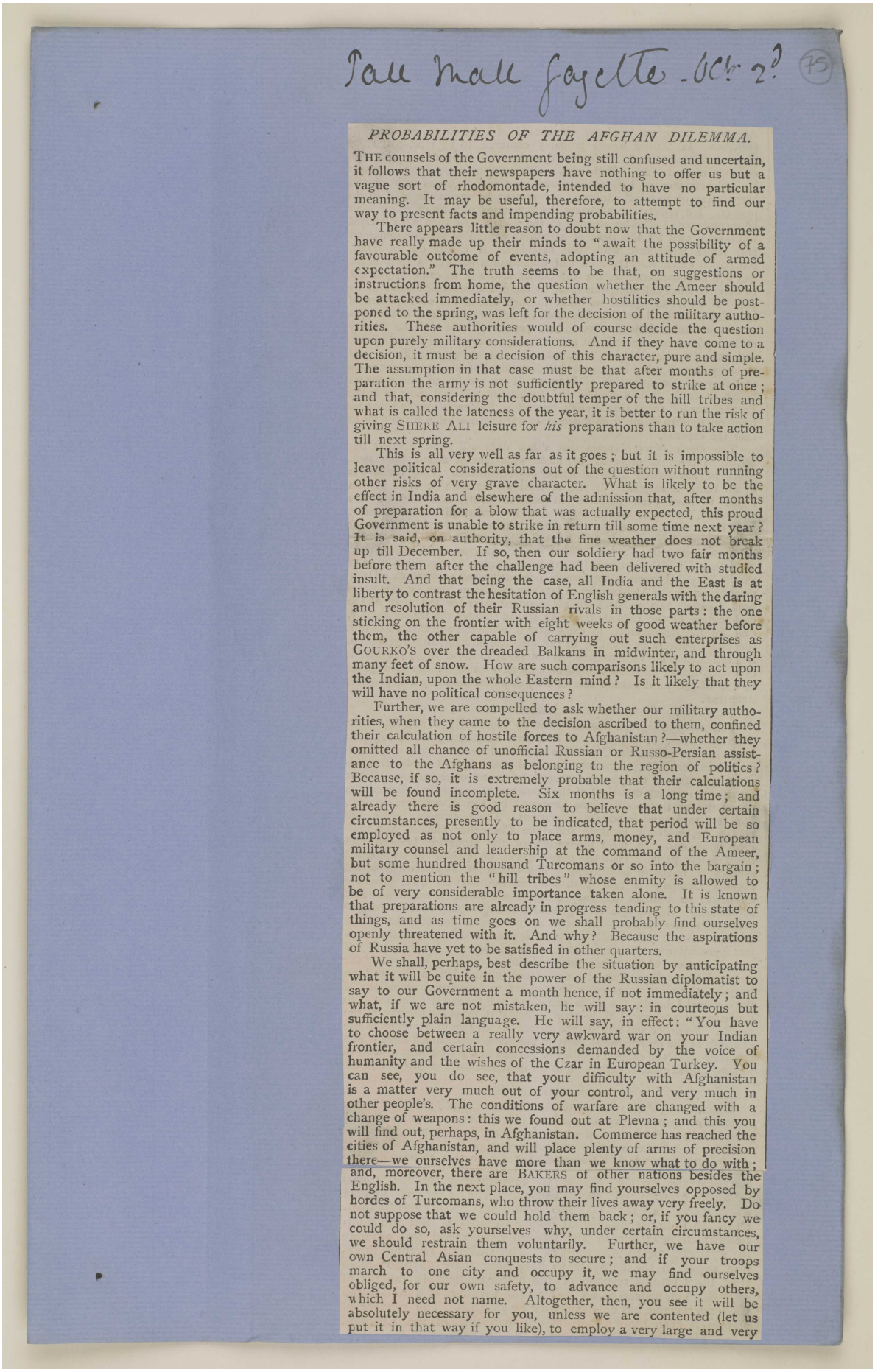

Pall Mall Gazette. Oct 2?

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PROBABILITIES OF THE AFGHAN DILEMMA.

THE counsels of the Government being still confused and uncertain, it follows that their newspapers have nothing to offer us but a vague sort of rhodomontade, intended to have no particular meaning. It may be useful, therefore, to attempt to find our way to present facts and impending probabilities.

There appears little reason to doubt now that the Government have really made up their minds to "await the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, adopting an attitude of armed expectation." The truth seems to be that, on suggestions or instructions from home, the question whether the Ameer should be attacked immediately, or whether hostilities should be postponed to the spring, was left for the decision of the military authorities. These authorities would of course decide the question upon purely military considerations. And if they have come to a decision, it must be a decision of this character, pure and simple. The assumption in that case must be that after months of preparation the army is not sufficiently prepared to strike at once; and that, considering the doubtful temper of the hill tribes and what is called the lateness of the year, it is better to run the risk of giving SHERE ALI leisure for *his* preparations than to take action till next spring.

This is all very well as far as it goes; but it is impossible to leave political considerations out of the question without running other risks of very grave character. What is likely to be the effect in India and elsewhere of the admission that, after months of preparation for a blow that was actually expected, this proud Government is unable to strike in return till some time next year? It is said, on authority, that the fine weather does not break up till December. If so, then our soldiery had two fair months before them after the challenge had been delivered with studied insult. And that being the case, all India and the East is at liberty to contrast the hesitation of English generals with the daring and resolution of their Russian rivals in those parts: the one sticking on the frontier with eight weeks of good weather before them, the other capable of carrying out such enterprises as GOURKO'S over the dreaded Balkans in midwinter, and through many feet of snow. How are such comparisons likely to act upon the Indian, upon the whole Eastern mind? Is it likely that they will have no political consequences?

Further, we are compelled to ask whether our military authorities, when they came to the decision ascribed to them, confined their calculation of hostile forces to Afghanistan?—whether they omitted all chance of unofficial Russian or Russo-Persian assistance to the Afghans as belonging to the region of politics? Because, if so, it is extremely probable that their calculations will be found incomplete. Six months is a long time; and already there is good reason to believe that under certain circumstances, presently to be indicated, that period will be so employed as not only to place arms, money, and European military counsel and leadership at the command of the Ameer, but some hundred thousand Turcomans or so into the bargain; not to mention the "hill tribes" whose enmity is allowed to be of very considerable importance taken alone. It is known that preparations are already in progress tending to this state of things, and as time goes on we shall probably find ourselves openly threatened with it. And why? Because the aspirations of Russia have yet to be satisfied in other quarters.

We shall, perhaps, best describe the situation by anticipating what it will be quite in the power of the Russian diplomatist to say to our Government a month hence, if not immediately; and what, if we are not mistaken, he will say: in courteous but sufficiently plain language. He will say, in effect: "You have to choose between a really very awkward war on your Indian frontier, and certain concessions demanded by the voice of humanity and the wishes of the Czar in European Turkey. You can see, you do see, that your difficulty with Afghanistan is a matter very much out of your control, and very much in other people's. The conditions of warfare are changed with a change of weapons: this we found out at Plevna; and this you will find out, perhaps, in Afghanistan. Commerce has reached the cities of Afghanistan, and will place plenty of arms of precision there—we ourselves have more than we know what to do with; and, moreover, there are BAKERS of other nations besides the English. In the next place, you may find yourselves opposed by hordes of Turcomans, who throw their lives away very freely. Do not suppose that we could hold them back; or, if you fancy we could do so, ask yourselves why, under certain circumstances, we should restrain them voluntarily. Further, we have our own Central Asian conquests to secure; and if your troops march to one city and occupy it, we may find ourselves obliged, for our own safety, to advance and occupy others, which I need not name. Altogether, then, you see it will be absolutely necessary for you, unless we are contented (let us put it in that way if you like), to employ a very large and very

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costly force in operations that may last longer than your generals seem at present to anticipate. It must be a large force for this further reason—one that will at once strike you as very much to the purpose: it will not be enough for you to come successfully out of this bigger and more troublesome war at the end. You must proceed from one success to another invariably. You cannot afford one signal defeat, either at the outset or in the middle of the campaign; because any such disaster might have the result of insurrectionary troubles in India itself. Further, you already see that the more difficult the war becomes through that system of unofficial warfare behind it which may possibly come into operation, the more you will be obliged, in common prudence, not only to pour plenty of men upon the frontier, but not to weaken the forces necessary at all times to watch the armies of your native princes; which we happen to know as well as you do are larger and better equipped than your countrymen generally are aware of. Now consider all these things: ponder not only what I have said but what I have left unsaid; and ask yourselves whether it is worth your while to run all these risks, and to incur these great costs, while your home revenue is running down and the Indian treasury is exhausted, for the sake of combating our wishes as to Roumelia, Bulgaria, our indemnity, and your Turkish Convention. Allow us our way in these matters unobstructed, and what can we promise you? We can promise you that you may dismiss your fears of unofficial war; all talk of alliance with the Ameer will cease; he will be left high and dry; he may even be persuaded to apologize at the last moment, and all will end happily."

Now we leave it to our readers to say whether we have not sketched in this imaginary speech a very probable account of the situation as it is, or as it will be, at this rate, a few weeks hence. For ourselves, we believe it to be very far from fanciful. What we doubt is, how it will be met. The temptation to fall in with the imaginary Russian persuasions seems to us extremely great; and if the Government have really adopted the course attributed to them of "awaiting the course of events," we shall expect to see our Ministers reduced by-and-by to face the somewhat serious consequences of either resisting such persuasions or succumbing to them. Whether they can get out of the difficulty by immediate action we do not undertake to say.

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The *Standard* publishes a despatch from Bombay which states that, according to the latest news received there from Simla, an opportunity has been afforded to the Ameer Shere Ali of making amends for the affront he offered to the British envoys. The telegram adds that, in any case, the Government will insist on a permanent position being assigned to our troops behind Candahar. The Russian newspapers continue to discuss the question at great length. The *Russki Mir* advocates support of the Ameer on the ground that every success of Russian policy in Asia would be an ostensible defeat of Great Britain. The *Golos* asserts that the Ameer has not acted precipitately, but has calculated the consequences of his refusal. "The feeling (the *Golos* says) that exists among the semi-dependent Indian tribes, the probability of Persia's friendly neutrality, the relations of the Ameer to the Sultan, who fears his conversion into an Indian Maharajah, and lastly the assurance that in case of war he has nothing to fear from Russia, and can therefore leave the western and northern frontiers of Afghanistan undefended, will greatly increase the military chances of the Ameer in his combat with his enemy."

The nature of the Indian native army is, the *Times of India* observes, "not in the least understood at home." The statement so freely made a short time ago by the newspapers in this country—that the native army was not only capable of extension to any number (some journals even going so far as to say that a million native troops might, if necessary, be carried into Europe) but that it was already mobilized to admit of that extension—is altogether founded on error. In sober truth, there is no scheme of mobilization at all in India. The Indian army consists of the regiments whose numbers are printed in the Army List; but of the mobilization which could immediately increase it by only 20,000 men it unfortunately knows nothing. The menaces of Russia and the obstructiveness of the Ameer will not be without their uses if they instruct the English people that it is not the reduction of the Indian army they ought now to discuss but its mobilization. These war-clouds may pass away, like so many others, but we invite the worst effects of the tempest by neglecting to prepare shelter against its terrors; and armies, it must be remembered, are being raised, equipped, and drilled on the other side. The policy of waiting for a war to begin in order to find the troops for it is so thoroughly English that neither Russians nor Afghans can be supposed to regard it with favour. This is a policy that has been successful sometimes; but it is not a policy suited to a period when the whole world is unsettled by ever-recurring rumours and intrigues, and when the lust of warlike nations for battle and spoil is inflamed by the recent successes of the Russians in Europe and Asia.

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THE BILL FOR THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE silence of the ministerial journals as to the bill for the Afghan war at last has been broken. The *Times* approaches the question this morning, though it takes care not to come inconveniently close to it. "It need not," we are told, "be admitted that the expense of an Afghan expedition will or ought to be borne exclusively by India." This sentence is of caution all compact; and it is some time before the reader discovers how infinitesimal the relief to the finances of India contemplated in it may prove to be. To begin with, the proposition, which is apparently denied, is only that the expense of the expedition is to be borne "exclusively" by India. The *Times* has evidently never imagined anything so unpleasant as its being borne exclusively by England. England may possibly contribute to the expense of the war—a war, be it remembered, undertaken for purely Imperial purposes—but she means, if the *Times* is any authority as to her intentions, to get as much of it as she can out of India. But the apparent denial of the proposition really comes to nothing. The *Times* does not say that the expense of an Afghan war ought not to be charged exclusively on the revenues of India, but only that it "need not be admitted" that it ought so to be charged. This is pretty much the same as saying, If we like to make India pay the bill we have a right to do so; but we are not bound, in discharge of the sacred duty we owe to ourselves, to make her pay it; or, even if we should hereafter determine that we are bound to make her pay it, we need not admit it now. It will be time enough to say so by-and-by. Early next year, however, even the *Times* concedes that "it will be for Parliament to determine what course should be taken to meet the cost of the war," and it goes on to suggest a precedent on which Parliament may act. In 1857 Lord Palmerston's Government asked the House to reimburse the Indian Treasury for a portion of the extraordinary expenses of the Persian War; and the arrangement made and ultimately sanctioned by Parliament was that her Majesty's Government should defray a moiety of these expenses. The *Times* is aware that this arrangement "was justified by the Government on the special ground that the finances of India had been grievously disturbed in consequence of the Mutiny;" but it handsomely waives the consideration that in this case there has been no mutiny, and proposes that, as India is still poor, the accuracy of the precedent shall not be contested. We hardly know how to characterize a method of treating this question which quotes a precedent dating back to the days of the East India Company, and makes no mention of the circumstance that the present position of affairs has been expressly and specifically provided for by an Act of Parliament passed since that time. The Act 21, 22 Vic., c. 106, s. 55, enacts that, "except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues." It seems to us the plain duty of the Indian Government and Council to insist on the observance of this clause. Of course, Parliament is omnipotent; and if both Houses think fit they may charge the cost of the Thames Embankment on the revenues of India. But the meaning of the clause is that the principle by which the division of burdens shall be regulated is that internal military needs shall be met by India and external military needs by England. Mr. Fawcett's quotation from the speech of the late Lord Derby, who as Prime Minister had charge of the bill, amply confirms this view. "The effect of the clause," he said, "would be that Indian troops, except for the purpose of preventing anticipated invasion, or of repelling actual invasion, should not quit their own territory; or, if they did, the expense should be defrayed out of the revenues of this country, and not out of the revenues of India." If the framers of the Act of 1858 had foreseen the present situation they could not have more exactly met it. Probably in substance they did foresee it. The possibility that we might one day have to deal with the Afghan question, not in its Indian but in its Imperial aspect—not, that is to say, as affecting our relations with a petty frontier prince, but as affecting our relations with that gigantic Asiatic Power which twenty years ago was known to be steadily coming nearer to our Indian dominions—was as well though not as closely appreciated then as it is now. If the Cabinet of the day had said, "Now that we are constructing a Government for India, it will be well to make it clear that India is not to bear the expense of an Afghan war, if ever England should find it necessary to undertake one," they could not have put their intention more clearly. If the Afghans invade India, or are plainly meditating an invasion of India, that is India's affair, and she will have to pay the bill. If England invades Afghanistan, that is England's affair, and she will have to pay the bill. We submit, therefore, that there is no occasion to rake up the precedent of the Persian war in 1857, when 1858 affords us what is of more value than the most apposite precedent—a statute passed to meet the precise case which has now arisen. Precedents are very useful when there is no statute, or when the meaning of a statute is open to question. But here is a statute of later date than the precedent; and unless the *Times* is prepared to say that the Viceroy of India is preparing to invade Afghanistan merely as a mode of resisting the Ameer, who is actually invading, or intending to invade, her Majesty's Indian possessions, it cannot deny that the necessity contemplated in the statute as justifying the employment of Indian troops beyond the frontier at the cost of the Indian revenue has not arisen. By the way, we should like to be told what are the "extraordinary expenses" of a war. Not soldiers, not arms, not supplies: these are all the ordinary expenses of a war. There cannot be a war without men to fight and arms to fight with, and food to keep the men alive. The only "extraordinary" expense that occurs to us at the moment is "Special Correspondence."

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"The World" Oct 2nd

FALSE GUIDES AND DUMB ORACLES.

An Afghan war in which no reverse is anticipated, but which, if any reverse occurs, may call the whole military forces of the Empire into action, is imminent; the vast bureaucracy that constitutes the Indian Government throbs with the excitement of preparation and expectancy; the anxiety of the English public grows more intense daily, and the Secretary of State for India is in attendance on the Queen at Balmoral. The other members of the Cabinet are in different parts, more or less remote, of the United Kingdom, and the Duke of Cambridge is about the only high official who in a critical and perplexed time is actually at his post. As nearly as possible twenty-four years ago there appeared a leading article in the *Times* which sounded the first notes of the death-knell of the Aberdeen Government. The newspaper gave a general support to the Ministry of the day; but it was not, as it has since become, its echo, its flatterer, and its slave. It was still 'the Thunderer,' was still independent, and had not yet condescended to hang with mercenary tremors on each passing Ministerial breath. We were then involved in the Crimean war. Parliament had risen for the long vacation, and the Premier and his colleagues were scattered over the holiday pastures of politicians, as if nothing particular was going on. The *Times* drew attention to this apparent indifference to the national interests at a supreme moment. Things were not progressing satisfactorily in the East, and Ministers were taking the world with as much apparent easiness as if the only campaign about which they had to think were that against the partridges, the pheasants, and the grouse. Not that change of scene was to be denied to over-worked and over-worried statesmen. But change of scene being necessary, why not, suggested the *Times*—which, if it knew, was then indifferent to the fact, which has since transpired from the memoirs of Royalty, that Lord Aberdeen was staying at Balmoral in consequence of the express wishes of his Sovereign—why not make the experiment of selecting a convenient spot for Ministerial relaxation on the South Coast?

But the spirit of a calculating sycophancy now reigns at Bearwood and Printing-house-square; and the journal which should be, as it has been, the instructor and the trusted adviser of a nation is degraded to the registrar of the designs, and the aspiring paneggyrist of the policy, of a Cabinet. It would be vain now to expect from it anything more than apologies for inaction or the blustering praises of extemporised swagger. If, indeed, it could speak with the voice and courage of 1854, we should long since have had the question asked, why, at a juncture full of menace to the Asiatic portion of our Empire, and straining to the utmost the departmental resources of the office over which Lord Cranbrook presides, Lord Cranbrook himself should be stationed six hundred miles from Westminster. The Viceroy of India is the subordinate of the Secretary of State; and if there ever could be a time when it was important that the Secretary of State should be in the capital of the Empire to confer with skilled advisers on the complex details of a delicate and difficult military enterprise, as well as with the Indian Viceroy, it is the present. The Indian Council at Westminster can at least boast the membership of men of great experience, both military and civil. If their characteristic quality is not statesmanship, they have knowledge. It is clear that the speedy success of the English arms in Afghanistan will greatly depend upon careful attention to the business points of warfare—upon the storage of adequate provisions the supply of the exact military equipment wanted, the judicious selection of the times and seasons at which the more active work of the expedition is commenced. It is not less clear that if the Secretary of State is to form a just opinion on these subjects, it must be after personal and daily interviews with his advisers, as well as after careful perusal of official reports. Nor will it be denied that this is work which can only be done on the spot, within the precincts of the office which Lord Cranbrook administers. In all these matters time is an essential element. The Duke of Cambridge, as we have said, has returned to his post. But Lord Cranbrook, even supposing he should have left Balmoral before these lines are published, must have had much to settle last week which could have been only settled in London, or must have postponed many matters which ought to have been settled at once.

Prudential considerations, by which are meant the tactical laws of party, are said to have had much to do with the assumption of this attitude of apparent indifference by the Cabinet. Lord Salisbury advocated the immediate presence of Lord Cranbrook in London, and the issue of summonses for a Council without delay. The advice was declined by Lord Beaconsfield, for reasons which have doubtless much in them that is plausible. The policy that commended itself to the Premier was to minimise the importance of the Afghan episode, and not to alarm the country by a hurriedly-convened meeting of Ministers. For the same reason, it may be presumed, the Ministerial speakers of last week—among whom was Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—scarcely touched on Shere Ali's rejection of the English mission. Coincidently with this, we have had a conflicting series of inspired telegrams in the *Times*. One day we are told that Afghanistan must be annexed, and the Ameer deposed. The next it is hinted that the necessities of the case may for the present be met if the Himalaya passes which lead to Afghanistan are occupied. To-day it is announced that the affront offered by the

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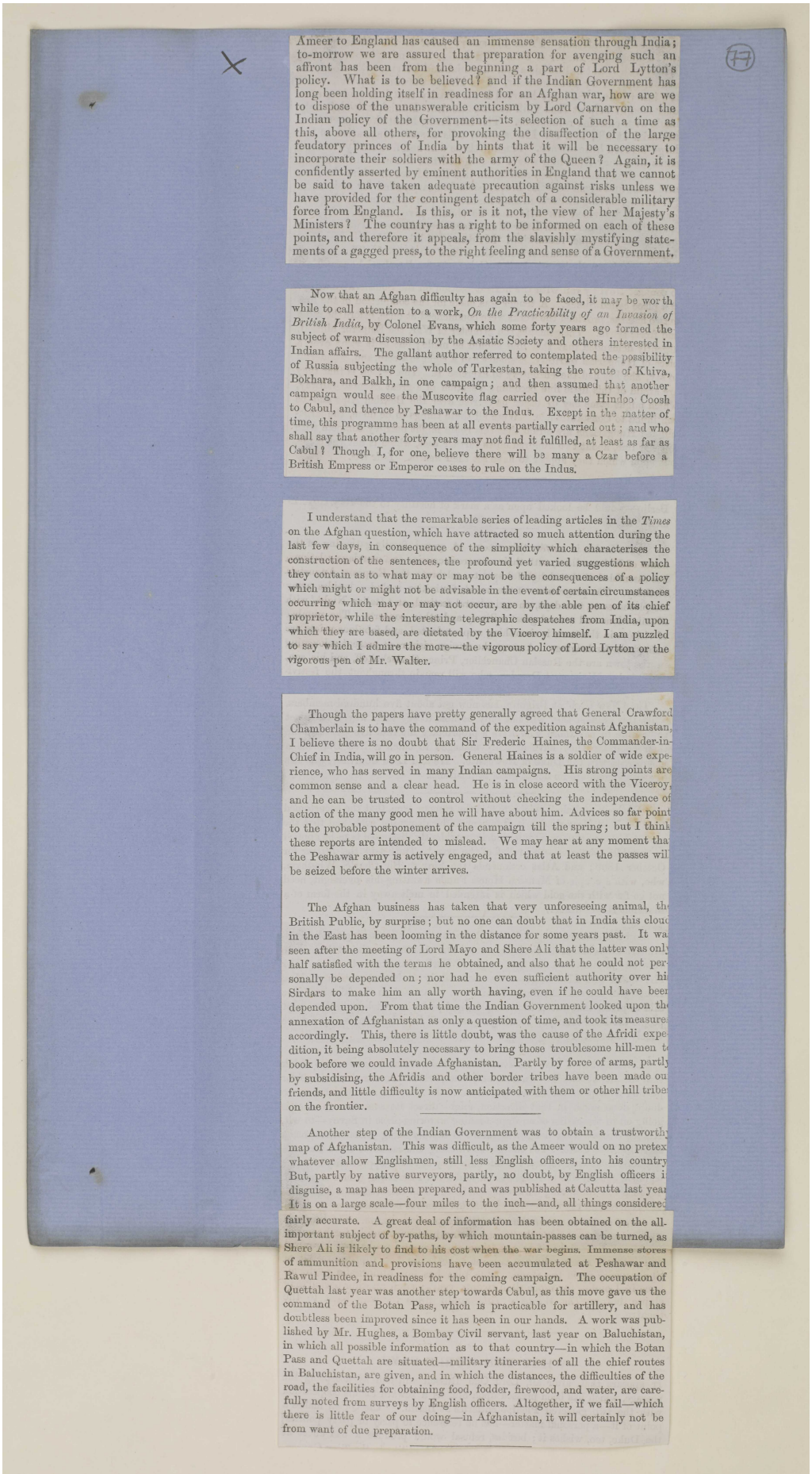

Ameer to England has caused an immense sensation through India; to-morrow we are assured that preparation for avenging such an affront has been from the beginning a part of Lord Lytton's policy. What is to be believed? and if the Indian Government has long been holding itself in readiness for an Afghan war, how are we to dispose of the unanswerable criticism by Lord Carnarvon on the Indian policy of the Government—its selection of such a time as this, above all others, for provoking the disaffection of the large feudatory princes of India by hints that it will be necessary to incorporate their soldiers with the army of the Queen? Again, it is confidently asserted by eminent authorities in England that we cannot be said to have taken adequate precaution against risks unless we have provided for the contingent despatch of a considerable military force from England. Is this, or is it not, the view of her Majesty's Ministers? The country has a right to be informed on each of these points, and therefore it appeals, from the slavishly mystifying statements of a gagged press, to the right feeling and sense of a Government.

Now that an Afghan difficulty has again to be faced, it may be worth while to call attention to a work, *On the Practicability of an Invasion of British India*, by Colonel Evans, which some forty years ago formed the subject of warm discussion by the Asiatic Society and others interested in Indian affairs. The gallant author referred to contemplated the possibility of Russia subjecting the whole of Turkestan, taking the route of Khiva, Bokhara, and Balkh, in one campaign; and then assumed that another campaign would see the Muscovite flag carried over the Hindoo Coosh to Cabul, and thence by Peshawar to the Indus. Except in the matter of time, this programme has been at all events partially carried out; and who shall say that another forty years may not find it fulfilled, at least as far as Cabul? Though I, for one, believe there will be many a Czar before a British Empress or Emperor ceases to rule on the Indus.

I understand that the remarkable series of leading articles in the *Times* on the Afghan question, which have attracted so much attention during the last few days, in consequence of the simplicity which characterises the construction of the sentences, the profound yet varied suggestions which they contain as to what may or may not be the consequences of a policy which might or might not be advisable in the event of certain circumstances occurring which may or may not occur, are by the able pen of its chief proprietor, while the interesting telegraphic despatches from India, upon which they are based, are dictated by the Viceroy himself. I am puzzled to say which I admire the more—the vigorous policy of Lord Lytton or the vigorous pen of Mr. Walter.

Though the papers have pretty generally agreed that General Crawford Chamberlain is to have the command of the expedition against Afghanistan, I believe there is no doubt that Sir Frederic Haines, the Commander-in-Chief in India, will go in person. General Haines is a soldier of wide experience, who has served in many Indian campaigns. His strong points are common sense and a clear head. He is in close accord with the Viceroy, and he can be trusted to control without checking the independence of action of the many good men he will have about him. Advices so far point to the probable postponement of the campaign till the spring; but I think these reports are intended to mislead. We may hear at any moment that the Peshawar army is actively engaged, and that at least the passes will be seized before the winter arrives.

The Afghan business has taken that very unforeseeing animal, the British Public, by surprise; but no one can doubt that in India this cloud in the East has been looming in the distance for some years past. It was seen after the meeting of Lord Mayo and Shere Ali that the latter was only half satisfied with the terms he obtained, and also that he could not personally be depended on; nor had he even sufficient authority over his Sirdars to make him an ally worth having, even if he could have been depended upon. From that time the Indian Government looked upon the annexation of Afghanistan as only a question of time, and took its measures accordingly. This, there is little doubt, was the cause of the Afridi expedition, it being absolutely necessary to bring those troublesome hill-men to book before we could invade Afghanistan. Partly by force of arms, partly by subsidising, the Afridis and other border tribes have been made our friends, and little difficulty is now anticipated with them or other hill tribes on the frontier.

Another step of the Indian Government was to obtain a trustworthy map of Afghanistan. This was difficult, as the Ameer would on no pretext whatever allow Englishmen, still less English officers, into his country. But, partly by native surveyors, partly, no doubt, by English officers in disguise, a map has been prepared, and was published at Calcutta last year. It is on a large scale—four miles to the inch—and, all things considered, fairly accurate. A great deal of information has been obtained on the all-important subject of by-paths, by which mountain-passes can be turned, as Shere Ali is likely to find to his cost when the war begins. Immense stores of ammunition and provisions have been accumulated at Peshawar and Rawul Pindee, in readiness for the coming campaign. The occupation of Quettah last year was another step towards Cabul, as this move gave us the command of the Botan Pass, which is practicable for artillery, and has doubtless been improved since it has been in our hands. A work was published by Mr. Hughes, a Bombay Civil servant, last year on Baluchistan, in which all possible information as to that country—in which the Botan Pass and Quettah are situated—military itineraries of all the chief routes in Baluchistan, are given, and in which the distances, the difficulties of the road, the facilities for obtaining food, fodder, firewood, and water, are carefully noted from surveys by English officers. Altogether, if we fail—which there is little fear of our doing—in Afghanistan, it will certainly not be from want of due preparation.

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THE KEY TO RUSSIA'S POLICY.

THE most significant piece of intelligence which has lately reached England, taken in connection with the Afghan difficulty, has passed almost unnoticed by the daily papers, which assume to instruct the public on Eastern affairs generally. Considering the confused utterances of these oracles on the subject which is now mainly absorbing popular interest, it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that a rumour of disturbances in Seistan conveyed no very definite meaning to the average journalistic mind. At the same time, coinciding as the event does with the refusal of Shere Ali to receive our mission, it is one of the highest importance, and may furnish the key to the policy on which Russia relies practically to defeat the Treaty of Berlin. It should never be forgotten that the European and Asiatic questions became indissolubly connected when we brought Indian troops into the Mediterranean, and that the Treaty of Berlin contains so many provisions which it is humanly impossible can ever be fulfilled, that Russia has only to keep England absorbed in Asia to do what she likes in Europe. Is there any European Power but England which would go to war with Russia to compel her to comply with the engagements she has entered into in regard to Turkey? Russia's object in Central Asia is not to go to war with England, but to disintegrate Afghanistan, and, by furnishing munitions of war and volunteer officers and men to the enemies of Shere Ali, to destroy the Afghan Power, and substitute for it her own puppets, while advancing her frontier from the Oxus and Taschkend. The instruments whom she intends to use for this purpose are the Shah of Persia and Abdurrahman Khan, a near relation and bitter enemy of the Ameer. In urging Shere Ali to refuse the British mission, she is urging him on to his own destruction. Whatever else may happen in Afghanistan, one thing is certain—the present Ameer's fate is sealed. The disturbances in Seistan mean a revival of the old frontier dispute between Persia and Afghanistan, which an English mission went to settle a few years ago, but, as is usual in arbitration matters, neither party was satisfied. In other words, Persia is urged by Russia to take advantage of the Ameer's difficulty with England to attack him covertly on his western frontier.

The acquisition by Persia of Seistan means the annexation of the important fortress of Furrur, and practically of Herat, which then becomes isolated from the rest of Afghanistan. Simultaneously with this move on the part of Persia, Russia will advance on Merv, which brings her frontier almost to the gates of Herat. At the same time she will probably install Abdurrahman Khan, now an exile in Samarcand, as ruler of Balkh, the north-eastern province of Afghanistan, where he is very popular, thus virtually approaching her frontier to Peshawar. In the mean time it is to be supposed that British troops will have occupied Candahar and Girishk, as those positions flank any advance from Persia, and may possibly find it necessary to declare war against Persia, in which case an expedition to the Persian Gulf will be necessary.

Russia calculates, and with reason, that by inciting Abdurrahman to advance from the north on Cabul, where he has many partisans, he will produce a revolution in Afghanistan, which the Ameer, attacked on all sides, will be in no position to put down. It will then be too late for him to accede to the British demands; for he will be powerless to execute them, and England will find herself engaged with Persia on the west, and the forces of the new pretender to the Afghan throne on the north, both strongly backed by Russia. The present which Russia made to Persia after the late war of the fortress of Khotour with an adjacent slip of territory, the marked manner in which the Shah avoided visiting England on the occasion of his last trip to Europe and journey to St. Petersburg, taken in connection with opportune disturbance in Seistan, indicate clearly the relations which subsist between the Czar and the Shah. Meantime Russia has pushed forward to Kizil-Awat, a point beyond her legitimate frontier, in order the better to support the movements above indicated; and the British Government has a right to demand an explanation of this advance, and to require her to withdraw from so menacing a position. Whether ultimately we shall be compelled to force Russia into taking an openly hostile attitude, or may prefer meeting her with her own weapons and rouse the Central Asian Khanates against her, furnishing them with trained Mahometan volunteer soldiers from our Indian armies, and with the military assistance and munitions of war necessary to enable them to revolt successfully against the Russian occupying force, is a question which the course of events can alone decide. In the mean time it is folly to shut our eyes to the fact that we are on the verge of hostilities which will lead to the gravest complications in Asia, and enable Russia to evade all her obligations under the Treaty of Berlin in Europe.

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"The Times" Oct 3?

LONDON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1878.

It is not often that the public at home takes a very keen interest in the frontier policy of the Indian Government. When, as occasionally happens, that policy suddenly becomes a matter of Imperial concern, we find ourselves very much in the dark about matters which it vitally concerns us to know. At this moment, for instance, we know beyond all question that our relations with the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN have reached a most critical point; but the successive stages by which that point has been reached are known only to a few. Lord LAWRENCE, who was once an actor in the long and eventful drama, is no doubt entitled to say, as he did in the letter we published yesterday, "that "we were wrong in the outset in our policy "towards the AMEER in many instances which "could be pointed out;" but even he, in spite of his Indian knowledge and experience, is forced to confess that we are still in the dark as to what occurred at the meetings at Peshawur towards the end of 1876 between the AMEER's agent and Sir LEWIS PELLY. It would certainly be well if the manifest defects in our information on the subject could be supplied from authentic sources. Unfortunately, it is only too clear that nothing which we can now learn about the past will be of much service in solving the present difficulty. Statesmen must deal with circumstances as they arise, and cannot relieve themselves of responsibility by idle recrimination as to past blunders; but, as all human affairs exhibit a more or less continuous train of cause and effect, often circuitous, but generally traceable, the public is entitled to know all that can without imprudence be disclosed of the course of events which has led to the present crisis in the relations between SHERE ALI and the Indian Government.

When the history of Indian frontier policy for the last few years comes to be written, it will probably be found that there have been faults and mistakes on both sides. Thus much, on grounds of general probability alone, we are ready to concede to Lord LAWRENCE. The Indian Government, on the one hand, may have neglected opportunities which have been eagerly seized by its rivals; and SHERE ALI, on the other, may without real provocation have passed from an attitude of jealous suspicion to one of undisguised hostility. On more than one occasion, as is well known, successive Viceroys have been authorized to give to the AMEER promises which, though purposely couched in indefinite terms, may have seemed to him to amount to a virtual guarantee of independence and of territory against all comers. In spite of these promises, which doubtless meant more to him than we ever sanctioned or intended, we seem to have acted more than once in a way rather to repel than to secure the friendship of a haughty and suspicious Sovereign like SHERE ALI. When, for instance, YAKOUB KHAN, his eldest son, had stirred up civil war in Cabul in resistance to the succession of the youngest son, ABDULLA JAN, the Government of India remonstrated with SHERE ALI, and expressed its disapproval of the harsh treatment of the rebels and their leader. On the same occasion General KAUFMANN, the Russian Governor of Turkistan, warmly sympathized with the AMEER. Indeed, in spite of the repeated pledges given by the Cabinet of St. Petersburg to the effect that the affairs of Afghanistan were entirely beyond the sphere of Russian influence in Asia, General KAUFMANN found means of making his sympathy known to the AMEER through native agents, who had already begun to pass between Tashkend and Cabul. SHERE ALI is said to have been at first surprised and alarmed by these insidious and unexpected overtures, and applied to the Indian Government for advice as to how he should deal with them. He was told, with due courtesy, but, as events have proved, with somewhat shortsighted indifference, that he would do well to keep on good terms with Russia, and that if he gave offence to that Power, the British Government would not hold itself pledged to do more than exert its good offices in his favour. After this it is not, perhaps, surprising that the Indian Government received little more authentic information concerning the relations between Russia and Cabul. Russia's spontaneous and repeated pledges on the subject have long ago been made known, and we have lately been favoured with the official explanation of the mission at Cabul. A significant comment on both is furnished by the detailed information on the subject of Afghanistan extracted from the records of the Russian Military Department, of which we print a second instalment this morning in our Berlin letter. It is not a little remarkable that Russia should manifest so sustained an interest, and should have collected such an amount of minute information as to the condition and resources of a Power which she has repeatedly declared to be entirely beyond the sphere of her influence in Asia. To return to SHERE ALI, however, it is manifest that he did not at first receive the overtures of Russia without suspicion, nor without a strong leaning towards the alternative of British support. A succession of untoward circumstances, however, seems to have strengthened his growing animosity towards the Indian Government. In 1873 he made overtures for an alliance, which were declined, as they had previously been after the Umballa Durbar of 1869, though a less definite assurance of continued friendship and of conditional support was given. Already in 1871 he had been irritated by the result of an arbitration which the Indian Government had undertaken between Persia and Afghanistan concerning the boundary of Seistan. The result was a compromise, which, as often happens, was satisfactory to neither party, and SHERE ALI resented it deeply as an infringement of his sovereignty, which, as he erroneously held, the Indian Government was bound to preserve unimpaired. Again, in 1875, in return for courtesies shown by the Ruler of Wakhan, a vassal of SHERE ALI, towards the British Mission to Yarkand, a letter and gifts were sent by the VICEROY without previous reference to the AMEER. This SHERE ALI resented as another breach of his sovereignty. But the supposed slight was manifestly nothing worse than an oversight, and if our diplomatic relations with Cabul had been in a more satisfactory condition, it would never have occurred. The result of all these untoward misunderstandings and unintentional slights was that the AMEER's disposition became gradually more and more unfriendly towards the Indian Government. Meanwhile, though the signs of this disposition were unmistakably exhibited in his acts, little evidence of it was furnished by the reports of the native agents maintained by the Indian Government at Cabul. It was with a view to establish a more satisfactory state of affairs that Lord LYTTON consented in 1876 to the conference at Peshawur between Sir LEWIS PELLY and an envoy of the AMEER. As Lord LAWRENCE says, no official account of the results of this conference has yet been made public. But it is understood that Sir LEWIS PELLY was authorized by the VICEROY to offer to the AMEER's envoy the treaty and guarantee which SHERE ALI had previously sought in 1869 and 1873, on the condition that British officers should have access to points of the AMEER's frontier exposed to Russia. It was not, however, proposed to establish a British agent at Cabul, for it was already known that such a proposal would prove unacceptable to the AMEER. The conference proved abortive. SHERE ALI's envoy recapitulated the grievances of which his Sovereign complained, but suggested no way of removing them, or of establishing better relations; at the same time, though he professed to have no authority to conclude a definite treaty, he declared that SHERE ALI held the British Government pledged under any circumstances to protect his territory. On this important point, however, we must assume that he was left in no doubt when the conference came to an end as to the view which the Indian Government took of its own obligations towards Afghanistan.

Thus the chief result of the Peshawur conference was to disclose the unfriendly and intractable disposition of SHERE ALI towards the British Government. The causes of this disposition as regards ourselves seem to be twofold—one, the difficulty of reaching SHERE ALI save through native agents, wholly untrustworthy and very possibly corrupt; the other the hesitating and at times ill-considered policy of the Indian or, which is at least as probable, of successive Home Governments. To have held entirely aloof from Afghanistan and all its affairs might have been wise as long as it was possible. It might have been equally wise to have secured the alliance when it was first proffered. But it cannot have been wise to have declined its alliance and then to have chilled by untimely mistakes and misunderstandings the friendship which it was all important to secure. On the other hand, it is impossible not to discern a third and

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perhaps a more important cause than all in the growing relations between SHERE ALI and the Power which professes to have no interest in his concerns. The effect of those relations is to be seen in the Russian alliance which the AMEER is known to have long urged on the SULTAN. It may be said—as is said on behalf of Russia in a telegram we print this morning—that SHERE ALI has pursued his own policy. But, in spite of this ingenuous disclaimer, sensible men will continue to have their own opinion as to the effect on his mind of interviews with the Russian envoys, official and unofficial, who have succeeded one another at his Court. At any rate, whatever motives have influenced his policy, he seems now to have chosen his course, and his insolent rejection of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S proffered mission is an earnest of what this is to be. A last attempt has been made to bring him, by friendly means, to a truer sense of his own interests. It has failed for the moment. But if he thinks that the matter is likely to end where it is, he will soon find that he has either grossly deceived himself or been grievously misled by others.

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, OCT. 2.

The *North German Gazette* of this evening publishes a significant letter from St. Petersburg in which the present situation as regards Russia and Afghanistan is discussed as follows :—

"The keynote of Russian policy is that she wishes to gain tranquillity on the basis of the Treaty of Berlin. Even among the military party, a purely defensive policy is advocated. It is, then, perfectly clear that Russia, under these circumstances and from these points of view, will neither prepare for nor second any enterprise in conjunction with Afghanistan. That Asiatic spectators during the war in the East were very attentive observers of the overt antagonism between Russia and England who can be surprised? It is also a fact that Russia, quite as much as England, allowed this antagonism to show itself with great plainness by her military reconnoissances. It may perhaps now be thought that it would have been better in the interest of both parties not to have done this, but what has actually happened cannot be immediately forgotten, and spectators like Shere Ali, who are by no means harmless, have pursued their own policy."

The letter concludes with a reiteration of its opening sentences :—"What we really want is to gain tranquillity on the bases of the Treaty of Berlin—tranquillity both at home and abroad. Russia has to collect her forces in the quiet works of peace."

THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, SEPT. 30.

I subjoin another extract from the records of the Russian Military Department touching the population of Afghanistan :—

"Afghanistan includes an area of 10,000 geographical square miles, with about 6,000,000 inhabitants. The sparsity of its population may be concluded from the fact that Germany on the same area supports over 40,000,000 people. The population of the various provinces will be seen in the following :—

"I.—CABULISTAN.

"1. Cabul.—District of Djellalabad, Cabul, Gazni, and Kuram, 900,000 inhabitants.

"2. Kafiristan (semi-independent).—District of Konar, 100,000 inhabitants ; principality of Kashgar, 60,000 ; Badjour, 50,000 ; Navasai, 10,000 ; and Dir, 100,000 ; Ligue Utman Kheilei, 50,000 ; Ligue Momund, 75,000 ; district of Swat, 210,000 ; Bunir, 326,000 ; and Khyber, 100,000 ; Northern Cabul, 1,000,000.

"II.—HESAR.

"1. Province of Hesar.—District of Yokikhohir, 10,000 inhabitants ; Desandshi, 10,000 ; Ser Djeng, 15,000.

"2. Province of Pusht-kug.—District of Dekudi, 10,000 inhabitants ; Bolgor and Kydelav, 150,000.

"III.—KHORASAN.

"1. Province of Kandahar.—District of Ferra, 130,000 inhabitants ; Kandahar, Hirisk, and Kelat Gildshi, 900,000.

"2. Province of Herat.—District of Gurian, 100,000 inhabitants ; Sabsor, 80,000 ; Bakna, 32,000 ; Kerrukh, 20,000 ; Obe, 12,000 ; Herat, 60,000.

"3. Herat Dependencies.—District of Kale No, Murgab, and Pindshe (Hissare tribe), 145,000 inhabitants ; Tivere, 64,000 ; Deria Dere, 25,000 ; Djevedje, 8,000 ; Rades, 25,000. Firus Kugi Tribe.—Dersi, 10,000 ; Kutche, 10,000 ; Tchektcheran, 20,000 ; and Doulet Yar, 13,000.

"IV.—TURKESTAN (semi-independent.)

"Khanate of Maimene, 100,000 inhabitants ; Andkui and Shibberyan, 60,000 ; Aktche, 10,000 ; Balkh and Seri Put, 64,000 ; Khulm, 300,000 ; Kundus, with districts of Talishen and Khasret Isman, 400,000 ; Badakshan —.

"V.—SEISTAN, 280,000.

"All these figures are only approximate.

"More important than the territorial division is that of races and tribes. There are nine distinct races in the country—Afghans, Tadshiks, Kizilbashi, Hesari, Usbeks, Hindoos, Djat, Kaffirs, and Arabs.

"The Afghans, or Patan, or Pushtu, who are the dominating race, are about 3,000,000 strong. They are divided into five tribes or 405 clans (kheil), the clans being subdivided into numerous families. 277 clans call themselves Afghans, the remaining 128 preferring the patronymic of Pakhtan. All boast of deriving their descent from the Ten Tribes of Israel, a claim not altogether substantiated, but in favour of which a good deal of evidence has been alleged.

"The five great tribes are :—

"I.—AFGHANS.

"Batanai, 25 clans ; Mattai or Gilsai, 52 clans ; Gurgushtai, 95 clans ; Sarabanai, 105 clans.

"II.—PAKHTAN.

"Karalanai, 128 clans. Total, 405 clans.

"Though spread over the whole country, the bulk of the Afghan population live in the eastern and south-eastern provinces, being inveterate mountaineers, and preferring the lofty hills on the Indian frontier to any more profitable and convenient residence. Of those living in the adjoining valleys some are in the habit of nomadizing on British territory part of the year.

"In the north-east the principal clans are the following :—The Shinvar, in the Valley of the Kame, a tributary of the Kabul, are almost entirely independent. The Tarkalanai, in the south-western basin of the river Pendjkor, are divided into the three principalities of Badjour, Birakhul, and Navasai, and sending 10,000 armed men into the field, may be estimated at 80,000 souls. The numerous clan of the Yusufzae, residing in the corner formed by the junction of the Cabul and Indus rivers, is divided into many families. Of these the Khvadazai occupy the greater part of the Pendjkor valley, forming the principality of Dir, which has 62 villages, capable of turning out 20,000 riflemen. The Khvadazai also live on the right bank of the River Swat, where they have 54 villages, and muster 17,000 rifles. The left bank of the River Swat is held by the Baizai, another branch of the Yussufzi divided into the Ranizai (52 villages and 12,000 rifles), and the Babuzi (70 villages, 18,000 rifles). Both these branches are governed by separate Khans. Between the Rivers Kame and Swat, on the left bank of the Kabul Darya, there are the less important subdivisions of the Gandjianaii, Darudzai, Mohamedzai, and Halilai. The Utman Kheilei, in the lower part of the same valley, form a fraternity having the command of 10,000 rifles. The Upper Momunds, south of Badjour and the Utman Kheil league, extend as far as the Kabul Darya, and on the right bank of the river come up to the Khyber hills. They have 25,000 families and two Khans. The British territory south-east of these, between Indus, Kabul Darya, and the hills, is inhabited by different branches of the Yusufzae, about 150,000 strong, with 30,000 rifles. North of this outlying tribe, in the more or less independent district of Bunair, we have the Malezai and Mandezai branches of the Yussufzi. They are subdivided into the Salarzae, Djidasai, Ashaisai, Hehelsai, Nurzai, Shumlai, Khudo Kheil, Jadun, Otmanzai, and Amazai. Part of the Douletzai live in the same neighbourhood. The whole population of Bunair is distributed over 111 villages, and can turn out up to 65,000 armed men.

"South of the Kabul Darya in Cabulistan and the Pendjab hills, lining the Indus Valley, the Tarnokhi muster 6,000 rifles. The Afridi, the most numerous of the border tribes, spending the greater part of the year on the Cabul hills, and descending only in summer into the Indus Valley, glory in the possession of 15,000 armed men. To them belong the Khyber and Shinvari people, famous for their martial and savage characteristics. Protected by the Khyber hills, they are entirely independent and receive from 10,000 to 20,000 rupees a year from the Cabul Government as a consideration for allowing caravans to pass. Some 30 years ago there were counted some 20,000 rifles in and near the Khyber Pass. The Khyber men are divided into many sections, each of them having a separate Khan and refusing to acknowledge any superior authority. Among the more prominent branches of the Afridi, the Jawaki, the Zaka-Khel, the Galli, and the Adam Kheil deserve to be mentioned. The Lower Momund (12,000 armed men) occupy the south-western corner of the district of Peshawur. The strip of land separating the British districts of Peshawur and Kohat takes its name from the Khattak, who, notwithstanding their 15,000 rifles, lead a pacific agricultural life. The Orakzai inhabit the Ganga valley south-west of Kohat, and the Tirak Valley. West of them there are the Bangash, in the valley of the Miranzai and part of the Kuram Valley, within the boundaries of Cabul. South of the Kuram valley, between the districts of Bannu and Tak, the country is infested by the robber tribes of the Batani (5,000 rifles), living partly on English, partly on Cabul territory. The Soliman hills (Takhti Suliman, *Anglicè* the Throne of Solomon), in the south-eastern extremity of Afghanistan, harbours the three martial brotherhoods of the Shirani, Ushterani, and Kazrani. The Shirani, 10,000 rifles, make constant inroads into the valleys, and up to the pacification of the country by the English were the terror of the whole region. They live in the direction of Deri Ismail Khan. The Kazrani have about 5,000 rifles and are less warlike.

"West of these, and still included in the Cabul frontiers, there is the extensive district of Dour, reaching from the river Gomel to the river Kuram, and inhabited by the Vezir people, divided into the three branches of the Makhsud, the Vezir in the south, the Derveshkel in the centre, and the Kabulkel in the north. The Vezir are a powerful and independent race, mostly nomads, leading a pastoral life, staying in the hills in summer ; the winter entices them down to the Indus Valley. Their principal centres are the towns of Kanagoram and Makeen. The upper valley of the Kuram is inhabited by the Turi and Jaji, of the Pakhtan division of the people. Further down the valley we meet with a portion of the Zuimucht, whose principal mass reside south-west. The mountainous district of Khost, south of the Kuram, is the property of small hill tribes—the Driplara, the Drikuti, Mattun, Gurbus, Torzai, and others.

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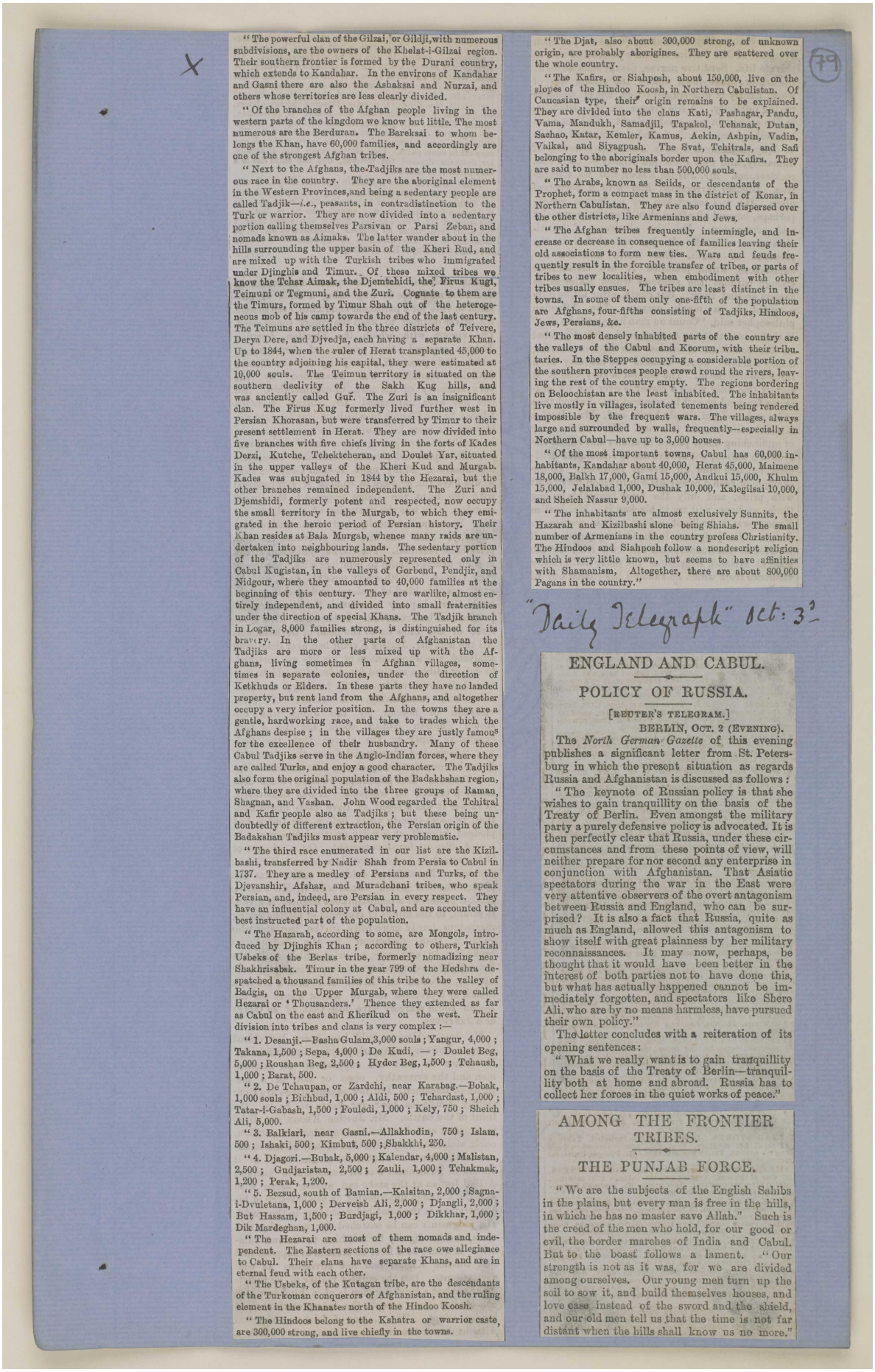

"The powerful clan of the Gilzai, or Gildji, with numerous subdivisions, are the owners of the Khelat-i-Gilzai region. Their southern frontier is formed by the Durani country, which extends to Kandahar. In the environs of Kandahar and Gasni there are also the Ashaksai and Nurzai, and others whose territories are less clearly divided.

"Of the branches of the Afghan people living in the western parts of the kingdom we know but little. The most numerous are the Berduran. The Bareksai to whom belongs the Khan, have 60,000 families, and accordingly are one of the strongest Afghan tribes.

"Next to the Afghans, the Tadjiks are the most numerous race in the country. They are the aboriginal element in the Western Provinces, and being a sedentary people are called Tadjik—*i.e.*, peasants, in contradistinction to the Turk or warrior. They are now divided into a sedentary portion calling themselves Parsivan or Parsi Zeban, and nomads known as Aimaks. The latter wander about in the hills surrounding the upper basin of the Kheri Rud, and are mixed up with the Turkish tribes who immigrated under Djinghis and Timur. Of these mixed tribes we know the Tchar Aimak, the Djemtchidi, the Firus Kugi, Teimuni or Tegmuni, and the Zuri. Cognate to them are the Timurs, formed by Timur Shah out of the heterogeneous mob of his camp towards the end of the last century. The Teimuns are settled in the three districts of Teivere, Derya Dere, and Djvedja, each having a separate Khan. Up to 1844, when the ruler of Herat transplanted 45,000 to the country adjoining his capital, they were estimated at 10,000 souls. The Teimun territory is situated on the southern declivity of the Sakh Kug hills, and was anciently called Gur. The Zuri is an insignificant clan. The Firus Kug formerly lived further west in Persian Khorasan, but were transferred by Timur to their present settlement in Herat. They are now divided into five branches with five chiefs living in the forts of Kades Derzi, Kutche, Tchektcheran, and Doulet Yar, situated in the upper valleys of the Kheri Kud and Murgab. Kades was subjugated in 1844 by the Hezarai, but the other branches remained independent. The Zuri and Djemshidi, formerly potent and respected, now occupy the small territory in the Murgab, to which they emigrated in the heroic period of Persian history. Their Khan resides at Bala Murgab, whence many raids are undertaken into neighbouring lands. The sedentary portion of the Tadjiks are numerously represented only in Cabul Kuristan, in the valleys of Gorbend, Pendjir, and Nidgour, where they amounted to 40,000 families at the beginning of this century. They are warlike, almost entirely independent, and divided into small fraternities under the direction of special Khans. The Tadjik branch in Logar, 8,000 families strong, is distinguished for its bravery. In the other parts of Afghanistan the Tadjiks are more or less mixed up with the Afghans, living sometimes in Afghan villages, sometimes in separate colonies, under the direction of Ketkhuds or Elders. In these parts they have no landed property, but rent land from the Afghans, and altogether occupy a very inferior position. In the towns they are a gentle, hardworking race, and take to trades which the Afghans despise; in the villages they are justly famous for the excellence of their husbandry. Many of these Cabul Tadjiks serve in the Anglo-Indian forces, where they are called Turks, and enjoy a good character. The Tadjiks also form the original population of the Badakhshan region, where they are divided into the three groups of Raman, Shagnan, and Vashan. John Wood regarded the Tchitral and Kafir people also as Tadjiks; but these being undoubtedly of different extraction, the Persian origin of the Badakshan Tadjiks must appear very problematic.

"The third race enumerated in our list are the Kizilbashi, transferred by Nadir Shah from Persia to Cabul in 1737. They are a medley of Persians and Turks, of the Djevanshir, Afshar, and Muradchani tribes, who speak Persian, and, indeed, are Persian in every respect. They have an influential colony at Cabul, and are accounted the best instructed part of the population.

"The Hazarah, according to some, are Mongols, introduced by Djinghis Khan; according to others, Turkish Usbeks of the Berlas tribe, formerly nomadizing near Shakhrisabsk. Timur in the year 799 of the Hedshra despatched a thousand families of this tribe to the valley of Badgis, on the Upper Murgab, where they were called Hezarai or 'Thousanders.' Thence they extended as far as Cabul on the east and Kherikud on the west. Their division into tribes and clans is very complex:—

"1. Desanji.—Basha Gulam, 3,000 souls; Yangur, 4,000; Takana, 1,500; Sepa, 4,000; De Kudi, —; Doulet Beg, 5,000; Roushan Beg, 2,500; Hyder Beg, 1,500; Tchaush, 1,000; Barat, 500.

"2. De Tchaupan, or Zardchi, near Karabag.—Bobak, 1,000 souls; Bichbud, 1,000; Aldi, 500; Tchardast, 1,000; Tatar-i-Gabash, 1,500; Fouledi, 1,000; Kely, 750; Sheich Ali, 5,000.

"3. Balkiari, near Gasni.—Allakhodin, 750; Islam, 500; Ishaki, 500; Kimbut, 500; Shakkhi, 250.

"4. Djagori.—Bubak, 5,000; Kalendar, 4,000; Malistan, 2,500; Gudjaristan, 2,500; Zauli, 1,000; Tchakmak, 1,200; Perak, 1,200.

"5. Bezsud, south of Bamian.—Kalsitan, 2,000; Sagnai-Dvuletana, 1,000; Derveish Ali, 2,000; Djangli, 2,000; But Hassam, 1,500; Burdjagi, 1,000; Dikkhar, 1,000; Dik Mardeghan, 1,000.

"The Hezarai are most of them nomads and independent. The Eastern sections of the race owe allegiance to Cabul. Their clans have separate Khans, and are in eternal feud with each other.

"The Usbeks, of the Kutagan tribe, are the descendants of the Turkoman conquerors of Afghanistan, and the ruling element in the Khanates north of the Hindoo Koosh.

"The Hindoos belong to the Kshatra or warrior caste, are 300,000 strong, and live chiefly in the towns.

"The Djat, also about 300,000 strong, of unknown origin, are probably aborigines. They are scattered over the whole country.

"The Kafirs, or Siahposh, about 150,000, live on the slopes of the Hindoo Koosh, in Northern Cabulistan. Of Caucasian type, their origin remains to be explained. They are divided into the clans Kati, Pashagar, Pandu, Vama, Mandukh, Samadjil, Tapakol, Tchanak, Dutan, Sachao, Katar, Kemler, Kamus, Aekin, Ashpin, Vadin, Vaikal, and Siyagpush. The Svat, Tchitrals, and Safi belonging to the aboriginals border upon the Kafirs. They are said to number no less than 500,000 souls.

"The Arabs, known as Seiids, or descendants of the Prophet, form a compact mass in the district of Konar, in Northern Cabulistan. They are also found dispersed over the other districts, like Armenians and Jews.

"The Afghan tribes frequently intermingle, and increase or decrease in consequence of families leaving their old associations to form new ties. Wars and feuds frequently result in the forcible transfer of tribes, or parts of tribes to new localities, when embodiment with other tribes usually ensues. The tribes are least distinct in the towns. In some of them only one-fifth of the population are Afghans, four-fifths consisting of Tadjiks, Hindoos, Jews, Persians, &c.

"The most densely inhabited parts of the country are the valleys of the Cabul and Koorum, with their tributaries. In the Steppes occupying a considerable portion of the southern provinces people crowd round the rivers, leaving the rest of the country empty. The regions bordering on Beloochistan are the least inhabited. The inhabitants live mostly in villages, isolated tenements being rendered impossible by the frequent wars. The villages, always large and surrounded by walls, frequently—especially in Northern Cabul—have up to 3,000 houses.

"Of the most important towns, Cabul has 60,000 inhabitants, Kandahar about 40,000, Herat 45,000, Maimene 18,000, Balkh 17,000, Gami 15,000, Andkui 15,000, Khulm 15,000, Jelalabad 1,000, Dushak 10,000, Kalegilsai 10,000, and Sheich Nassur 9,000.

"The inhabitants are almost exclusively Sunnits, the Hazarah and Kizilbashi alone being Shiahs. The small number of Armenians in the country profess Christianity. The Hindoos and Siahposh follow a nondescript religion which is very little known, but seems to have affinities with Shamanism. Altogether, there are about 800,000 Pagans in the country."

"Daily Telegraph" Oct: 3

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

POLICY OF RUSSIA.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

BERLIN, OCT. 2 (EVENING).

The *North German Gazette* of this evening publishes a significant letter from St. Petersburg in which the present situation as regards Russia and Afghanistan is discussed as follows:

"The keynote of Russian policy is that she wishes to gain tranquillity on the basis of the Treaty of Berlin. Even amongst the military party a purely defensive policy is advocated. It is then perfectly clear that Russia, under these circumstances and from these points of view, will neither prepare for nor second any enterprise in conjunction with Afghanistan. That Asiatic spectators during the war in the East were very attentive observers of the overt antagonism between Russia and England, who can be surprised? It is also a fact that Russia, quite as much as England, allowed this antagonism to show itself with great plainness by her military reconnaissances. It may now, perhaps, be thought that it would have been better in the interest of both parties not to have done this, but what has actually happened cannot be immediately forgotten, and spectators like Shere Ali, who are by no means harmless, have pursued their own policy."

The letter concludes with a reiteration of its opening sentences:

"What we really want is to gain tranquillity on the basis of the Treaty of Berlin—tranquillity both at home and abroad. Russia has to collect her forces in the quiet works of peace."

AMONG THE FRONTIER TRIBES.

THE PUNJAB FORCE.

"We are the subjects of the English Sahibs in the plains, but every man is free in the hills, in which he has no master save Allah." Such is the creed of the men who hold, for our good or evil, the border marches of India and Cabul. But to the boast follows a lament. "Our strength is not as it was, for we are divided among ourselves. Our young men turn up the soil to sow it, and build themselves houses, and love ease instead of the sword and the shield, and our old men tell us that the time is not far distant when the hills shall know us no more."

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It is the same cry that has gone up from the sons of the soil wherever the Englishman has put his foot in India. Peace follows our footsteps, and, as if some great natural law were asserting itself, order and quiet settle upon the land. But there is not a race in India out of Bengal to whom tranquillity is not irksome, and a long interval of settled government hateful. The old men taunt the young that they can cypher better than their fathers, but cannot ride so well, and among the youth there is always a party that is fascinated by the belief that the spear and not the pen should be the emblems of government, and that bull-hide shields are a more proper defence for men than codes of law. But British rule, though it settles upon a district as lightly as snow, freezes as hard as ice. And under it, let the restless spirits fret and gall as they will, the people find their fingers numbed when they put hand to sword, and the sluggish blood does not thrill to the rumour that the country side is up. The comforts of peace always use solid arguments when they appeal to men and women—and, on the other side, what is there? Picturesque warfare, with poverty and wounds and death, the severing of home ties, the destruction of home itself. This is no fanciful case, but the actual fact for all British India. The Sahib comes one day among the fields with his accountants and his draughtsmen, and there is much writing and little talking, and the next day his tents are gone. But a sheet of paper is left behind, with the head man of the hamlet, and one of their number has been taken into the service of Government as a village watchman. There are no other signs of authority visible, but the word goes round that it will not do to trifle with the Sahib's arrangements. On the paper is shown each man's field, and it has a number, and though filching from a neighbour's land can no longer be indulged in, there is a compensating advantage to each man in the security that his own cannot be filched from. So the old stone boundaries, that have hitherto never had rest from month to month, find grass growing up round them, and every man points to them as if they were the eternal hills—for are they not all marked upon that paper? Here and there a turbulent soul suggests that the new *régime* is dull, but he finds to his surprise that the others consider it comfortable. So he grumbles at the want of enterprise in the present day, and at the slothful spirit that has come over the once lawless district, but he acquiesces in it. And as it has always been so is it to-day, for England can never be at rest in the East. "The old men tell us," say the mountaineers, "that the time is not far distant when the hills shall know us no more." And the old men are right, for "where the plough comes the wolf must leave"—or else turn watch-dog. The lesson will be a difficult one to learn, but other wild and stubborn races have already learnt it at our hands, and in time the hill men will too. Confirmed in possession of the lands they have seized, they will be forbidden to take more, and the same paralysing influences of a secure life and settled *régime* will overcome them as they have the fighting races of the plains of India. Though proud to madness, patriotic as no other race on earth is, and united among themselves clan by clan, they present to civilisation no insuperable difficulties, while from the simplicity of their manners, hospitality to the stranger, and sincerity to him, in spite of force and corruption, there is much to encourage those who say that the English character will win eventually esteem and respect.

In our issue of yesterday we sketched the Waziri as he is seen at home, and now, returning to the frontier line, from the Thal to the Khyber, we would attempt to individualise the Uthman Kheyls and the Ahmadzais. With one or other, or both, we are already neighbours, from Bannu up into the Peshawur district, and they will be among the first whom it will be necessary, in view of using the passes, to bring into our service. The Uthman Kheyls hold the Ghwalari Pass, where the Gomul river, rising in Cabul, issues from the Suleiman range upon British India. Much of the trade of Central India used to find its way by this road into Cabul, and the Uthman Kheyls drew a large income from the black-mail they levied and the plunder they took in addition from the caravans. But the traffic has of late years found other and safer channels, and the hill-men may, therefore, be said to subsist by their flocks and by robberies committed upon such travellers as unlucky chance has brought to their mountain pastures. The Ahmadzais are more amenable, by circumstances of position, to British influence. Their head-quarters are, vaguely, the Salt Range, and their offshoots have struck into distant districts. Thus, tempted by the pasturage of the prairie upland known as the Thal lands, that spread out at the mouth of the Kuram Pass, where the river of that name enters British India, they came down years ago in force. Before their black blanket tents the native tribes retired, leaving them in sole possession. But with the return of summer the love of home revived, and striking their vast camp the horde retired through the Kuram Valley to their own hill domains. But the easy life of the plains had already won their hearts, and the next winter saw them again darkening the Thal. And so for several successive years they drove down their herds of broad-tailed sheep, their goats and camels, to the luxuriant pasturage, withdrawing when the spring weather told them that the hill-sides were green again, but every year more and more stayed behind, and from a pastoral life turned to agriculture. Growing strong among their neighbours, they pushed their landmarks forward, and so rapid was their advance that had not the British appeared upon the scene the Ahmadzais would have been now upon the western banks of the Indus. The tribes they drove before them and subdued they despised, as well as they might, for in the strong, straightforward character of the Ahmadzai there is nothing that sympathises with the Afghan traits of the people they found in possession of the Thal. For these lands were once part of the Cabul kingdom, and into them have drifted one colony after another, all the refuse of that medley of clans we call "the Afghans," meaning thereby the subjects of the Ameer of Cabul generally and not the Afghans proper, the dominant community of that country.

The invading Ahmedzais found therefore in the pastures a horde of savages in constant petty strife among themselves, without even tribal cohesion or any patriotic sentiment, and, calling them cowards and liars, they seized their fortified villages and turned into tenants the men they had met as landlords. They thus became, on the advance of the British frontier, British subjects; and, confirmed in their possessions, have given frequent proof that a just administration, promptly severe and forgiving easily, can influence them for good. All over India it is found that when two magistrates are sitting together—a European and a native—the former has all the work; for, given the choice, no Indian, whether Hindu or Mahommedan, will go to his countryman for justice in preference to the Sahib, and the hill-men of the frontier are no exception. This, at any rate, proves that the English character commands respect for its impartiality in judgment and desire for equity among the poor wild creatures of the border marches. Nor in visiting them does the European find any of that ferine shyness which characterises the hill-men on the hills. The woman remains standing at the tent door to watch the naked children tumbling on the ground, and the shaggy dog at her side guarding the flock that has been left at home in its charge, betrays no alarm at the presence of the stranger. The fierce looking jezail-armed herdsman on the hill side hardly turns to notice the passer by. The girls trudging from the springs behind the donkeys laden with water skins offer the stranger drink, and the laughter round the wells is not hushed at his approach. And yet this is the tribe that in the disturbances known as the Mahomed Kheyl rebellion of 1870-71 illustrated by dreadful outrages the violent contrasts of the hill-man's character. The Mahomed Kheyls are a branch of the Ahmadzais, and, having settled at the passes leading into fertile Dawar and Khost, made an honest income enough by escorting caravans through the defiles.

Being thus in sole possession of the right of way they were held answerable by the British Government when the district came under our management for all depredations and disturbances. In return they held their lands at a nominal rent, and enjoyed the privilege of nominating a certain number of persons to the frontier militia. Their chief was a man of the best type of the Ahmadzais, and during his lifetime there were no complaints; but he died, and the tribe drifted back into lawlessness. They had no grievance against man, but nature had been hard upon them, and a year of drought had made them discontented. This feeling they demonstrated by a villainous outrage. Selecting the night of the regular relief of the British outpost of Kuram, they waylaid the relieving party, and as the soldiers were passing heedlessly along, fired a volley into them from a few yards distance and fled. Seven men

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were killed and four wounded out of the guard of twenty, and under cover of the morning mists and among the rocks the murderers were soon safe from pursuit. The news of the outrage spread all down the frontier line, every tribe wavering between the prospect of a return to old guerilla ways and the orderly habits they were beginning to learn, and in the end it was a triumph of British administration that the outlaws found so few to sympathise with them actively. But the murderers themselves rallied all their clan about them, and for a year kept the whole frontier in disorder and alarm. The authorities were not to be irritated into exceptional procedure. A rigid blockade of the passes was established, and, when winter came round, the Mahomed Kheyls, shut up in the bleak barren hills, had no pasturage for their flocks. They dared not trespass into the territories of other tribes, but the bitter price demanded of them for permission to re-enter British territory kept them in outlawry till the starvation could no longer be borne. Then, after fifteen months of exile, all the leaders of the tribe, with the women and children, came down to the camp of the Sahibs. An eye-witness has described their return: "The men, with heads bare (among Orientals the uttermost expression of abject submission) and ropes about their necks, cast down their arms before the British officials, and, throwing themselves on the ground, begged for pardon, whilst some of the women and children sat huddled together in the background, others spread themselves like locusts over the garden, and devoured greedily every edible green thing they could find." Due punishment was inflicted upon the tribe, and since then they have not given trouble.

The episode discloses something of the system of frontier administration, but at the present moment, when such an important responsibility has devolved upon the officers in charge of the border districts, a more detailed sketch will be of interest. For the protection of our frontier—about a thousand miles in length—has been established a chain of forts and outposts, situated at the mouths of the more important passes. A good road connects each with the next, and this is patrolled by local militia. But force and threats are not the main agents of our civilisation. These are forbearance and conciliation. Even when a tribe goes into outlawry, in consequence of some gross outrage, there is no blood exacted for the blood shed, but the whole tribe is besieged in its own block of mountains, and the humiliation of voluntary surrender forced upon the outlaws. They feel this more than the fine that is imposed and the confiscation of pastures. Sometimes a keener point is put upon their disgrace by making a tribe burn down with their own hands one of their own villages, worthless erections of grass and leaves, and rebuilt in a few hours. But it galls the mountaineer more to set a torch to the rubbish than to suffer imprisonment. Nevertheless, when the application of force is necessary, the means at hand are ample for complete retribution; and against the military power standing to arms all down the line, a universal rebellion would make no head. The Punjab Frontier Force consists of eleven regiments of infantry, one of guides, five of cavalry, two light field batteries, and two mountain batteries, in all twelve thousand men. Being amply provided with carriage the force can be mobilised in a few hours. Besides these, the minor frontier outposts are garrisoned by local militia. These, of course, in a general outbreak might fraternise with the separate clans from which they are drawn; but their defection, while giving the rebels no material increase of strength, would not detract at all from the adequacy of the regulars to cope with the emergency. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the *régime* is one of clemency and patient forbearance, and in time it will become a tradition along the frontier, as it has indisputably become in other parts of India, that the British Government is too strong to be shaken from its policy of steady calm or provoked into extraordinary procedure by acts of petty malignity. When a Viceroy of India was stabbed a few years ago by an assassin, every city in the empire was restless with apprehension of the wrath of England. But the astonished nations of Hindustan saw only the murderer tried in the usual way, sentenced with all the forms and ceremonies of an ordinary trial, and hanged as if he were only a common criminal. The vernacular press reflected the feeling of the natives of the country exactly when it spoke with respectful awe of our courageous adherence to the very letter of our laws at a moment of such great excitement. With the same dignified policy of unswerving justice we shall subdue to admiration of us and respect for our laws the wild creatures of the Western frontier.

"Pall Mall Gazette" Oct: 30

THE CABINET AND ITS EASTERN DIFFICULTIES.

WHEN at the beginning of last week it was known that SHERE ALI had resolved to challenge a war with England, and that he had done so in a way which left no choice as to the acceptance of the challenge, it was reported that the Cabinet would "consider without delay the measures to be adopted in an emergency as trying as any of which the present generation of England have had experience." And no sooner was this announcement made than we thought ourselves justified, after consideration of the circumstances of the case, in denying the probability of any such meeting of the Cabinet. As some of our readers may remember, the argument was this. After all, Ministers are but men, with some of the weaknesses as well as some of the sterner qualities of their kind. They have reputations to lose. It is possible for them to be placed in awkward and even ridiculous positions. No more than other people can they be indifferent to the discovery that they have not been so wise, or so courageous, or so triumphant as they held themselves out to be. And it was not to be expected, therefore, that they should be the first to acknowledge that at a momentous crisis they had so managed matters as to plunge the country deeper into the manifest dangers which they undertook to preserve it from, and from which they announced that they had preserved it. If, after dispersing to distant holiday resorts in confidence that nothing was likely to happen to disturb their well-earned repose, they were suddenly to meet together to consider what measures were to be taken in respect of these Indian difficulties, what would the inference have been? The inference would have been that they recognized those difficulties as serious. But if they are serious, they are so because they are due to Russian hostility, made audacious by the triumph of Russia over their weak, distracted, aimless, overawed, discomfited selves. Why, therefore, should they push forward to acknowledge themselves disconcerted by this same audacious hostility, or to seem to be so? What more natural than that they should hesitate to make a great Government matter of armed operations which are nothing less than war for the preservation of India against Russia? How could they be expected to make haste to

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acknowledge that within a few weeks of their peace-with-honour triumphs they were actually pitted against the hostile machinations of a Power whose ability to disturb the empire they ridiculed while they were helping her with means to do it? Their cue (it appeared to us) was not to acknowledge that they had anything more than a mere frontier disturbance to meet; and to remain quiet in their various places of retirement by way of keeping up appearances.

These anticipations were verified by the event. The Cabinet was not called together, doubtless for the very natural reasons assigned. But the omission was much remarked upon, and it really is necessary to do something; and so, after the lapse of a fortnight, the Cabinet is to assemble. It is announced that a Council will be held on Saturday. Moreover, the journal selected as the channel of this announcement is instructed to add that at this Council Ministers "will in all probability discuss the further development of frontier affairs in India; the situation, as it now presents itself, having neither been unexpected nor unprovided for." Nobody but an anxious official could have penned this communication; because nobody but an anxious official could have ventured on the statement with which it concludes. "The situation, as it now presents itself, having neither been unexpected nor unprovided for." But if the situation as it now presents itself was expected, then when the Government allowed themselves to be forced into that wretched secret Salisbury-Schouvaloff Agreement—an Agreement which placed Russia in a position of mastery in the East (for so all Asia of course regards it)—they foresaw that they would immediately have to face other concessions to Russian diplomacy if they wished to avoid a costly and dangerous war on the Indian frontier. Surely it is only kind to doubt this assertion. And it happens that there is ministerial authority for doubting it; for not only did one of our Plenipotentiaries at Berlin, speaking as Secretary of State for India, publicly ridicule the fear of Russian influence on India, but his more important colleague assured us only a few weeks ago that the relations of Russia and England were "essentially friendly," and that the Czar's Government were now convinced that "a restless and warlike spirit is one that must debase and perhaps even ruin their country." And when Lord BEACONSFIELD said this he was already aware that the Czar's mission was planted at Cabul, that certain menacing military operations were observable in the Russian armies in Central Asia, and much besides. And what are we to understand by the official saying that the present situation as it now presents itself has been provided for? That it ought to have been provided for we know; because, according to a statement apparently authorized by the Viceroy, the Government were informed about the Russian mission in June, and might surely have foreseen then all that has followed. If we look to our military preparations, they certainly do not yield any clear evidence that the situation was not only foreseen but provided for. How about the still open difficulty as to the hill tribes, for instance? But of course some provision may have been made, then or since, of a diplomatic character. For anything the world knows to the contrary, there may be another secret understanding with Russia, by which she agrees to withdraw from the Afghanistan scene, either in consideration of concessions already rendered or yet to be allowed. Indeed, a few days ago one of the ministerial papers bade us expect to hear that "SHERE ALI is relying upon a policy the mainsprings of which have been broken by events;" and that he may find himself "disowned and deserted." The probability seems to be, however, that if SHERE ALI is to be disowned and deserted, that event will not take place until the understandings between England and Russia which began with the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Agreement have been carried further. In what is called a significant letter from St. Petersburg, in the *North German Gazette*, it is said, apropos of England and Afghanistan, that "the keynote of Russian policy is that she wishes to gain tranquillity on the basis of the Treaty of Berlin." This is pretty much what an imaginary Russian diplomatist said yesterday in our own pages.

AN AFGHAN COMMUNICATION.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—My friend Shumsheer u Deen ("the Scimitar of the Faith") has asked me to translate the enclosed, and he wished me to send it to the *Times*, whose articles on Afghanistan are sent by telegraph to Tashkend and thence to Cabul as rapidly as possible. But I have persuaded him that Europeans do not like eating dirt, and still less publishing the fact that they have done so. It is therefore his wish that I should send his letter to you.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Abbotsbury, Sept. 30.

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TO THE SAHIB I CULLUM "TIMES."

Salutations: Such as this humble follower of the Prophet (on whom be praise) may offer to an infidel. Did you ever hear, O Sahib i Cullum (O Lord of the Pen) what happened to that boastful one who sold the skin of the king of the forest before he had slain him? Have you slain the great Sirdar of Cabul with the sword of your mouth and defiled his father's grave? Has the father of snow melted at your command, O boastful one? Has the Sahib i Jung* put the finger of silence on the mouth of suspense because you have spoken? Have the walls of virgin fortresses fallen before the ravisher, and have the Jan Baz† eaten dirt at the hands of infidels? These are unclean thoughts, O father of boasters. Know, O ye sons of dishonoured mothers, that the Sirdar Shere Ali is a Sahib i Tulwar, a lord of the sword, not a son of words. Loosen the folds of your memory and see what Akbar Khan (on whom be peace) did to the sons of the infidel in the Coord Cabul Pass: the Suffeid Coh (Father of White Mountains) still looks down on their crumbling bones; and thus shall his great nephew do again. Know that the Prophet, the Servant of God, darkened the counsels of the unclean beasts and caused them to supply my lord the Sirdar with life destroyers, such as Akbar Khan knew not of. Has not the Evil One also put into your heart and into the hearts of the writers of unclean news in this infidel land such a love of money that they willingly tell my lord the Sirdar what he could not otherwise learn? How could he ascertain the numbers of infidels prepared for Jehanum, and the places intended to be defiled by their presence, if it were not told him by infidel news writers, whose words reach his honoured ears by the mouth of the white slaves in Tashkend? Thou mayest ask why I do warn thee. Words of wisdom fall on thine ears as light falls on the eyes of a blind man, who knoweth it not. The Evil One hath made your hearts fat and your livers hot; so that ye cannot understand. You believe that the sword of your mouth is as sharp as the sword of the Holy One; but the father of evil has baffled you and by his decree your lips of uncleanness can never be closed. Even in this land of darkness have we not heard that the great one of Erin hath given you over to destruction, and declares that the harp of Tara shall shout for joy when my lord has given the carcasses of your infidel soldiers to the beasts that gnash with their teeth and the foul ones that drink blood? Enough. The cymbals of the Thirteenth Imaum have sounded. All infidels shall be destroyed, and among them your Indians shall be the first.

SHUMSHEER U DEEN.

* Sahib i Jung, the Lord of War, was a great gun in Ghuznee.
† Jan Baz, the reckless of life.

"Times" Oct: 4th

As we announce elsewhere, a Cabinet Council has been summoned for to-morrow, and the attention of the Government will, no doubt, be chiefly directed to the consideration of our relations with Afghanistan. It has not been necessary for the Government of India to wait for the decision of the Cabinet at home before taking such immediate steps as were advisable for bringing SHERE ALI to a sense of his imprudence. But the insult offered by the AMEER'S agents to England in the person of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN brings matters in regard to our Indian frontier policy to a crisis which demands the consideration of the Government. We traced yesterday in brief outline the successive steps by which this crisis has been reached. It was hoped, indeed, up to a few days ago that it might have been averted, and that our relations with Afghanistan were about to be placed on a better footing by the AMEER'S consent to receive Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN at Cabul. Those hopes have now been disappointed, and SHERE ALI must be left to abide by the consequences of the decision which he has chosen to make known to us with such scant courtesy. If we are not mistaken, the Indian Government has already decided on the measures to be immediately pursued, and is now engaged in carrying them out. But a question of greater moment awaits the decision of the Cabinet at home. Whatever the issue of the present misunderstanding, whether SHERE ALI makes amends at once for his insolence, or whether he awaits the chastisement that will certainly overtake him, it is clear that our future relations with Afghanistan must be placed on a new footing. We have no desire to annex the country; indeed, we should only be too glad if we could ignore it altogether. But we shall no longer be content to go from bad to worse in our relations with it, as we have been doing for the last few years. SHERE ALI is our neighbour, and he holds the gates of India—a territory through which, as history shows, the tide of invasion has always flowed down into the plains of India. If he will be friends with us, it is well, and we wish for nothing better. But we can permit no more doubt on the subject. We cannot submit to constant anxiety because he is unfriendly to us whenever he has the chance, while he receives the emissaries of a rival Power. We are ready to respect his independence so long as it is not made a menace to our own security. It now rests with the Cabinet to decide whether our former forbearance should cease, and whether inactivity, masterly or mischievous, should give place to a more decided policy. It will not do for the tranquillity of India to be at the mercy and caprice of a wayward potentate like SHERE ALI.

No doubt the judgment of the Government, like that of sensible men in less responsible positions, will be largely determined by the course of events. There are two questions, of very different degrees of importance, involved in the present Afghan difficulty. The one concerns the judgment to be formed of the policy and the varying circumstances which have led through a series of years to the existing situation; the other concerns the course to be pursued in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. It is hardly necessary to urge that the latter is the pressing question of the hour. It is also, happily, the one on which very little difference of opinion exists to perplex us. We are all agreed that SHERE ALI must be punished for his insolence, and that he must be made to learn how much easier it is to live on good terms with England than on bad terms. We owe it to India no less than to ourselves to do this, and to do it with as little delay as may be. The other question is one which can wait for the moment. If the successive Governments which have controlled our frontier relations have been inconsiderate, imprudent, or shortsighted, we have now to bear the consequences. But these consequences, whatever they are, will neither be lightened nor altered by mutual recriminations, or by any balancing of blame between one party or Government and another. Before we blame Lord LYTTON or the Cabinet under whose instructions he has acted, for an alleged change in our policy towards Afghanistan, we must be quite sure that the course of events had left an alternative open to them. What we know is that the Indian Government was so ill served by its native agents at Cabul that it was forced to endeavour to establish more satisfactory relations. It was clearly not Lord LYTTON'S fault that the Peshawur Conference proved abortive. He offered all that SHERE ALI had asked for in 1869 and 1873, and he asked for little in return; but the Afghan Envoy professed to have no powers to conclude a treaty, and would not even assent to the reasonable demand that British officers should be stationed on points of the Afghan frontier exposed to Russia. In point of fact it is clear that SHERE ALI has long hesitated between England and Russia. If we blame any one for this besides ourselves, for pursuing a policy always hesitating and at times ill-considered and shortsighted, it is Russia we must blame rather than SHERE ALI himself. Russia's pledges on the subject are explicit, but how far they have been kept we may judge from the fact, which has been made known through several channels, that so long ago as last January SHERE ALI wrote to the SULTAN expressing his conviction that Russia was honest and upright, England faithless and deceiving, and urging the

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SULTAN, therefore, to abandon the English alliance. Of course this candid opinion may be nothing more than an independent judgment on public affairs expressed by an enlightened Sovereign who stands equally aloof from both Powers and weighs them in an impartial balance. But the opinion having been expressed, it became necessary for the Indian Government to show that half of it at least was unfounded. When matters have reached this state of tension between two neighbours, there is no alternative but prompt reconciliation or open quarrel. Lord LYTTON proffered the one; SHERE ALI has chosen the other. We cannot doubt what the issue of the quarrel will be, and we will still hope that it may be composed without serious collision. But though there is little room for alternative as to our immediate course of action, the question still remains as to the terms on which we are to live with Afghanistan in the future.

Clearly, in the first place, we must demand an ample apology from SHERE ALI for the affront offered to our Envoy. So far there is no difference of opinion. Whether it will be prudent for this purpose to do more than mass troops on the frontier, and, if possible, at once to occupy portions of the AMEER'S territory, is a military question which will soon be decided. Meanwhile, if a winter's reflections do not bring him to his senses, we shall be able to act decisively in the spring. If reparation is offered or exacted, we can hardly refrain, as Lord LAWRENCE urges that we should, from demanding the admission of an accredited Envoy at the AMEER'S Court. Lord LYTTON, it is true, refrained from such a demand in 1876 for reasons which doubtless were then sufficient. But a good deal has happened in the meanwhile. We have seen how difficult it is to maintain friendly relations with a Sovereign who isolates himself and cherishes his animosity in silence without giving us a chance of allaying it. The demand to be allowed to send an Envoy cannot be called an unreasonable one on the part of a Power which has such interests at stake as England has in Afghanistan. For want of an Envoy those interests have been grievously imperilled, even if they have not for the moment been wrecked. The native Vakeels have either done nothing or have wrought mischief, and, as we cannot afford to be indifferent to what goes on in Afghanistan, we have a right to be represented by an agent whom we can trust. If, therefore, the Government decides that it is necessary for us to be represented for the future by a mission at Cabul, the best reparation that SHERE ALI could make for his recent insolence would be to welcome such a mission with such marks of respect as would indicate to his own subjects and to all India regret, or, at all events, reparation, for his previous insult. By that means it would be possible for us to show him that our purposes are really what we have always professed them to be. We wish for his friendship, but we have no desire to extinguish his independence. We know what a country Afghanistan is, and we know what a dangerous possession it would be likely to prove to any Power that was forced to undertake its conquest. We print elsewhere an account of the forbidding characteristics of some of its border tribes, and there is no reason to suppose that the tribes of the interior would prove to be more easy to deal with either as neighbours or as subjects. An Indian proverb says there is no recovery either from the bite of a cobra or the hatred of an Afghan, and an old border man many years ago summed up the characteristics of his countrypeople to ELPHINSTONE by saying, "We are content with "discord, we are content with alarms, we are con- "tent with blood, but we will never be content "with a master." We must hope that SHERE ALI'S animosity has not yet reached the point of incurable hatred, for we certainly have no desire to teach intractable Afghans the lesson of submission to new rulers.

AFGHANISTAN.

Recent news from India confirms previous announcements that Lord Lytton's Government are at present contenting themselves with massing troops on the immediate frontier, and that no active operations will be undertaken, at any rate in the neighbourhood of Cabul and Ghuzni, until the spring, unless, indeed, the conduct of the Ameer should make it imperatively necessary to push through the passes before winter sets in. To many delay appears dangerous; an example, it is argued, should be made, and that quickly; but it should be borne in mind that extended operations in the East have never been, and can never be, undertaken in a hurried, dashing manner. Havelock's slow, though sure, advance on Lucknow drew down upon him the indignant remonstrances of many even in his own command. Lord Clyde's subsequent operations were irreverently styled the "Hackery Campaign;" but both these Generals accomplished their work the more thoroughly because they provided for every contingency, and prevented the possibility of a mistake. So, in the same way Sir Paul Haines is preparing for every eventuality, feeling that the least difficult task the expeditionary army has before it is the defeat of the Ameer's forces. Many of Shere Ali's subjects hold high rank in the Army, Police, and Civil Service of Bengal, so that there is no lack of sources of information as to these troops. The observations we have published from the records of the Russian Military Department on the military strength, geography, and the population of Afghanistan show that the Russian Government have not been slow in collecting statistics, but there is little doubt that more detailed reports still are in the possession of the Indian authorities.

A slight sketch of our dealings with the various tribes who inhabit the mountain ranges between the Punjab and Afghanistan may be of some interest, as it demonstrates what an important element they constitute in the preparation of any scheme for the invasion of Cabul. All, or nearly all, of them nominally own allegiance to the Ameer, and his emissaries and officials have free intercourse with them. None have ever recognized our authority in any way, and, with the exception of the Belooch tribes on the southern portion of the border, not one of them has ever willingly admitted an Englishman into their territory. Our knowledge of their country has been obtained by survey parties attached to the numerous expeditions we have waged against them, or from the notes of officers who, without Government sanction, have from time to time succeeded in penetrating through the first fringe of mountains on our frontier. The jealous reserve they maintain with regard to us is the less explicable when it is remembered that they are permitted to pass freely to and fro between our territory and theirs; allowed to trade freely in our bazaars, to enlist into our regiments; and that many of them hold responsible positions with and draw large emoluments from the Indian Government. It may safely be asserted that there is not a Punjab regiment in the service that has not on its rolls at least one native officer from the trans-frontier tribes. They are to be found in Madras, Hyderabad, and Bombay; and yet with all these inducements to remain on friendly terms, and to cultivate the closest relationship with us, we are on no better footing with these men than we were in the first days of the annexation of the Punjab. It is true that their raids are less frequent, and that, consequently, British expeditions into their territory are more rare than they were in the early days of the occupation of the trans-Indus provinces; but that is simply because they know that raids in force are promptly avenged, and feel they are not strong enough to resist a British expeditionary army. The great difficulty in dealing with the Pathan tribes on the Punjab frontier is that they own allegiance to no man. Each tribe is split up into many sections; these again are subdivided into so many clans. Between these there are blood feuds of long standing, so that often not only is village divided against village, but house against house. There was one man, indeed, who possessed a great deal of influence in the northern portion of the trans-frontier mountains—the Akhoond of Swat—whose peculiar career we traced on the 22d of January last; but he has passed away, and his power has not descended to any other person. With the Belooch tribes, who dwell opposite the southern portion of the Derajat and Scinde, a different system prevails. They own implicit obedience to their chiefs, and, consequently, it is far easier to deal with them. For this reason, the administration of Scinde has been less hampered by troublous warfare than that of the Punjab.

Between the Mahabun Mountain, north of Peshawur, and the Bozdar Hills, south-west of Dera Ismail Khan, the ranges immediately contiguous to our frontier are inhabited by 15 different Pathan tribes, of whom no less than 13 have felt the force of our arms, and against these 13 upwards of thirty separate expeditions have been undertaken. West of these tribes are others of whom we know comparatively little, and against whom we have but small cause of complaint. South of the Bozdars the Belooch element may be said to commence.

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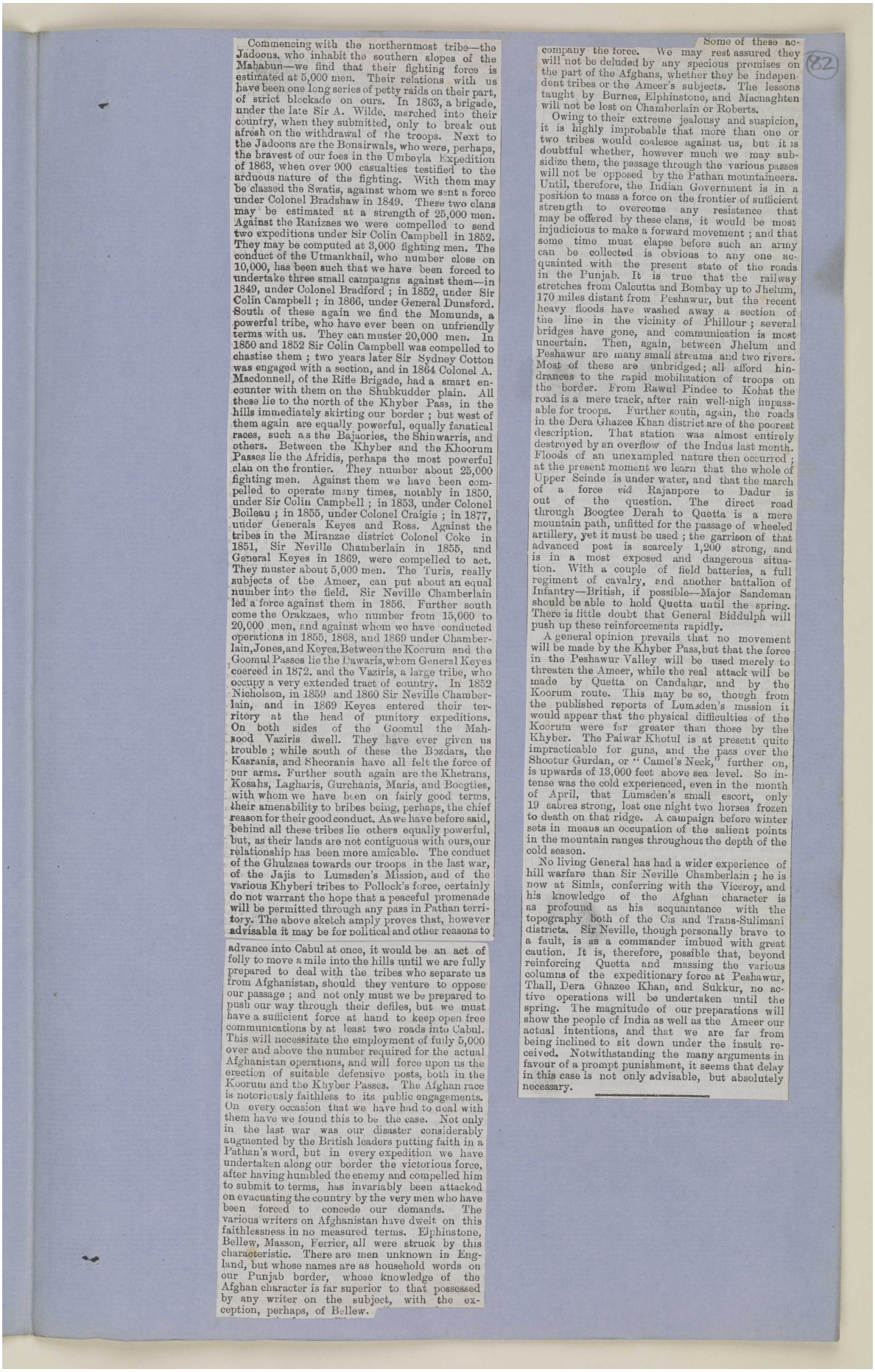

Commencing with the northernmost tribe—the Jadoons, who inhabit the southern slopes of the Mahabun—we find that their fighting force is estimated at 5,000 men. Their relations with us have been one long series of petty raids on their part, of strict blockade on ours. In 1863, a brigade, under the late Sir A. Wilde, marched into their country, when they submitted, only to break out afresh on the withdrawal of the troops. Next to the Jadoons are the Bonairwals, who were, perhaps, the bravest of our foes in the Umbeyla Expedition of 1863, when over 900 casualties testified to the arduous nature of the fighting. With them may be classed the Swatis, against whom we sent a force under Colonel Bradshaw in 1849. These two clans may be estimated at a strength of 25,000 men. Against the Ranizaes we were compelled to send two expeditions under Sir Colin Campbell in 1852. They may be computed at 3,000 fighting men. The conduct of the Utmankhail, who number close on 10,000, has been such that we have been forced to undertake three small campaigns against them—in 1849, under Colonel Bradford; in 1852, under Sir Colin Campbell; in 1866, under General Dunsford. South of these again we find the Momunds, a powerful tribe, who have ever been on unfriendly terms with us. They can muster 20,000 men. In 1850 and 1852 Sir Colin Campbell was compelled to chastise them; two years later Sir Sydney Cotton was engaged with a section, and in 1864 Colonel A. Macdonnell, of the Rifle Brigade, had a smart encounter with them on the Shubkudder plain. All these lie to the north of the Khyber Pass, in the hills immediately skirting our border; but west of them again are equally powerful, equally fanatical races, such as the Bajaories, the Shinwarris, and others. Between the Khyber and the Khoorum Passes lie the Afridis, perhaps the most powerful clan on the frontier. They number about 25,000 fighting men. Against them we have been compelled to operate many times, notably in 1850, under Sir Colin Campbell; in 1853, under Colonel Boileau; in 1855, under Colonel Craigie; in 1877, under Generals Keyes and Ross. Against the tribes in the Miranzae district Colonel Coke in 1851, Sir Neville Chamberlain in 1855, and General Keyes in 1869, were compelled to act. They muster about 5,000 men. The Turis, really subjects of the Ameer, can put about an equal number into the field. Sir Neville Chamberlain led a force against them in 1856. Further south come the Orakzaes, who number from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and against whom we have conducted operations in 1855, 1868, and 1869 under Chamberlain, Jones, and Keyes. Between the Koorum and the Goomul Passes lie the Dawaris, whom General Keyes coerced in 1872, and the Vaziris, a large tribe, who occupy a very extended tract of country. In 1852 Nicholson, in 1859 and 1860 Sir Neville Chamberlain, and in 1869 Keyes entered their territory at the head of punitory expeditions. On both sides of the Goomul the Mahsood Vaziris dwell. They have ever given us trouble; while south of these the Bozdars, the Kasranis, and Sheoranis have all felt the force of our arms. Further south again are the Khetrans, Kosahs, Lagharis, Gurchanis, Maris, and Boogties, with whom we have been on fairly good terms, their amenability to bribes being, perhaps, the chief reason for their good conduct. As we have before said, behind all these tribes lie others equally powerful, but, as their lands are not contiguous with ours, our relationship has been more amicable. The conduct of the Ghulzaes towards our troops in the last war, of the Jajis to Lumsden's Mission, and of the various Khyberi tribes to Pollock's force, certainly do not warrant the hope that a peaceful promenade will be permitted through any pass in Pathan territory. The above sketch amply proves that, however advisable it may be for political and other reasons to advance into Cabul at once, it would be an act of folly to move a mile into the hills until we are fully prepared to deal with the tribes who separate us from Afghanistan, should they venture to oppose our passage; and not only must we be prepared to push our way through their defiles, but we must have a sufficient force at hand to keep open free communications by at least two roads into Cabul. This will necessitate the employment of fully 5,000 over and above the number required for the actual Afghanistan operations, and will force upon us the erection of suitable defensive posts, both in the Koorum and the Khyber Passes. The Afghan race is notoriously faithless to its public engagements. On every occasion that we have had to deal with them have we found this to be the case. Not only in the last war was our disaster considerably augmented by the British leaders putting faith in a Pathan's word, but in every expedition we have undertaken along our border the victorious force, after having humbled the enemy and compelled him to submit to terms, has invariably been attacked on evacuating the country by the very men who have been forced to concede our demands. The various writers on Afghanistan have dwelt on this faithlessness in no measured terms. Elphinstone, Bellew, Masson, Ferrier, all were struck by this characteristic. There are men unknown in England, but whose names are as household words on our Punjab border, whose knowledge of the Afghan character is far superior to that possessed by any writer on the subject, with the exception, perhaps, of Bellew.

Some of these accompany the force. We may rest assured they will not be deluded by any specious promises on the part of the Afghans, whether they be independent tribes or the Ameer's subjects. The lessons taught by Burnes, Elphinstone, and Macnaghten will not be lost on Chamberlain or Roberts.

Owing to their extreme jealousy and suspicion, it is highly improbable that more than one or two tribes would coalesce against us, but it is doubtful whether, however much we may subsidize them, the passage through the various passes will not be opposed by the Pathan mountaineers. Until, therefore, the Indian Government is in a position to mass a force on the frontier of sufficient strength to overcome any resistance that may be offered by these clans, it would be most injudicious to make a forward movement; and that some time must elapse before such an army can be collected is obvious to any one acquainted with the present state of the roads in the Punjab. It is true that the railway stretches from Calcutta and Bombay up to Jhelum, 170 miles distant from Peshawur, but the recent heavy floods have washed away a section of the line in the vicinity of Phillour; several bridges have gone, and communication is most uncertain. Then, again, between Jhelum and Peshawur are many small streams and two rivers. Most of these are unbridged; all afford hindrances to the rapid mobilization of troops on the border. From Rawul Pindee to Kohat the road is a mere track, after rain well-nigh impassable for troops. Further south, again, the roads in the Dera Ghazee Khan district are of the poorest description. That station was almost entirely destroyed by an overflow of the Indus last month. Floods of an unexampled nature then occurred; at the present moment we learn that the whole of Upper Scinde is under water, and that the march of a force *vid* Rajanpore to Dadur is out of the question. The direct road through Boogtee Derah to Quetta is a mere mountain path, unfitted for the passage of wheeled artillery, yet it must be used; the garrison of that advanced post is scarcely 1,200 strong, and is in a most exposed and dangerous situation. With a couple of field batteries, a full regiment of cavalry, and another battalion of Infantry—British, if possible—Major Sandeman should be able to hold Quetta until the spring. There is little doubt that General Biddulph will push up these reinforcements rapidly.

A general opinion prevails that no movement will be made by the Khyber Pass, but that the force in the Peshawur Valley will be used merely to threaten the Ameer, while the real attack will be made by Quetta on Candahar, and by the Koorum route. This may be so, though from the published reports of Lumsden's mission it would appear that the physical difficulties of the Koorum were far greater than those by the Khyber. The Paiwar Khotul is at present quite impracticable for guns, and the pass over the Shootur Gurdan, or "Camel's Neck," further on, is upwards of 13,000 feet above sea level. So intense was the cold experienced, even in the month of April, that Lumsden's small escort, only 19 sabres strong, lost one night two horses frozen to death on that ridge. A campaign before winter sets in means an occupation of the salient points in the mountain ranges throughout the depth of the cold season.

No living General has had a wider experience of hill warfare than Sir Neville Chamberlain; he is now at Simla, conferring with the Viceroy, and his knowledge of the Afghan character is as profound as his acquaintance with the topography both of the Cis and Trans-Sulimani districts. Sir Neville, though personally brave to a fault, is as a commander imbued with great caution. It is, therefore, possible that, beyond reinforcing Quetta and massing the various columns of the expeditionary force at Peshawur, Thall, Dera Ghazee Khan, and Sukkur, no active operations will be undertaken until the spring. The magnitude of our preparations will show the people of India as well as the Ameer our actual intentions, and that we are far from being inclined to sit down under the insult received. Notwithstanding the many arguments in favour of a prompt punishment, it seems that delay in this case is not only advisable, but absolutely necessary.

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ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, Oct. 3.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the Berlin *National Zeitung* takes an unfavourable estimate of the British military strength in India :—

"The European Army in India numbers 64,000, the Native force 128,000. The 64,000 Europeans being required to keep down 230,000,000 of mostly hostile subjects, few, if any, can be employed abroad. As to the native forces, they are very untrustworthy, being kept together only by rigorous discipline. . . . Owing, moreover, to the lack of officers, these forces cannot be increased. By the side of and opposed to the 192,000 English troops we have 264,000 men forming the contingents of the various semi-independent Princes. Hitherto prevented from united action by differences of race and state, these forces are likely to gather round Afghanistan as a common centre in case of war. Add to this that the Wahabites on the north-western border, who can send about 50,000 men into the field, are hostile to England, and that a portion of the native forces may be expected to mutiny, and the result must be very doubtful. But will there be war at all? Accustomed to show a bold front, England, as a rule, fights only if she has others to fall back upon. Wherever firmness is shown the Englishman yields, and as the Afghans are sure to hold out, having no commercial interest to compromise, it is very problematic whether the English, with no allies to fight for them in the present instance, will really have recourse to main force. By occupying Quetta and demanding admission to a country which has never tolerated their presence the English have provoked diplomatic defeat. They have done this at a moment when all India awaits speedy liberation from the English yoke. In these circumstances, the affront sustained is no doubt painfully felt; but to be worsted by the Afghans in the field would be still more disagreeable. However, let Englishmen take care of their own affairs as best they may, we Russians have nothing to do with these Afghan squabbles for the present."

The above fairly reflects the tone of Russian public opinion at this juncture.

The Russian Press, too, begins to speak out. The St. Petersburg *Golos* says that England, having allowed Messrs. Baker, Kemball, and others to fight for Turkey, Russia will not prevent her officers, volunteers, and ammunition merchants going to and fighting for Afghanistan. This would be a semi-official war no doubt; but semi-official hostilities are far preferable to direct and official rupture, which is not to be apprehended.

The *Journal de St. Pétersbourg* begs to inquire whether *The Times* newspaper really expects the Russian Government to ask England's permission before sending an Embassy to Afghanistan or any other country.

Herman Vambéry, the well-known authority on Turkestan affairs, in a letter to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, expects that England will defeat Shere Ali with the assistance of the Beloochees, Heratees, Afridis, &c. The same writer also asserts that a Russo-Persian alliance has been concluded.

THE AMEER AND THE SULTAN.—The *Whitehall Review* publishes as authentic the following letter from the Ameer of Afghanistan to the Sultan of Turkey :—"The bearer of the august instructions of your Highness has arrived in Afghanistan, and your devoted servant is deeply touched at the benevolence of the sentiments with which you regard him, as well as the step you have taken in sending him an Ambassador Extraordinary. I thank your Highness warmly. I also hasten to inform you that I pray the Almighty God to protect your precious existence, and to watch over the health of your sacred person. In my prayers I ask that the light of Islam may enlighten the world, and as the residence of your Highness is regarded—and rightly so—as the principal centre of Mussulmans on the entire surface of the terrestrial, I pray to God to guard it against the invasions of the enemy. The Ambassador of your Highness has communicated to me your views respecting the English. The object of the letter sent by me with the consent of your Highness was to obtain information respecting the events of Europe. In this I have not met with any great difficulties. From information which I procured from different sources I concluded that the Russians had approached the residence of your Highness, while the English, after more than once affirming their goodwill towards you, had remained neutral up to the present, and followed the policy they resolved to adopt at the outset. As all the world knows that a long friendship unites the Ottoman and English nations, I cannot avoid expressing some regret that the English should abstain from supporting you precisely when you most require their aid. Knowing that for some time past the English willingly desert the bond of friendship and abandon my efforts are constantly directed to holding them at a distance. I consider that the Russians possess as much energy as the English, and they always surpass them when it is a question of good faith. I am positively unable to afford the slightest confidence to English promises. I know well that your Highness did not approve of what I said in my last, that the friendship of the English was only a word—a word written on ice; but now your Highness has been able to convince yourself by your own experience how little reliance there is to be placed in their friendship, and you see that the English always abandon their friends in their misfortune to their fate. I, therefore, no longer doubt that you will grant the necessary attention to my humble opinion of the English. If their conduct were conformable to justice, all difficulties on my side would be removed without the least doubt; but, confident in their power, they have always acted in an arrogant and disdainful manner. Through the several interviews I have had with the Russian Envoy, who has been here some time, I have acquired the conviction that in every case the Russians are more honourable and sincere than the English. Thus it is that I consider it my duty to entreat your Highness to reject all alliance with England, and to come to an understanding with the Russians. May God grant the Ottoman arms numberless victories, and make all the Mussulmans victorious!—CHIR ALI.—Dated, 10 Moharren, 1295 (January 19, 1878)."

Daily News. Oct 4th

WE trust that the report which our Correspondent at Kazauli telegraphs to us may prove to be true, and that the movement upon Cabul is to be immediate. So clear and strong are the reasons which recommend prompt action that nothing short of the physical obstacles which would render such a movement impossible ought to be allowed to overrule them. It is understood that the Cabinet will meet to-morrow, but if the officious explanations of those who undertake to speak for the Government be correct, there will not be much occasion for deliberation on the part of our statesmen. The Cabinet Council will, according to the assurances thus given, only have to discuss some prospective development of the frontier policy in India, inasmuch as the present situation has been neither unexpected nor unprepared for. Of course it would be unfair to take every utterance of this kind as really representing the views of her MAJESTY'S Ministers, or even representing what some of them might wish to have reported to the public as their views. It is natural, too, that neither the Ministers themselves nor their volunteer spokesmen should be quite willing to admit that a crisis has arisen for which they were not fully prepared. "Were you "not taken by surprise at Waterloo?" an inquisitive and inconsiderate person once asked of the Duke of WELLINGTON. "No," was the reply, "but I am now." Men to whom the question might be addressed with less impertinence would probably be found as unwilling as WELLINGTON to admit that they were taken by surprise. But if we regard as at all authoritative and literal the assertion we have referred to, it must raise strange doubts and suspicions in every mind. Was all this, then, really expected and prepared for—the refusal of the AMEER to receive the mission, the manner of the refusal, which almost amounted to an attack upon our Envoy, and the consequent necessity for warlike preparation? Let us see what follows, if we assume the question to be answered in the affirmative and on authority. It would evidently follow that our Government sent a mission to SHERE ALI which they knew that for some reason or other he would not receive. It was peremptory in its terms; its language hardly kept within the confines of courtesy. The AMEER was not asked to come into council with us. He was merely informed that we had determined on entering his capital and having a conference with him. Our mission approached him in a form particularly likely to offend if he was in a humour to be offended, and tempt to resistance if he was in a condition to resist. It came in armed force, and yet was not an army capable of clearing a path for itself. Was the form of the mission a part of the preparation intended to bring about the result which we are now officiously assured was not unexpected? Is it, then, to be understood that the Government so acted as to force on, or at least draw on, the very crisis which we may presume will end in the occupation of Cabul?

It will be owned that those who undertake to interpret between the Government and the public have put the former in what seems to be an awkward dilemma. If the Government "saw everything "and foresaw everything," why did they send towards SHERE ALI'S capital a mission which they knew SHERE ALI would not receive—unless indeed that they were anxious for the refusal, in order to make it the occasion for the further action which is now promised? We have already explained why we cannot agree with Lord LAWRENCE in thinking that SHERE ALI'S slack of courtesy might be safely passed over without any armed intervention on our part. But we cannot imagine anything more monstrous than a policy which planned to bring about such an act of discourtesy on the assumption that it would have to be punished by an armed intervention. Virtuous indignation without stint has been lavished upon the First NAPOLEON because it is certain that he sometimes put upon the sovereigns of weak States exactions which he knew they would not bear, in order that their refusal might give him an excuse for military intervention. Such a policy seems to be as little in keeping with the spirit of the present day as the sacking of towns or the execution of captives. Yet we do not see how anything less than this could fairly be inferred from the statement we have alluded to—that is if the statement were to be taken as authoritative, a highly important qualification. We are not by any means disposed

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Daily Telegraph Oct. 4th

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to attach too much importance to it, and it would be rashness itself to found any serious impeachment of the Ministry on such a statement. But it is evident that we have not such warrant for the principles of the Government's Asiatic policy as would be found in the common sense and the moral responsibility of a whole Cabinet. Ten or a dozen men of fair abilities, and with a serious sense of their responsibility to the country, would not be likely at any time to rush into a policy of unscrupulous adventure. But we have had too many proofs of the fact that the PRIME MINISTER acts independently of the great majority of his colleagues when he thinks fit. He has always one or two companions who are devoted to him and his policy, whatever it may be. DIOMEDE, in the "Iliad," more than once declares that the campaign would be much better managed if its direction were left altogether in the hands of his faithful friend STHENELUS and himself, and the other princes and chiefs took no further part in it. Lord BEACONSFIELD is the DIOMEDE of the Cabinet, with the important difference, we presume, that he has his way, and DIOMEDE had not. Lord BEACONSFIELD and his STHENELUS of the hour have made many an important stroke of policy. We are not, therefore, to assume that some political plan never could have been adopted because it is not a plan that ten or twelve Ministers fairly consulted in good time would have been likely to accept.

Nothing could be less satisfactory than the position in which the country finds itself placed. The less likelihood we see of England's being able with safety to her influence in the East to pass over SHERE ALI'S conduct unpunished the less is there to approve of the statesmanship which, unintentionally or not, has brought us to such a pass. FOX once indignantly inveighed against a policy which, as he declared, compelled him to vote for the prosecution of a war, and for the censure of the Ministers who had brought the war about. Many Englishmen, perhaps even the majority of Englishmen, will find themselves in the same painful condition with regard to the intervention in Afghanistan. They will find that they cannot help giving their countenance and support to the intervention, and that they are at the same time well inclined to vote the Ministry deserving of censure for the policy which renders intervention necessary. We are always told that this Afghan move is part of a whole scheme of policy in Asia, for some new development of which we are advised to be already on the look-out. But the country certainly did not expect anything of the kind, and we are convinced would never have sanctioned a policy of renewed intervention in Cabul if it had only been allowed to know in time that such a scheme was in preparation. We are told by one set of supporters of the Government that if the country did not know it was the fault of the country's representatives; that if Ministers had been more closely pressed and more sharply cross-examined a year back, and if questioners had insisted on finding out the real meaning which ambiguous words were employed to conceal, they might have got to know the actual intentions of the Government. Another set of supporters ask whether it is really supposed that a Government entrusted with the affairs of an Empire like ours could publish in advance their plans on Eastern policy. To a certain extent one explanation confutes the other. If the Government were bound to keep their plans a secret from Parliament, cross-examination would have been of no use; if they were not so bound, it ought to have been unnecessary. But in any case the policy which prepares an occasion for warlike intervention, and only lets out the secret when the country has no longer any real freedom of choice left to it, may suit Imperial schemes and ambitions, but will never become naturalised in the home of constitutional government. Even if we were to acquit her MAJESTY'S Ministers of having deliberately provoked this particular crisis, we cannot but blame the crooked and subterranean policy which allowed it to come as a surprise upon the country.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCT. 4.

A special telegram from our Correspondent at Kasaulie announces that the movement against Cabul will take place immediately.

WHAT the *North German Gazette's* St. Petersburg correspondent styles the rivalry between England and Russia in Asia is none of our seeking. If we carried British rule to the foot of the North-western mountains, our position in the Peshawur Plain and in Sind did not in the least degree threaten the Muscovite Empire. Ranges of lofty hills, vast trackless deserts, inland seas, subject to the Czar, separated the Punjab from the nearest settlements east of the Ural hills and the mouths of the Volga. Over those extensive regions we exercised so little influence that our travelling officers were murdered in Bokhara, and slight gratitude was exhibited when POTTINGER saved Herat from the Russians. The great movements of Russia southward, undertaken with vigour after the Crimean War, were developed with the object of creating a condition of things which should give her a base whence she could disturb our rule, and, if possible, weaken if not thwart our policy in Europe. The Generals sent to Turkestan thoroughly comprehend the secret purpose of their employers, which was to gain ground and political influence, so that the acquired Eastern forces might come into full play in the event of another convulsion in the West. The audacity exhibited by clever soldiers like TCHEKNAIEFF, ROMANOFFSKI, and KAUFFMAN was covered by the plausible despatches of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, by showy pledges and promises, never intended to be redeemed or kept, and even by special missions tendering as security the honour of a Czar. By these processes, continuous action following fast upon solemn declarations that no more territories would be absorbed, Russia came down to the Oxus, seated herself in the Attrek Valley, and approached daily closer to the confines of Afghanistan. No doubt she was powerfully aided by the conduct and prevailing temper of English parties, some of whom actually encouraged her to proceed, while others affected, if they did not feel, a profound indifference to facts and consequences. If they were startled for a moment, they were easily lulled to sleep, and, presuming on English disbelief as well as English sympathy, the Russians, boldly disregarding feeble protests, treated Central Asia as their destined prize—not as an end, not for itself, but as a means and stepping-stone towards open and secret manœuvres against our power. The whole militant course of Russia, from 1852 to 1877, has been directed upon the British Empire; and we repeat that until this largest of contemporary facts, so far as we are concerned, is frankly recognised, we shall always fail to adopt a sound, becoming, and just policy.

Elsewhere we publish a summarised view of the advance of the Russian sway over the Asiatic Continent, which, if it contains nothing novel for those who have watched her progress, may convey information both useful and surprising to less constant observers of contemporary events. If the statements of this summary be followed with a good map, be the same "big" or little, the gigantic area of these conquests and the extraordinary rapidity of its absorption will strike even the least experienced in geographical science. But in these very facts lies the proof of two generalisations which explain at once the facility of the prodigious acquisitions thus made and the absence of contentment which Russia shows in moving beyond them. It is practically a wilderness through which she has pushed her way, a vast, inclement, inhospitable, unpeopled world for the most part, which, though interspersed with oases of fertility—in ancient times seats of flourishing communities—is mainly steppe, and upland, bare desert or rugged hill, fit only for the semi-savage tribes who roam about these regions. Thus, hitherto, her conquests have been easy, being gained over nomads incapable of cohesion, or barbarous Princes without resources or scientific arms. For the same reason the possession of such enormous expanses has never repaid the Czars. The most profitable portion of the Russian dominions south of Siberia burdens the Government of St. Petersburg, as our statement shows, with a heavy deficit; and the system of monopoly in trade, which the aggressors everywhere establish, with their necessary subordination of everything to military considerations, forbids the hope of much improvement. They have made a huge parade-

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ground of their annexations; they camp upon them, but do not colonise; their attempts at civilisation are few and perfunctory, hardly exceeding a school here and there to teach the Muscovite tongue to a tractable few among the Khirgiz, and a desultory encouragement of silk-growing and cotton-planting. The history of Russian advance in Asia thus far does not pretend, indeed, to embrace triumphs of philanthropy. It may be summed up in the lines from "Wallenstein," "Our life was but a battle and a march, We swept across the Continent." The "Circassian style" has been the mode pursued with obstinate enemies, and the degree of liberty prevailing in Russia itself will suggest how much freedom can be allowed to subjugated Tartars and Toorks. That they have brought a certain degree of order where their flag was planted, and that they have very usefully, as in Kuldja, suppressed the barbarian form of slavery while establishing their own, must be admitted. Where the Muscovite banner is carried the only master, of course, is the "White Czar," and that he is better than the Usbeg and Urt Khans, and the ferocious Princes of the Oxus, may also be readily conceded. The conclusions which force themselves upon us in studying the rapid flow of the Russian arms through Central Asia are briefly that it is almost a wilderness which they have conquered, and that it is a wilderness which does not and cannot pay them. In these facts lies the explanation at once of their facile progress, and of the unabated passion with which their generals and politicians still push forward.

We have not dwelt upon these obvious considerations to censure Russia on account of her appetite for domination, or to complain that she has not made more progress in civilising the steppes. Our purpose is merely to remind those who glibly talk of leaving Russia to do her part of the beneficent work of regenerating Asia, while we attend to our own, that such language is nothing but amiable and empty optimism. The work of Russia in Asia is not, and scarcely affects to be, civilisation at all. Her perpetual inroads into the Continent downward from Orenburg and eastward from the Caspian are in obedience to that law of nature which has governed the migrations of Asiatic barbarians for ages. Multiplying in the barren and bitter but prolific North, wave after wave of the sub-Arctic races have in like manner struggled south towards the regions of warmth and plenty; and even if Russia were not conscious of it an ethnologist could inform her politicians that what she aims at is to reach the sunny kingdoms beyond the Oxus, and to water her Cossack ponies in the rivers running into the Arabian Sea. Once more we waste no words in blaming them for this; since it would be as reasonable to reproach the lemmings of Norway or the white bears of the Polar Circle for migrating whither instinct leads them. But a just consideration of the facts will dissipate the idle notion that if we only regard this constant incursion with benevolent patience Russia will stop short at the proper line, and evangelise Turcomans and Yomud Tartars as a simple labour of love. She will and can do nothing of the kind. Step by step she must and will advance—if no obstacle in Europe or in Asia hinders—until the icicles melt from her winter tents on the slope of the Ghor Mountains and in the pleasant valleys of Persia and Merv. And if she comes as far as that, the plains of India, which seem distant now, will be then the natural—the necessary—goal of her reinforced legions. Every wandering conqueror from ALEXANDER to MAHMOUD of Ghuzni has been drawn thither as the magnetic mountain drew SINDBAD's ships. Constantinople in Europe and Delhi in Asia are objects so imperatively attractive to Muscovite ambition that even FUAD Pasha confessed he would have overturned civilisation to gain them had he been born on the Neva. It may be forgiven to those so born if they think civilisation of no great value as compared with the "manifest destiny" of the Slav; but they will have no countenance in educated minds, who know what loss it was to mankind when the garnered culture of Carthage, of Assyria, of Phœnicia, of Greece, and of Rome was wrecked in a surge of untaught brute force. These nations mostly perished by waiting too long and too supinely, and by the decay of that spirit which at Thermopylæ and Marathon gave the world PHEIDIAS and ÆSCHYLUS, and might have given it more. Let there be an end, then, to the folly talked about this Russian advance from the Caucasus to Cabul. It signifies but one thing, that sooner or later, unless internal rebellion or ruined finances break up the huge despotism of the Czars, we must do battle with them for the tranquil development of India, and for the hegemony of Asia; that as matters stand we ought rather to ask what is the best time and which the most suitable field than whether the inevitable event must be faced. If, owning so noble an Empire and such vast resources, and possessing, moreover, such far higher claims as a civilising Power, we have not the courage or the foresight or the national cohesion to make our policy as large as our opportunity, then the world will merely witness the old phenomenon which has again and again been repeated in history. BELISARIUS will prove valiant in vain, and Rome in vain wealthy and populous; the propitious hour will pass, and the Slav, instead of the Anglo-Saxon, will be at last the Lord of Asia and the heir of the splendid Aryan heritage.

THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE TOWARDS INDIA.

It has been said that there is room and to spare in Asia for both England and Russia. And knowing that Asia is nearly six times as large as Europe, and that it takes all the Chinese Empire with its three millions of square miles to fill comfortably an accidental bulge of the eastern coast line, the spaciousness of the Asiatic Continent is certainly beyond dispute. But, after all, "the sea" is far larger than Asia, and there might be supposed to be room on it for many ships without collisions occurring. Yet ships do often get in each other's way. Nor is this so extraordinary, when it is considered that the greater part of the sea is never used at all; and that it is only in certain narrow strips and small patches that seafarers care to go. All the South Seas are not worth the Dover Straits, and for one ship that crosses the Pacific a hundred round Gibraltar. It is the same with Asia. The vast Siberian region in the north no one ever cared to have; and till the Czar of Russia bethought him of freezing exiles the white foxes and ptarmigan had five millions of square miles of snow all to themselves. But south of Siberia lies an extensive belt of land stretching from Europe to China, in which to the end of time the various nomad nations that inhabit it might have grazed their flocks and fought for pastures, had not Russia seen her way, so we are told, to cheapening tea, and interfered with the routine of Central Asian life. By pushing down her frontier south to the river Syr Darya (Jaxartes), she obtained a more direct trade route from Europe to China and the east of Asia, and, to keep this route open, had to establish comparative order among the nomad tribes through whose grazing grounds the caravans passed. This may be called the first step in aggressive advance. South of the Syr Darya, and between that river and the Amu Darya (Oxus), lies a third vast belt of territory, then in possession of various chiefs or Khans, and, therefore, called "the Khanates." Among themselves these chiefs lived peaceably enough, but their lands were supposed to be fertile, and their cities to possess a rich trade, and Russia seeing, for so she has explained the advance, that a still quicker route for merchandise between Europe and the far East lay through these Khanates, pushed down her frontier southwards to the Oxus. This may be called the second step. South of the Oxus—of that part of it which then became the frontier of Russia—and between it and the kingdoms of Persia and Afghanistan and British India, lies another belt, the belt of British Interests, occupied by formidable tribes of Turkomans, and by the kingdoms of Bokhara and Kashgar. Russia is now pushing her frontier down through this belt also, to the frontiers of Persia, Afghanistan, and India. And this may be called the third step. Roughly, therefore, and for the purpose of a general preliminary view of Russian advance, Asia may be divided into four belts, namely, the Siberian in the extreme north, the Nomads' domains, the Khanates, and the belt of British interests.

But though when viewed from a large geographical standpoint the above divisions represent accurately enough for our purpose the direction and magnitude of Russia's strides across Asia, it does not indicate the method and policy of this advance. To make this clear we must use the Caspian Sea as our basis, and draw thence the lines of Russian progress from west to east. For, though the direction of that progress has been *to* the south, it has been made *from* the west. That is to say, though the Russian frontier has been pushed down from north to south, from Siberia towards India, each new line of forts and outposts has been run from west to east, from the Caspian Sea towards China. The Caspian has its northern shore in Russia and its southern in Persia, and its eastern, therefore, faces full towards Asia. At the north-eastern corner of this sea Russia built a fort in 1834, and thence ran a military line eastward, past the north of the Aral Sea, to the frontier of the Chinese Empire, where another fort, that of Vernoe, was built in 1847. This coincides with the first step of aggressive advance indicated above, and brought Russia south of the nomad tribes, and gave her an armed frontier from west to east. But disturbances all along the line soon afforded justification for further annexation, and another line was therefore drawn, starting in the west from the centre of the Caspian Sea, and passing to

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the south of the Aral Sea to the Chinese frontier in Khokand. This coincides with the second step of advance. Further annexation being considered necessary, another line was begun, this time from the south of the Caspian Sea, which, running east along the frontier of Afghanistan, is to end at the Chinese frontier, where it adjoins Cashmere. This will coincide with the third step of advance indicated above. Roughly therefore, but not inaccurately, the three successive rectifications of the Russian frontier in Asia may be said to start in the west from the north, centre, and south of the Caspian Sea respectively, and to end all of them in the east at corresponding points on the frontier of the Chinese Empire. In brief recapitulation it may be pointed out that two methods of looking at the advance of Russia may be employed—the first as a succession of waves from north to south; the second as a series of military lines from west to east. Either of these methods taken alone must of necessity be inadequate to represent the advance, but taken conjointly they indicate both the direction and method with sufficient accuracy.

Each of these extensions of boundary represent, of course, the subjugation of many independent chiefships. As picturesque episodes in one of the most remarkable campaigns ever undertaken, these conquests possess individually a striking interest for both the military student and the general reader. But, collectively, they form a chapter of Asiatic history fraught with momentous consequences to England, and therefore with facts of the utmost importance to every Englishman. Prominent in the story stands out the facility with which pretexts for advance and annexation have been found, and, though it is quite true that in the history of the British in India the same facility is equally apparent the two courses of aggressive advance cannot be considered analogous. In India we always enlarged our boundaries in self-defence, and not with any ulterior object outside of India set in the future before us. But in Central Asia Russia has never possessed anything to defend, and every advance has been a pure aggression, apparently though not really, unconnected with any distinct, far-seeing policy and irrespective of previous annexations. One "natural boundary" after another has been accepted as definitive, but each has in turn been transgressed as larger prospects of conquest opened out. And from this haphazard, impulsive appearance it has been argued that Russia has no Asiatic policy; that she takes whatever comes next, and moves only as opportunity happens to suggest. Northwards she cannot move; eastward lies China, too strong for attack; westward all is Russia already; so southward, if anywhere, she must expand. This argument, given the necessity of expansion, is certainly complete, but then no such necessity has ever existed. It is not with Russia in the Khanates as it was with England in India. She has no magnificent trade to defend, no established administration to support. Nor, in the Khanates, can she ever have. Her occupation of the provinces which she has overrun is purely a military occupation, and from such a poor country she can never hope even to pay her expenses, much less realise revenue. Such is the latest word of Russian authorities themselves. Taking Turkestan alone, the most promising of all her Asiatic possessions, the income for the five years ending with 1872 amounted to ten and a half millions of roubles, the expenditure to nearly thirty millions, and the average annual deficit, therefore, to nineteen millions. Miserable as is this financial condition, it becomes even worse when it is considered how large a proportion of such "income" as there is is paid by the Russians in Turkestan themselves, and how little by the country; and when we add to the current expenditure all the preliminary expenses of military outfits and so forth, made in and paid by Russia. We need not go into further details. It suffices to prove the unproductiveness of her Asiatic conquests that, besides the large initial expenditure upon her armies, she has to make up annually a large deficit. It cannot, therefore, be for their wealth that Russia has absorbed one after the other the inoffensive chiefships that intervened between Siberia and India. Why, then, does she continue to advance? We have seen that it is not from necessity within nor from pecuniary advantages to be gained without, and those who say that she does so for no settled reason, having no "policy," must confess that for so impoverished a Monarch as the Czar of all the Russias, the taste for conquest is a very extravagant one.

On the other hand, there is a large party who maintain that Russia does possess an Asiatic policy, and that in all her madness there is a great deal of method. In support of their view they adduce historical facts, among them the following. When England was engaged in war with Napoleon I., the Czar Paul suggested to the Emperor an invasion of India *viâ* the Caspian Sea and Persia. But Napoleon was then thinking of invading England *viâ* Boulogne and the Channel, and showed no enthusiasm in the Russian project, so the Czar Paul, being an enterprising and irrepressible Monarch, determined to invade India by himself. An army of Don Cossacks began to assemble at Orenberg; General Orlof was appointed to the command; and the Czar, in his address to his soldiers, informed them that "all the wealth of India will be your reward in this expedition." But six weeks before the day fixed on for the start of the army the Czar Paul died, and the expedition, though discussed on a larger scale at Tilsit, was abandoned by his successor. Forty years passed, and England was at war with Russia, and again the Czar Nicholas took the subject of the invasion of India *viâ* Persia into consideration. General Duhamel, so Mr. Schuyler, in his work on Turkestan, informs us, actually drew up a plan of operations; but affairs in the Crimea proved too pressing for the development of the project. Once more, in the year that has just passed, it seemed at one time as if the strained relations between England and Russia would result in an open rupture, and simultaneously the news came from India that the officials who have charge of our Eastern Empire were cognisant of rumours of restlessness beyond the frontiers. In the native bazaars the gossip went round that trouble was impending in Cabul, and in well-informed circles it was known that movements of troops, now amicably designated as "military reconnaissances," towards the districts nearest the Afghan, and therefore the Indian, frontier were in progress, and that the potentates on our borders were being taken into the confidences of Russian Generals. Such are three facts of history. We might quote many more to show that, turn the compass as they might, the needle of Russian hopes has always pointed to India. We might recapitulate once more the broken pledges of successive Ministers of the Czar that they would never think of Cabul with more possessive aspirations than does the dog of the moon it bays. We might heap up from the experiences of the reigns of the two last Ameers of Cabul instances of Russian intrigue on the Indian frontier, some of them so notorious that Dost Mahomed, the late ruler, and Shere Ali, the present, pleaded them in justification of appeals for British protection. But we are not indicting Russia. Our purpose is only to note the successive stages of her advance, and to glance at the two theories which are entertained with regard to them. The one denies Russia any Asiatic policy, any object or aspiration in her costly and dangerous enterprises. The other believes such madness in expenditure and risk to be impossible, and affirms that, coupled with a similarly costly domination in Transcaucasia, which entails an annual deficit, the conquest of the Khanates is only a means towards an end, and that end India. How far common sense supports the one theory, or history the other, we leave our readers to judge. But, in judging, facts only should be considered, and not the speeches of Czars; for Livadian promises will go down to posterity bracketed with Punic faith.

India has often been conquered from without, and—except that once when the Queen of the Seas used her own highways—always from Afghanistan. It will never be conquered from without again. But within itself British India must for many generations to come contain all the material for and elements of terrific strife. They may be modified in time, but as yet—and the best friends of India are those who first confess it—we have great need of peace within our boundaries, and the leisure for an undivided attention to our own liberal schemes for the enrichment and civilisation of the peoples we are going to make a great nation. And to ensure this peace we must have no taunting savages at our gates, no incendiary ambassadors throwing firebrands over the walls of our domains. An ill-intentioned neighbour, whether he is so of his own motion or at the instigation of others, cannot be permitted to impede us in our task, and any one who incites him to misdemeanours proves himself an enemy. Our diplomatic correspondence with Persia and Cabul abounds in expressions of our anxiety at the interference of Russia with either, and with admissions from both that such anxiety is well founded. Nor have we, in our naïve way, been backward in apprising Russia directly of the apprehension we entertain from her approach to our Indian frontiers, and she in reply has always assured us of her determination never to awaken apprehension. But her face has been set south throughout her career of conquest, and to-day she is actually engaged in warfare with the very last tribe that intervenes between her and Merv. At Merv her armies would be encamped within two marches of both the Persian and Afghan frontiers, and within ten of Herat, and the prospect is one for very serious consideration, for the same absence of policy that has brought her across fifteen degrees of latitude towards India may some day bring her a hundred miles further in the same direction, and England will then have to settle with Russia, once and for all time, the Asiatic question of the peace of India.

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The Standard. Oct 4th

Ministers can scarcely fail to be aware that a feeling of the deepest interest and no small anxiety pervades the country concerning our relations with the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN. Is it to be peace or war? And is there to be an immediate campaign, or are hostilities to be deferred? What has been done? What is doing? What is contemplated? These are no trivial nor untimely questions. They are of the utmost moment; and they are natural, opportune, and pressing. Under these circumstances, it is impossible to pronounce as unreasonable the expectation that a Cabinet Council would have been held at least a week ago to consider these grave matters. But the expectation has been disappointed, and not until to-morrow will the members of the Government assemble in council in Downing-street. The Ministers have been scattered over the surface of the island, and though we no more doubt that the PRIME MINISTER is alive to the gravity of the juncture than we question his right to well-earned rural retirement, yet he has been in contemplative seclusion at Hughenden when it might have been supposed that there were weighty reasons for his conferring with his colleagues. The Cabinet commands a majority in both Houses of the Legislature, and it has not forfeited the confidence of the majority in the country. If Lord BEACONSFIELD and his Ministry will not support the honour and Imperial interests of the country, we shall look in vain for any party that will. Their opponents are pledged to clip our wings, to narrow our interests, to circumscribe our influence, to lower our dignity, and to abolish that pernicious thing—our *prestige*. But that is hardly a reason why the Government, because it is trusted by the country, should treat its just solicitude lightly. Parliament is not sitting, and we do not seem to be enjoying those vacation confidences from authoritative lips which might compensate us for the solitude of Saint Stephen's. We are all ready to believe that the Ministry has at heart the welfare of the State, and to hope that its plans will be equal in excellence to its intentions. But the most devoted among its followers must surely look for some signs of action, or, at least, of consultation. Instead of enlightenment as to the course meditated towards SHERE ALI, we have a Babel of irresponsible voices, all giving advice—urging, remonstrating, prophesying, lamenting. An earlier Cabinet Council would have silenced a good deal of this vapid declamation. The Ministry would have been supposed to know its own mind; and the country would no longer have been in an attitude of uncertainty. This abstention from collective consultation on the part of the Cabinet is to be regretted, if only by reason of the effect it produces on the public mind. It evokes fears which, we must observe, events of recent occurrence have done a good deal to justify. When we pointed out that, by the absence at Berlin of the PREMIER and Lord SALISBURY as England's Plenipotentiaries at the Congress, Cabinet Councils, even if held, would be practically useless, we were answered that the Ministers who went to Berlin and the Ministers who stayed behind were so thoroughly of one mind that the danger was a purely imaginary one. The reply was difficult to understand at the time; but it must be confessed that in due course it was explained. We all supposed that Lord BEACONSFIELD and Lord SALISBURY were going to Berlin with their hands free, and that therefore it would be necessary for them from time to time to confer with their colleagues at home. It turned out that, before they started, they and their colleagues were bound by the SALISBURY-SCHOUVALOFF Memorandum and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and thus that they really went to register a foregone conclusion.

Is the position of the Cabinet with regard to Afghanistan analogous to that we have just described? Did the Cabinet long ago sketch out a policy, and was it all cut and dried some weeks since? We can understand such a state of affairs, only on one supposition. It is conceivable that Ministers, resolved to have done with SHERE ALI's systematic unfriendliness, projected the Mission because they knew it would be refused access to Cabul, and determined in that event to avenge the insult and carry out a bold line of policy. But, in that case, why do we not hear of armies being set in motion at once? Why is there not an immediate advance through the Passes that conduct to Candahar, to Ghizni, to Cabul? Why any hesitation? Why a moment's delay? How is it, if the supposition we have made be well founded, that it is possible for those persons to obtain a hearing who suggest that we must not undertake military operations in the autumn, that we must wait for spring or the melting of the snow? How is it that hasty action is deprecated, that we hear it pleaded that every precaution must be taken to ensure success, and that we cannot afford to risk a single failure? Every precaution should already have been taken; action should already have been provided for; success, if possible at all, should have been prepared for now. It is not SHERE ALI who selected the middle of September to bring his quarrel with us to a crisis. It is not the AMEER who put winter too near to the rejection of our Mission. It is not the Himalayan snows that have come to confront us, but we that have spontaneously and deliberately gone to meet them. We chose the time; we chose the occasion; we chose everything. There was nothing to prevent us from biding our time, and leaving SHERE ALI to sulk through the heart of the inclement season. There was nothing to hinder us from postponing Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S demonstration till the month of March: nothing to expedite our invitation of the barbarian's affront, nothing to hurry us in the massing of troops, in the organisation of a formidable commissariat, in the selection of paths and tactics. We are assuming, for the moment, that it is too late to do more this year than strengthen Quettah, and make terms with the hill tribes, and perhaps occupy Candahar. But if there be time for no more than this, why were we not all allowed to get through the winter without hearing SHERE ALI's name? It seems utterly incredible that the action taken by Lord LYTTON should have been taken under instructions issued from home, and in conformity with resolutions arrived at in Cabinet Councils held some weeks back, and yet that there should now be any thought on the part of the Cabinet of postponing operations against SHERE ALI till the spring. Shall we be told that military operations are matters for military men to decide upon? No doubt they are. A Cabinet that ordered military operations in the face of the adverse opinion of its military advisers would be guilty of a grave crime. But a Cabinet that gratuitously invoked a crisis at a certain moment imperatively demanding military operations, without first learning from its military advisers whether those operations would be possible at that moment, would be guilty of a blunder so gross that we would rather not describe it further. We decline for a moment to believe that the Government have committed any such blunder. We look for immediate operations against Afghanistan, and if they are to be postponed, it will be the duty of the Cabinet Council to-morrow, after having considered the unexpected conditions which may have arisen, and which may explain the postponement, to acquaint the country with an outline of them.

There is another point which is considerably exercising a portion of the public, though, we think, with much less reason. It is asked, who will have to pay for an Afghan war, if there is to be one—India or England? We can have no hesitation in answering the question. The bulk, if not the whole of the expense, ought, beyond all shadow of doubt or dispute, to be defrayed by the Imperial Exchequer; and we do not suppose that there will be any difference of opinion upon that subject in the Ministry or among their followers. There are two reasons, either of which would be conclusive, for this course. India cannot at present afford to pay for fresh wars, or bear any substantial addition to its taxation. But we need not fall back upon that plea, seeing that an Afghan campaign, if undertaken by us, though it will be due nominally and ostensibly to the vicinity of Afghanistan to our Indian Empire, will really and substantially be owing to the perfidious proximity of another Power, and that a European one. The Afghan question is merely the Eastern question bulging out, so to speak, in Asia. Some persons thought they had stopped it up, but now, as they see, it leaks elsewhere. We do not pretend to be surprised at the circumstance. Perhaps the Government are just as little surprised. But then they must show, by prompt and vigorous action, that they were prepared for what has occurred. What is wanted now in India is something of the spirit of the Founder of our Empire in the East, of the spirit which drove CLIVE to make his sudden attack on Arcot. We are sure there are men in India imbued with it, and who would quickly carry a campaign against Cabul to a successful issue, if they are not paralysed by more vacillating minds. And there is, as our Simla despatch in another part of our impression to-day testifies, still some ground for the hope that, by a vigorous and immediate demonstration of our strength, the end we have in view may possibly be attained without a campaign and without a declaration of war.

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SIMLA, THURSDAY.

There is at present but little news from the frontier. The Government are hastening on the preparations for the expedition *vid* Quetta. Each of the native infantry regiments ordered to the frontier are to receive an addition of two hundred men, who will be drawn from other regiments.

The native cavalry regiments will also be strengthened by a draft of sixteen sabres per troop.

While the Quetta expedition is the first object of attention the preparations for the division intended to advance by the Khyber Pass are also being pushed on, and if the necessary supplies and transport be got together while the weather permits a movement in advance will take place here also. A small force is already advancing to occupy Jamrood, which lies at mouth of Pass.

No letter has yet arrived from the Ameer, and although the natives bring down word to Peshawur that the Ameer is collecting his forces from all quarters to oppose our advance, it is thought that even yet there may be no fighting. The Afghans do not yet realise that England is in earnest. When they perceive that we intend to force the passes and invade their country in earnest, events, which it is at present impossible to reckon upon, may occur to alter the whole position of affairs.

The greater portion of the Sirdars are hostile to Shere Ali, and are inclined to be friendly towards England. They will, therefore, object most strongly to be compelled to take the field against us merely because the Ameer has chosen wantonly to insult us.

The Ameer's position is, therefore, considered to be most unstable, and with so many discordant elements at work, disturbances are expected which may not improbably end in his deposition.

In that case England might be able to make what terms she chose, without the necessity for fighting, as the mere demonstration by imposing forces would suffice to show the Afghans that a country distracted by internal dissensions would be in no position to resist our power.

(BY GREAT NORTHERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
ST. PETERSBURG, THURSDAY.

With respect to the telegram of the *Agence Havas* of Oct. 1, giving details regarding the question put by England to Russia and the answer of the latter, the *Golos* of to-day says :—

"We cannot say whether any despatches regarding the mission of General Stolieteff to Cabul have passed between the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and St. James's ; but we can boldly affirm that Russia's answer was not to a question arising out of the refusal of the Ameer to receive the Embassy of Sir Neville Chamberlain."

This throws a doubt upon the Havas telegram, the opinion of the *Golos* being founded on logic and a knowledge of diplomatic usage.

"Surely," says the *Golos*, "the British *chargé d'affaires* would not be entrusted with so delicate a question at a time when Lord Augustus Loftus was bound for St. Petersburg, and had had an interview with Prince Gortschakoff on the way hither. Under any circumstances we consider it most important to know the date of the interchanged despatches. While it was simply a question of explaining a step not as yet denounced by the British press and the Ministry as a step hostile to England, the Russian Government could give its explanation a somewhat apologetic form, but now that that moment has gone by Russia is openly accused in England of having instigated Afghanistan, and to such an explanation as Great Britain would now think of demanding from St. Petersburg it would simply be impossible to send any reply resembling an apology."

The *Russki Mir* of to-day remarks :—

"Our understanding with England regarding Afghanistan was arrived at in the hope of British diplomacy assuming a more definite form, and certainly not for the purpose of having intrigues directed against us, nor for depriving ourselves of the possibility of having a *point d'appui* against the many weak points of the Anglo-Indian Empire. If we have made some movement in Central Asia to meet any eventuality which might arise, it was simply an involuntary and feeble answer to the daring position assumed by England at the entrance to the Black Sea."

The *Novoe Vremya* of to-day observes :—

"English inquisitiveness is gratified. Russia, in answer to England's question about the object of General Stolieteff's visit to Cabul, says that it was sent under previously-existing circumstances, and to pay Russia's respects to the Ameer, a mocking reply worthy of the insolent question, although perhaps it would have been better to have left England's Note unanswered. The English, by occupying Quetta and the Bolan Pass, have finally violated the neutrality of Afghanistan. How, therefore, the London Cabinet had the daring to remind Russia of the obligations that Great Britain had herself destroyed only an Englishman can explain."

The *Moscow Gazette* of yesterday, referring to the Reuter's telegram in which Russia is said to deny the existence of any understanding between her and Afghanistan, observes :—

"We trust the telegram is of English fabrication, and that we have given up the dangerous and degrading habit of always righting ourselves before England as a schoolboy does before a strict tutor. It is all the better for us if we can live peaceably with Afghanistan when England is unable to do so."

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4.

Our Correspondent at Simla reports but little news from the frontier, but says that the preparations for an advance are being hastened on. Natives have brought to Peshawur a report that the AMEER is collecting forces from all quarters to oppose the British troops, but it is thought that after all there may not be any conflict. There is some possibility that the action of the AMEER may lead to disturbances, which would end in his deposition, in which event, it is pointed out, England could make what terms she chose. The St. Petersburg newspapers contain some striking comments on the telegram reporting that an English note had been presented to Russia, but they do not agree as to what was the result. Indeed, the *Golos* throws discredit on the report, and asks whether the British *chargé d'affaires* would be entrusted with such a delicate mission while Lord A. LOFTUS was on his way back to the Russian capital, and had had an interview with Prince GORTSCHAKOFF *en route*. The *Novoe Vremya* contends that it is England who has violated the neutrality of Afghanistan by our occupation of Quetta.

Morning Post - Oct 4.

THE AFFGHAN POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.—At a meeting of the North Walsham Agricultural Association on Wednesday—Lord Suffield presiding—Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton remarked that the suspension of the annual gift to the Ameer of Cabul, the occupation of Quettah, and the claim to have no other than a British representative at the Affghan capital might have led to the present situation in Affghanistan, though it was possible Russia had contributed to it. Colonel Duff, M.P., said he only looked at the fact that the Crown had been insulted, and, whether the Ameer was backed up by Russia or not, chastisement must be administered and reparation enforced. Lord Carington also spoke in approval of the Government policy.—A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Birmingham Liberal Association, held on Wednesday evening, passed the following resolution :—"That this committee regards the action of the Government of India in relation to the Ameer of Affghanistan, constituting as it does a reversal of the sagacious and prudent policy pursued for a long period by the most eminent Indian statesmen, as rash, aggressive, and untimely, and as likely to lead to an ingloricus war, which must seriously increase the financial burdens already pressing with such severity on the English and Indian peoples."

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Pall Mall Gazette - Oct 4

SIR,—It is high time to ask the people of England, respecting the "Perish India" and "large maps" policy, the question with which Artemus Ward replied to Brigham Young's statement that he had seventy-five wives, and certainly was married: "And pray how do you like it—so far as you have got?" How do the people of England, and how does the Government like it? Casting up the diminished Conservative vote at Truro, "See," cries the *Daily News*, "the result of a 'spirited foreign policy'"—that is to say, with the irony off it, of your spiritless "Perish India" policy. The Government was forewarned from the first that "the brooding East" would judge the issue of the late war by the fate of Kars. If Kars was restored to the Turks Russia had lost; but if it was left in the hands of the Russians the star of England had set; and its final surrender at Berlin by England was the signal to Shere Ali to definitively throw in his lot with the Russians, and make common cause with them against us.

The Government set the restoration of Bayazid against the surrender of Kars, pleading that so they had saved the commercial interests of Turkey and England. In reality, they thereby simply capped a portentous military disaster by a crushing commercial blunder. Russia has always sought to supersede the ancient commercial route between Trebizond, Bayazid, and on to Merv, by the railway line from Poti to Tiflis, and thence, by way of Baku, across the Caspian to Merv; but hitherto unsuccessfully, owing to the failure of the harbour at Poti. But in Batoum Russia has now secured the best harbour in all that part of the Black Sea coast; and as the Russian Government has already deputed a party of engineers to select a route for uniting it with the Tiflis railway, it will probably not be long before this line absorbs all the to-and-fro trade between Europe and Central Asia. Batoum is, in fact, the key to the trade of Central Asia, essentially an English trade, and its acquisition was of vital importance to Russia in the prosecution of her secular policy against English commercial interests, and a more fatal blow to our political influence in Turkey and Persia than even the surrender of Kars, the most renowned stronghold of Imperial power in all Asia. So much, so far, for a spiritless "Perish India" foreign policy.

Those who then backed the Radical Opposition, and their abettors within the Cabinet, in this suicidal policy of the "Schouvaloff-Salisbury" "project of a Memorandum" are the very ones who, now that it is producing its inevitable consequences along our north-western Indian frontier, are loudest in alarm; but their thought is still rather to damage the Government, than, by a thoroughly informed criticism, to advise and support it in the measures it should adopt to meet the emergency which has startled the country. There is a pressing necessity for immediate action; and it is as childish as it is ignorant to waste time and temper in denouncing Sir Henry Rawlinson's "Memorandum on the Central Asian Question" of July, 1868, or the fantastic policy attributed to Lord Lytton, which exists only in the imagination of his accusers. There is no such thing known, there is no such thing possible, as "Lord Salisbury's policy" or "Lord Lytton's policy," but only the impersonal policy, founded on a strict induction of historical and contemporary facts, of the Government of India. Lord Lytton's delay is a political and, I understand, also a military error of the first magnitude. As for Sir Henry Rawlinson, his policy is one of gradual consolidation of our hold along our north-west frontier, and had it only been steadily pursued during the last ten years, instead of being persistently disregarded and ridiculed by the India Office, we should not now have to meet the cost of a second Afghan war; and, it is not too much to say, Europe would have been altogether spared the misery of the late fraudulent and pitiless war. Ever since the alliance of the three Emperors—those three arch-anarchs of Europe—the Russian Legation at Teheran has been increased by a number of apparently wealthy young Russian officers, with nothing to do ostensibly but enjoy themselves. At the same time, native Russian agents were secretly established at Cabul and Khelat. The young Russians at Teheran soon made themselves popular everywhere in society—Persian and European; but wherever they went they decried the English as a nation of selfish shopkeepers, and extolled the name and fame of Russia. They so well succeeded in bringing the British Legation itself into disrepute that the very English in Teheran, the subordinates of the telegraph establishment and others of their class, at last, in all their disputes with the natives, took to going to the Russian Minister for redress instead of to the British Minister. These young Russians also travel about in disguise with the trading and pilgrim caravans in various parts of Persia, Turkey, and Turkestan, everywhere magnifying Russia, and prophesying the loss of India by England. At the same time a flotilla has been in preparation at Samara, on the Volga, capable of transporting 100,000 men from the heart of Russia to any point on the northern frontier of Persia. The contempt into which we have been brought soon began to show itself openly. On the Shah's birthday, the year before last, a party of officials discharged fireworks under the windows of the British Legation—the most degrading insult that could be offered to us in Persian eyes. Again, at Resht, the other day, when the Shah landed on his return from St. Petersburg and Vienna, the Russian Cossacks who were there whistled right into the face of the English consul as they passed him on the road, and tried to charge another Englishman who was present into the ditch, riding at him full gallop, to the infinite delight of the sycophant Persians. In Afghanistan it has culminated in the insult offered to the Indian Government by Shere Ali, who owes to us the settlement both of the Oxus boundary and the Seistan boundary. Ever since a native Russian agent has been secretly established at Cabul he has refused all communication with us; and now, seeing the Russians gathered in force by the fords of the Oxus, and hearing of the surrender of Kars, and frenzied by the death of his heir, in "a bloody humour" he has dared to openly defy us, with every circumstance that could add injury to the offence. What must Cavagnari's feelings have been as he rode back baffled between the two native princes? and what must the two princes have thought? What he felt every Englishman is feeling now, and what they thought the teeming millions throughout India are thinking as one man.

In the face of such untoward circumstances, it is indeed high time to ask the people of England, in respect of the "Perish India" and "large maps" policy of the Schouvaloff-Salisbury Administration—for it is theirs now, and no longer Lord Beaconsfield's—"And pray how do you like it, so far as you have got?" And also, how does the Government itself, from the electioneering point of view, like it?—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October 1. IRAN.

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In explanation of the meeting of the Cabinet to-morrow, and in excuse of no Council having been held earlier, it is now said that only a few days ago it was still hoped that the crisis might be averted, and that "our relations with Afghanistan were about to be put on a better footing by the Ameer's consent to receive Sir Neville Chamberlain at Cabul." It is added that those hopes have now been disappointed. No attention need be paid to such official exploitations as this. The reasons why no Council was called till now are clear enough. Some we explained yesterday: as for the rest, there has been the usual difficulty in the Government about coming to conclusions, and the unfortunate complexity of political with military considerations has aggravated the vacillations and disagreements of a Ministry which has never ceased to vacillate and disagree. If one day it seems desirable to treat the whole matter as a mere frontier row, next day the difficulties of so treating it come uppermost. At one time the seductions of securing themselves against possible electioneering consequences at home, by refusing to regard an Afghan war as an Imperial matter and so putting off the cost of the war upon India, operate on the minds of certain Ministers, if not on all; but it soon appears that the public will not allow them to saddle India with these expenses, and that disorders their views a little. Now the dread is paramount that an instant attack on the Ameer at this season of the year, and with present preparations, might possibly lead to check, or even to some small but humiliating "disaster;" and then everything is to be decided by the Viceroy's military advisers. And so it is resolved (for there can be no doubt that for a time at least the resolution was taken) to await the possibility of a favourable outcome of events, meanwhile adopting an attitude of armed expectation. But no sooner is this done than the probable political consequences of such a course are presented to view, and the Government have to consider how foolish they will look if they admit that they allowed the matter to drag on till the Ameer could defy us with any amount of accompanying outrage—leaving the Viceroy of India for six months (as one of their critics put it) in the absurd position of holding forth one hand for an apology, while the other is applied to the bruises inflicted on his honour. And so the days have dragged on; no man being able to guess with any degree of surety at what the Government proposed to do, and the Government itself being scarcely better informed. But of course this state of things could not last for ever—especially with a Viceroy out in India by no means content with it, and very much wanting to know whether the Home Government had any mind on the subject, and what that mind happened to be. At last a Ministerial Council is called; and it is to be hoped that by the time to-morrow's meeting is over something like order and precision of judgment will have settled over the Cabinet. But the chances are that more meetings than one will be held before that happens.

The *Times*, referring to the meeting of the Cabinet Council to-morrow, says that if it is not mistaken, the Indian Government has already decided on the measures to be immediately pursued, and is now engaged in carrying them out. But a question of greater moment awaits the decision of the Cabinet at home. Whatever the issue of the present misunderstanding, whether Shere Ali makes amends at once for his insolence, or whether he awaits the chastisement that will certainly overtake him, it is clear that our future relations with Afghanistan must be placed on a new footing. If Shere Ali will be friends with us, it is well, and we wish for nothing better. But we can permit no more doubt on the subject. We cannot submit to constant anxiety because he is unfriendly to us whenever he has the chance, while he receives the emissaries of a rival Power. It now rests with the Cabinet to decide whether our former forbearance should cease, and whether inactivity, masterly or mischievous, should give place to a more decided policy. Before we blame Lord Lytton, or the Cabinet under whose instructions he has acted, for an alleged change in our policy towards Afghanistan, we must be quite sure that the course of events had left an alternative open to them. What we know is that the Indian Government was so ill served by its native agents at Cabul that it was forced to endeavour to establish more satisfactory relations. It was clearly not Lord Lytton's fault that the Peshawur conference proved abortive. He offered all that Shere Ali had asked for in 1869 and 1873, and he asked for little in return; but the Afghan envoy professed to have no powers to conclude a treaty, and would not even assent to the reasonable demand that British officers should be stationed on points of the Afghan frontier exposed to Russia. In point of fact it is clear that Shere Ali has long hesitated between England and Russia. If we blame any one for this besides ourselves, for pursuing a policy always hesitating and at times ill-considered and short-sighted, it is Russia we must blame rather than Shere Ali himself.

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INDIAN GENERALS, PAST AND PRESENT.

THE Hon. Miss Eden's "Up the Country," a journal written by Lord Auckland's sister while he was Governor-General of India, gives a glimpse of the General Elphinstone who was afterwards to obtain so unenviable a notoriety as commander of the force which capitulated at Cabul. The lady is in the Governor-General's camp at Futtehpoor, in the North-West Provinces, marching down to Allahabad, preparatory to returning to Calcutta, after a long sojourn in Upper India, during which the occupation of Afghanistan had been established with apparent success. And Miss Eden writes:—"General Elphinstone passed through camp to-day"—February 6, 1840, or about two years before the massacre—"in his palanquin, and stopped for about two hours, and came to see us. . . . . He is in a shocking state of gout, poor man!—one arm in a sling and very lame, but otherwise is a young-looking general for India. He hates being here. He is wretched because nobody understands his London topics, or knows his London people. . . . . General E. said, 'I got a hint, and rather a strong one, from the Governor-General to take Delhi on my way to Meerut, and look at the troops there, and be active in my command.' He went off with a heavy heart to his palanquin, which must be a shaky conveyance for gout. He cannot, of course, speak a word of Hindustani, neither can his aide-de-camp." "I have a negro," said the General to the lady, "who speaks English, but I could not bring him dawk." "I suppose," she adds, "he means a native." This was the sort of man who was thought good enough for an Indian command in those days; and to Miss Eden it seemed quite natural and proper that a broken-down club lounger should be sent out for one. Not that he was much worse than the usual run of generals thirty or forty years ago, except that they were not all gouty. The custom was to select some man who had been ten or twelve years on half-pay, and whose pockets wanted replenishing, and send him out from his club or from Bath or Cheltenham to India for a five years' command, where the old gentleman would twaddle away about his reminiscences of London life with an easy sense of superiority to the people about him: and this General Elphinstone appears to have done, being at the same time an absolute cipher so far as the business of his command was concerned. The fact was that the Duke of Wellington, who always had rather a contempt for other generals, in his latter days became almost indifferent about the fitness or otherwise of the recipients of his patronage. In his view one man was about as good as another. It must be added that the Company's generals were seldom much better. If they knew more about the country and the troops under them, they were usually even older than the generals of the Queen's service. All went smoothly along, however, in peace time, when there was little or nothing to be done. Or, if a campaign had to be fought, these gallant old gentlemen managed somehow to scrape along, helped on their horses by their grooms and through their work by their staff—who, however, were in too many cases not much fitter for their work than the generals. Of course all were not of this sort; here and there a man like Gilbert or Nott, young in spite of his years, would come to the front; but these were the exception. Old men who had to be held on their horses, to whom a canter would have been fatal, and who could not boast of mental or professional qualifications to make up for their physical deficiencies, were only too common. Still, it was not necessary to transfer Elphinstone from the peaceful retirement of the Meerut command to that of Afghanistan. But this was merely one instance among many of the dementia which possessed the Indian Government with respect to the occupation of Cabul: it was of a piece with sending all the wives and children of the troops to join them there, and the establishment of our magazines outside the Cabul cantonment, inviting by their unprotected state the enemy's attack.

These and such like mistakes will certainly not be repeated; and it is satisfactory to know that the officers named for commands are all men of approved intelligence and vigour. General Roberts, lately Quartermaster of the Bengal army, is still, we believe, a regimental major of artillery. General Donald Stewart has distinguished himself in numerous campaigns, and especially by a most daring ride from Agra to Delhi in the height of the Mutiny, on a line swarming with enemies, and from which every trace of British rule had been swept away. The present Adjutant-General of the Indian army, General Lumsden, has probably a better knowledge of the scene of coming action than any living officer, gained during a service of many years on the frontier; it may be mentioned, too, that he accompanied his brother's mission to Afghanistan, which was shut up in Cabul during the eventful summer of 1857. Sir Paul Haines, the Commander-in-Chief in India, served as an aide-de-camp on Lord Gough's staff in the Sutlej campaigns, and afterwards commanded a battalion in the Crimea. It is not likely, however, that the Commander-in-Chief will himself take the field on this occasion.

The *Golos* has an article written in a mysteriously allusive tone, to which we believe we can supply the key. That paper says:—

We cannot say whether any despatches regarding the mission of General Stolieteff to Cabul have passed between the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and St. James's; but we can boldly affirm that Russia's answer was not to a question arising out of the refusal of the Ameer to receive the Embassy of Sir Neville Chamberlain. . . . . Under any circumstances we consider it most important to know the date of the interchanged despatches. While it was simply a question of explaining a step not as yet denounced by the British press and the Ministry as a step hostile to England, the Russian Government could give its explanation a somewhat apologetic form; but now that that moment has gone by Russia is openly accused in England of having instigated Afghanistan, and to such an explanation as Great Britain would now think of demanding from St. Petersburg it would simply be impossible to send any reply resembling an apology.

Now in July it "was simply a question of explaining a step not denounced by the British press, &c., as a step hostile to England." And if we are not mistaken, in July—last July—the British Government asked for some explanation of the mission to Cabul, which was then known to them; and then, also, it was not only possible for the Russian Government to give an explanation "in a somewhat apologetic" (and treacherous) form, but it actually did so.

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The following sentences from an article headed "Afghanistan" in the *Times* this morning form a remarkable commentary upon the ministerial communiqué published yesterday in the other official journal. This was to the effect that the Cabinet Council called for Saturday was to meet in order to discuss "the further development of frontier affairs in India, the situation as it now presents itself having been neither unexpected nor unprovided for." Unexpected it cannot have been, of course. How far has it been "provided for"? Let us see :—

Until the Indian Government is in a position to mass a force on the frontier of sufficient strength to overcome any resistance that may be offered by these clans, it would be most injudicious to make a forward movement; and that some time must elapse before such an army can be collected is obvious to any one acquainted with the present state of the roads in the Punjaub. It is true that the railway stretches from Calcutta and Bombay up to Jhelum, 170 miles distant from Peshawur, but the recent heavy floods have washed away a section of the line in the vicinity of Phillour; several bridges have gone, and communication is most uncertain. Then, again, between Jhelum and Peshawur are many small streams and two rivers. Most of these are unbridged; all afford hindrances to the rapid mobilization of troops on the border. From Rawul Pindee to Kohat the road is a mere track, after rain wellnigh impassable for troops. Further south, again, the roads in the Dera Ghazee Khan district are of the poorest description. That station was almost entirely destroyed by an overflow of the Indus last month. Floods of an unexampled nature then occurred. At the present moment we learn that the whole of Upper Scinde is under water, and that the march of a force viâ Rajanpore to Dadur is out of the question. The direct road through Boogtee Derah to Quetta is a mere mountain path, unfitted for the passage of wheeled artillery, yet it must be used; the garrison of that advanced post is scarcely 1,200 strong, and is in a most exposed and dangerous situation. With a couple of field batteries, a full regiment of cavalry, and another battalion of infantry—British, if possible—Major Sandeman should be able to hold Quetta until the spring. There is little doubt that General Biddulph will push up these reinforcements rapidly.

Times. Oct 6

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

PARIS, OCT. 4.

A letter in the *Univers*, dated St. Petersburg, the 29th of September, says :—

"About three months ago two emissaries, as unofficial as possible, sent by the Indian Government, arrived at Cabul. They were two merchants, or at least two persons professing to be so, who after numberless vicissitudes succeeded in failing at Cabul. 'Fail' is the right word; they entirely failed in all their enterprises. The chief of these was aimed at obtaining a passport for some English officers, whose mission would have been to follow from a distance the operations of the Russian columns then on the march. Great personages, confidential advisers of Shere Ali, were especially the object of the assiduities and flattering insinuations of these singular merchants. General Stolieteff, who had then been five weeks at Cabul, having learned the arrival and proceedings of these two persons, spoke to Shere Ali of them. The Russian General had no great difficulty, as you may imagine, considering the Ameer's suspiciousness and Anglophobia, in convincing him of the danger, or at least imprudence, of letting such travellers stay in Cabul. The Ameer ordered the expulsion of the two self-styled merchants, having them escorted to the frontier. This unofficial attempt of the Indian Government with Shere Ali—if, indeed, there was any attempt, and if the two persons in question really acted for the Indian Government—must be regarded as an enormous blunder on the part of the English. It began with an unavowable proposal. Moreover, it occasioned a first check for the English and a success for the Russians. The fact is that the whole Russian Mission, and probably also Shere Ali and his advisers, had no doubt that the two expelled persons were envoys of the Indian Government directed to negotiate the free passage of English spies through Afghanistan. Now, all who have to do with Orientals know the importance in their eyes of a first success or failure; how the former inspires them, and how the latter disheartens them. General Abramoff, though forming part of the Russian Mission, has never entered Cabul. As the military head of the Mission, he remained with the bulk of the escort at Chita, about 200 kilometres from Cabul. Later on, when there was no longer any doubt of the success of the Mission, he drew further back with his detachment, and finally quitted the Ameer's territory, installing himself in a village not far from the Afghan frontier. There are only vague *data* as to the distribution of Russian troops in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan. On this point there is the greatest reserve, and it seems that even in the office of the War Ministry nothing definite is known. All that has leaked out is that not far from the frontier, or rather on the frontier, are now encamped three pretty strong detachments, without reckoning General Abramoff's escort, composed of four sotnias of Cossacks. General Stolieteff, accompanied by nine officers, three of them of the Staff, two interpreters, and 40 Cossacks, is still at Cabul. I can inform you almost positively that he will not be recalled. He will at most leave Cabul itself for some other locality within reach. From the middle of July to the end of August six caravans entered Cabul, comprising about 700 camels. Many men, a great part of them in European dress, accompanied these caravans, which were not commercial caravans. Succeeding each other at tolerably equal intervals, they all carried letters and enclosures for the Russian Mission. Three of them have already returned empty, and accompanied by at most a fifth part of the original escort."

This artless communication gives room for many commentaries in view of the events in preparation in that quarter. Without too much presumption, may not the answer be found in a phrase of the *Golos*—a phrase inconsiderable and probably escaping notice in a moment of forgetfulness—"Russia will observe in the impending conflict *the same severe and strict neutrality* which England observed in the late war." The italics are those of the Russian paper.

The writer of the above letter claims to have derived his information from good sources, and to have been corroborated by events in former letters on Afghanistan.

The *Mémorial Diplomatique* alleges that the German Ambassador at Constantinople is pressing the Sultan to advise the Ameer to receive the English mission, and that the Emperor William has begged the Czar to avoid raising any fresh complication.

The *Reichsanzeiger* announces that Russia has ordered the disarmament of her ports on the Black Sea and the removal of the torpedoes.

"THE BANKRUPTCY OF INDIA."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The alarming article under this title by Mr. Hyndman, in the *Nineteenth Century* for this month, is entirely based on an assumption that the total gross produce of India can be accurately measured by a money value of £277,000,000. The "terrible state of affairs" thus developed, and the "general collapse" anticipated as the result are attributed to the pressure of the Government assessment, and especially that upon the cultivators of the land. The conclusions arrived at are so startling that, though, like Mr. Hyndman, I have never been in India, I, as an alarmed Englishman, have tried to test the strength of the basis upon which they rest. The only *data* I have at hand are taken from the figures in the last year's report of the Punjab. The number of cultivated acres there agrees with those quoted by Mr. Hyndman—say, 21,000,000 acres, and I adopt his average value of £1 14s. per acre.

The Government assessment is £1,905,000, to pay which one-sixth of the wheat crop (the produce of 1,120,000 acres) would have to be sold and exported. There would remain for consumption in the country the produce of 5,500,000 acres of wheat and of 12,000,000 acres of other grain, the two sufficing to yield for a year 2lb. per head per day for the population of 17,600,000, which is more than double the weight of corn eaten by the people of this country. Besides this, they would have for consumption their garden vegetables and milk; and beyond it the money value of 845,000 acres of oil seed, 720,000 acres of cotton and hemp, 391,000 acres of sugar-cane, 129,000 acres of indigo, 69,000 acres of tobacco, 88,000 acres of spices, drugs, and dyes, 12,000 acres of poppy, and 8,800 acres of tea, the aggregate value of which, without touching the corn, would leave nearly twice the Government assessment.

Mr. Hyndman has committed the error of arguing from an English money value, at the place of production, upon articles of consumption, the true value of which is their food sustaining power to the people who consume them.

October 4. C.

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AFGHAN AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, OCT. 2.

A summary of the Russian Military Department "Notes on Afghan Agriculture and Industry" may be interesting at the present juncture.

So far as is known the land belongs to local chieftains, who while letting it to vassals, themselves have to pay a tribute to their suzerains. Only on the well-watered banks of rivers and canals, where agriculture attains to some degree of perfection, is the land owned or rented by individuals. Pastures are always the common property of the clans, steppes being considered nobody's property. Like all other rights and personal possessions, title-deeds are worth but little in Afghanistan. Everybody's hand being against everybody, landed proprietors are frequently expelled, or else expelling others, to transfer themselves to fresh scenes. Some emigrate to neighbouring khanates, and by dint of the strong arm manage to establish themselves on ground belonging to another clan.

In consequence of the difference of climate in various parts of the country, agriculture is by no means the same thing in the north as in the south. In Cabul the land is well-watered by canals and very fertile. In the valley of the river Cabul, from the Khyber hills to the capital, there is no barren, unproductive soil. Arable land in those parts is so extremely valuable that—a rare thing in Afghanistan—it is amply provided with roads. There are here plenty of ariks or open canals, not to speak of the underground rills, artificially laid down in some parts. These water-courses are constructed by the Government or village authorities, or by charitable individuals wishing to confer a benefit upon their neighbours. In the case of Government waterworks, a tax has to be paid for their use; whereas village canals are frequently the joint property of the community.

In the Kafiristan mountains agriculture ascends to a considerable height, wherever an arable plot is to be found. In other parts, where corn cannot be sown, the hills are planted with fruit trees in terraces. The harvest in these parts principally depends upon the amount of rainfall.

South of the Safaid Koh hills in the district of Kuram, agriculture is confined to the valley of the Kuram, which in some parts is 22 miles wide. In this valley, as in all other valleys of East Afghanistan, there is a stony ledge of ground at the foot of the hills unfit for agriculture. The mountains have plenty of arable land that cannot be cultivated for want of rain or wells. Still further south, in the district occupied by the Mahsood Vaziri tribe, the cultivated land forms only 2 or 3 per cent. of the entire area, the rest being barren for want of water. The few fields there are close to the rivers, where they enjoy the benefit of an occasional inundation.

The Logar and Gazni districts, in the far west of Cabul, are well cultivated and supply corn to the whole principality.

In Candahar, from the source of the river Tarnak to the capital, the country offers but scanty opportunities for agriculture. Fields, as a rule, follow the river-bank in narrow strips, or sometimes cluster round water-courses, mostly subterranean in those parts; nor is the lower valley of the Tarnak much more productive. A more cheerful aspect is offered by the Helmund Valley, having fields and gardens to about two versts on either bank, as far as the Seistan Lake. South of the Helmund, the barren steppe appears rather unexpectedly. North of the river, the barren steppe, stretching away to the hills, is here and there studded with villages surrounded by oases with artificial irrigation.

Herat, possessing a good soil traversed by several rivers, is considered the most fertile part of the plateau of Iram. Here the harvests are uniformly good. There are two of them every year, yielding forty-fold. The district of Ghorbund is the storehouse of the country; and such is the superabundance of land that where corn might be grown cattle are frequently pastured. Every now and then the country is the scene of Persian warfare, which prevents the development of agriculture.

Sistan, the basin of Lake Khamun, and of the deltas of surrounding rivers, is a plain intersected by low ridges. Two-thirds of the surface is sand, the remaining third being alluvial soil, capable of high cultivation, but mostly occupied by tamarind trees. The delta of the Helmund, with its many parallel water-courses, is very fertile, and wholly under the plough. The fields are here separated by quick-set hedges; the harvests are abundant, and much is exported.

Of the Turkestan Khanates under Afghan control, Balkh is the most productive, thanks to its extensive system of irrigation. Notwithstanding political troubles and the consequent decrease of the population, Balkh still yields enough to supply some of the neighbouring Principalities. The valley of Kunduz, though fertile, is swampy, and has an unhealthy climate compelling people to live in the hill districts. All attempts at agriculture have failed, colonists invariably succumbing to malaria.

There is a deal of arable, well irrigated ground in the other Khanates; but they are too frequently exposed to war and robbery to permit of the labour of the husbandman. In all these parts plenty of good land lies fallow.

The agricultural produce of Afghanistan is very various. Wheat, maize, barley, and millet form the principal food of the population. Rice requiring much water is only planted in the valleys of the tributaries of the Indus, in Kundus, Balkh, and some localities of Herat. Every variety of fruit known in Europe grows well, the rhubarb especially fine. Indeed, fruit is one of the great staples of food in the country, and a principal article of exportation. The Cabul Valley gardens are famous for peaches, apricots, cherries, apples, pears, pomegranates, figs, and quince; the Jellalabad Valley has also lemons and dates. The white mulberry-tree is found everywhere; the other species with red fruit is also there. The mulberries are dried, ground into flour, and made into cakes, either with or without corn-flour. Pistachio-nuts are grown in such quantities in the neighbourhood of Maimene that they are exported in caravans to Persia and Bagdad. It is a peculiarity of the climate that all these excellent comestibles get ripe at a considerable altitude. Pomegranates flourish at 4,500ft. above the sea, while apricots ascend to 8,000ft., and mulberries to 9,000ft. Grapes are plentiful, and the making of wine is a chief branch of industry, especially in Kafiristan. Considerable quantities of grapes are dried and eaten as raisins. Some sorts are gathered before they are ripe and exported to Bombay, &c. In Herat a special tax is imposed upon the manufacture of wine, which can only be carried on by Government licence. Tobacco is much grown and used. The three most approved growths in East Afghanistan are the Candahar, Balkh, and Mansurabad, of which the last is the best. Its price on the spot is from 60 kopeks to 1 rouble 20 kopeks the man (6½ Russian lbs.), the other two sorts being only half as dear. In Herat there are two tobacco harvests the year, the first being accounted the best. There is little cotton produced in the country, except in the Bangash district, near the Indian frontier; but this, too, is indifferent in quality and quantity. Hardly any silk is produced, notwithstanding the abundance of mulberry-trees. Of other plants, we may mention the madder, in Candahar and Gazni, much employed for dyeing woollen cloth, and also exported; Indian hemp used in brewing a narcotic beverage; a species of rhubarb, producing oil for lamps; assafœtida, a shrub encountered everywhere, but more especially in the south, from which pitch is extracted. This pitch, used in Afghanistan for medical purposes only, is frequently exported to India. A decoction made from the young leaves is drunk by the Afghan and Beloochees in Sistan. The best sorts sell at Candahar at from 80 kopeks to 1 rouble 30 kopeks the pound, inferior qualities commanding from 30 to 60 kopeks the pound.

Cattle breeding is another principal occupation. As in the steppes and hills of Russian Asia, clime and soil necessitate a frequent change of pasture. Thus the Ghulzae, Afridi, and other clans pass the summer in the Safaid Kon hills, descending for the winter to the plain of Candahar and the Indus Valley, and sometimes crossing the frontier into British territory. The Beloochees nomadize in summer near the River Helmund, but in autumn, with the first frost, may be seen wandering to the southern steppes, where water is found only at that season. Excepting in the Cabul Valley, cattle breeding is carried on in all parts of Afghanistan by a nomad population, living side by side with the sedentary and agricultural inhabitants. The nomads rarely apply themselves to agricultural pursuits. Of the domestic animals, camels, dromedaries, and a cross between the two, are used for riding and draught, as well as for the milk and butter they yield; their flesh is only eaten by the very poorest. The clan Gesarai, living in the hills where camels are of little use, value them, however, for their wool. Cabul has few camels, and only a cart-horse sort of horses. The species of horse called yabu is employed for draught in the hills. A finer breed is seen among the Hazaras, in the Khanate of Maimene, where good specimens command from 20 to 32 roubles. In the south, the breeding and sale of horses is almost exclusively in the hands of the Beloochees; but a peculiarly valuable kind introduced by Nadir Shah from Persia is only met with among the Afghan tribe.

Veair sheep and goats are very numerous, and considered the most useful animals in the country; but in Sistan, where they cannot be reared, on account of the insects abounding there, the inhabitants turn their attention to the breeding of cattle. There is a good deal of wool collected, manufactured, and exported.

The mineral wealth of the country is very great, but little explored, and less utilized. The richest parts known are the hills south-west of Cabul and in the Hazara districts. Gold is found in the rivulets of Legman, in the rivers Kabul, Kunar, and their tributaries. The principal places where gold is washed down on the Kabul river are Jellalabad and Mitchni; on the Kunar, Tchachar-Bag, Peshat, and Kirtch. It is believed that all the rivers coming from the western side of the Hindoo Koosh are auriferous. Silver, formerly mined in large quantities in Kugestan, is now only gathered in the valley of Gorbend. Lead occurs in the Nepkau Kul hills in the Hazara district north of Candahar, and in the Gorbend Valley. Of copper, there are large quantities in the Gal Koh hills, in the territory of the Jaguri tribe of the Hazara. Here there is also antimony, likewise met with north of Candahar, and in the Khyber hills. Sulphur, saltpetre, and salammoniac may be dug out of the Gorbend and Jaguri territories. Iron is abundant along the western slopes of the Hindoo Koosh. There are mines in the valley of the Pendjkor, and in the hills west of Bunnoo, whence the article is exported to India. Iron works also exist in Badakshan, near Feizabad, and in Southern Cabul, near Kanogorum. The iron, being entirely smelted with charcoal, is highly valued in the adjoining countries.

Pausing at this point, I will here mention that the best work extant on Kabulistan and Kafiristan, is the Russian translation of the second chapter of the fifth volume of Ritter's Geography of Asia by Professor Grigorieff. In addition to Ritter's masterly descriptions, the book contains ample commentaries, drawn from private sources, as well as from all that has been printed on the subject since Ritter wrote. The work, unfortunately, only reaches down to 1867.

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TACTICS IN AFGHANISTAN.

During the last thirty-six years the British Army has had little experience of the sort of war which we shall have to carry on in Afghanistan. Something slightly resembling it has indeed taken place at the Cape, in Abyssinia, in the Bhootan war, and the various expeditions against the mountain tribes which infest our North-West frontier. Still, the knowledge thus acquired will be only partially useful in a campaign against the Afghans. Such warfare must be of an exceptional description, both from the character of the country and the nature of the Afghans, their arms, and their military and political organization. As to the nature of the country, it is as if in the south a groundwork of sandy desert, and in the north one of steppe were sprinkled with fragments of Switzerland. In the south also the climate is comparatively hot and there is little water; while in the north the climate, save in the valleys, is cold, and water is tolerably abundant. Hence there is a difference both in the disposition of the people and in the organization, description, and tactics of the troops. In the south the inhabitants are more peaceable and less manly, and cavalry is the favourite arm; in the north the inhabitants are hardier and bolder, and infantry are more freely used. General Ferrier, formerly Adjutant-General of the Persian Army, writing in 1850, gives some interesting and valuable information concerning the military resources of Afghanistan. According to him, the Afghan army might in case of necessity consist of the whole male population, for every man is a born soldier. He says that the troops have no regular pay, but a portion of them are supposed to be paid, and are called Defteris. This so-called regular army consists of the Cabul, the Candahar, and the Herat divisions. In the Cabul division there are 21,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry; in the Candahar division, 12,000 cavalry and 6,000 infantry; in the Herat division, 12,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry; giving a grand total of 71,000 men, besides artillery. In addition to these, the Sirdars, like the European barons of the Middle Ages, on being summoned, bring their contingents, who are usually the men of their clan; finally, the inhabitants of towns, who owe allegiance to no chief; take up arms for the sake of plunder, and either select a chief under whom to serve or act together in small parties consisting of acquaintances or men from the same locality.

During a campaign the Sovereign gives pay to the contingents, handing over the money to the chiefs, who retain a large portion in their own hands, compensating their followers by giving them small grants of land or certain valuable privileges. The number of Sirdars and Khans is out of all proportion to the number of fighting men. The chiefs and richer Afghans are accompanied to the field by enormous retinues of servants; but the ordinary Afghan, idle and self-indulgent as far as his means allow at home—when they can—on service display wonderful powers of abstinence and endurance. Quickly collected, an Afghan army, like the Highland clans of Scotland in the 17th century, soon melts away on the slightest provocation, and when a battle occurs a comparatively small proportion of those who began the campaign are to be found in the ranks. The irregular bands from the towns disperse to their homes as soon as food becomes scarce; and as the Sirdars only carry provisions for themselves and their immediate followers, and there is no attempt at a regular commissariat, portions of the contingents are successively dismissed when the country is unable to support the entire army by pillage. There is little strategy and no tactics, discipline, or organization. The most ordinary rules of war are disregarded, and the army, marching without advanced guard, rearguard, or scouts, is a mere moving mob of armed men. They are utterly ignorant of the science of war, and, indeed, despise it, placing reliance on their dash, strength, and courage. They never attempt manœuvres, but attack in parallel order all along the line, each band fighting in the way which seems best to them. Nevertheless, they have a natural instinct for war, and are splendid skirmishers. It is a fact worth noting that they generally make three onsets, but, if they fail in the third, never attempt a fourth, considering that fate is against them, and that it would be impious to strive against its decree. Their formation is in two lines, the first rank consisting of the bravest, and the second, some distance in the rear, of those less daring spirits who wait for an opportunity to indulge in a love of plunder and bloodshed with little personal risk. The chiefs are mere leaders, anxious to display their personal prowess, and never seeking to handle their troops. When victorious the Afghans are merciless, and never cease from slaughter till their arms are powerless from the fatigue of striking. Whenever possible, they select a plain for the theatre of battle, in order that they may give full scope to the cavalry, of which the bulk of their forces are composed, and which constitutes their favourite arm. The Afghan horsemen charge with great intrepidity and dash, and if they only moved with precision their cavalry would, according to General Ferrier, be the finest in the world. Their highest praise of a warrior is that he is a good swordsman. Vain and presumptuous as they are undoubtedly brave, they have a wholesome dread of British artillery. Their arms are the firelock, the carbine, pistols, swords, occasionally bows and arrows, and the lance. Many of them carry shields. Most of the barrels of their firearms are Turkish and rifled, the locks being coarse and defective. Such was the state of Afghan military resources a little more than a quarter of a century ago, according to General Ferrier.

From the narratives of those who were present during our operations in Afghanistan, we gather some other particulars which are valuable at the present moment, for progress is not rapid in Central Asia, and in many essential matters there have been few military changes during the last half-century. Lady Sale tells us that the Afghan horsemen were in the habit of both carrying and using firearms, and also on occasions each trooper would take up behind him an infantry soldier in order to convey the latter rapidly to the scene of fight. Both she and others have mentioned some striking instances of the impetuosity and courage with which the Afghan cavalry charge. The most remarkable of all was that made by Dost Mahomed, the father of the present Ameer, at the battle of Purwandurrah, on the 2d of November, 1839. At the head of only 80 horsemen, the Dost charged the 2d Bengal Cavalry and drove them before them till they obtained safety from the British guns. Of the officers, two were killed on the spot and two others, Fraser and Ponsonby, escaped, but were covered with wounds. The English gentlemen had fought like paladins. Their men refused to follow them, so they plunged alone into the ranks of the Afghans. The Afghan horsemen showed equal readiness to charge infantry in the affairs outside the cantonments of Cabul in 1841. All testimony agrees that their infantry are excellent skirmishers, making the most skilful use of the nature of the ground. Like the Scotch clans, they often charge sword in hand. As marksmen they are, notwithstanding the poorness of their weapons, very good. Some of them during the siege of the cantonments at Cabul in 1841 were, according to Lady Sale, deadly shots. Speaking of two men—a barber and a blacksmith—she says:—"They completely commanded the loopholes with their long rifles, and although the distance is probably 300 yards, yet they seldom failed to put a ball through the clothes or into the body of any one passing them."

The present Ameer, after his visit to Umballa in 1869, made many changes in military matters—changes by no means approved by his subjects. Impressed by what he had seen of English troops, he sought to introduce an improved discipline and organization, and, by increasing the strength of the regular troops, to make himself more independent than he had hitherto been of the chiefs and their contingents. In 1873 Captain Marsh used often to talk to the officers of his guard at Candahar:—

"They all agree that the Ameer is making too many alterations since his visit to Umballa in 1869; they do not call them improvements, which I can quite understand—one, for instance, taking away from the army their usual easy flowing dress and clothing them in tight coats and trousers quite unsuited to Asiatics. The Ameer has translated the drill-book into Pushtoo, and instead of one's hearing orders in very curious English, as formerly, the men now really understand what is being said to them."

On his entry into Candahar:—

"The streets were lined with regular troops to keep off the crowds assembled to see me. The soldiers are most comically dressed. Their uniform, which is of an English pattern, is cut out of a striped woollen cloth that looks like bed ticking; their trousers were too short, but well strapped down; on their heads were tall, red, conical caps, or *kullas*, with real balls dangling at the top, but no *loonjees*, or turbans, giving their heads a very bare, cold appearance. Their cross belts are of brown leather, as also their pouches, and they are armed with old Tower muskets. The square in front of the Ark is a spacious one, and here the guns were parked. They appeared to be of all shapes, sizes, and dates, with carriages and limbers white with age."

A few miles before he entered the city he was met by an escort of honour of 50 Sowars belonging to the Regular Army. "These men were got up in imitation of our Native Cavalry, and tolerably mounted on Turkoman and Herat horses."

At Herat, on leaving the presence of Yakoob Khan, the Governor of the Province, he was "surprised to find a well-dressed and soldierly-looking company of Heratee Sepoys ready to present arms to me, which, by the way, they did very badly." Invited to visit the armoury and gun foundry, he saw "six new smooth-bores, six-pounders, well-made and mounted, besides a lot of small old guns; his rifles were roughly made, but looked serviceable." The army of Herat, according to Captain Marsh, consists of six regiments of 1,000 men each, two regularly-drilled and armed, the others, from want of means, of inferior quality. The cavalry, though numerous, are of a motley description and quite devoid of discipline. In case of war the Governor of Herat could place in the field about 10,000 regular troops of all arms, of good physique, and receiving rations, uniform, and about 6s. per month. The cavalry receive in addition forage for their horses. In addition to the regular army, there is a numerous feudal militia.

When at Umballa in 1869 the Ameer said to Lord Mayo that they could make breech-loading rifles and guns in his country, but could not manage the ammunition. It is well known that a manufactory

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of rough rifles exists just outside our North-Western frontier near Peshawur, and from time to time many rifles have been stolen from us by the hill tribes. The Ameer has also at different times received from us a battery of guns and 18,000 stand of arms. As to his capacity as a general, it is difficult to gauge it, for he has never been pitted against other than Afghan foes. He displayed, however, at Umballa great intelligence and the highest interest in all that related to the art of war. On one occasion Major Knollys, the Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General of the Division, had a private interview and a long conversation with the Ameer. *Apropos* of the chestnut troop of Horse Artillery then at Umballa, Major Knollys related to the Ameer the wonderful exploit of that troop under Norman Ramsay at Fuentes d'Onor. The Ameer listened most attentively to the description, and then eagerly discussed the exploit in a manner which proved that he had reflected deeply on all connected with the profession of a soldier and the capacity of each arm of the service.

To return to the tactics of the Afghans, we would call attention to the fact that they are utterly regardless of their lines of communication being threatened, for they have absolutely no line of supply. They therefore only fear turning movements when they threaten to prevent them from retreating in case of disaster. It is likewise as well to remind our officers that the Afghans are addicted to making night attacks. In harassing convoys and troops passing through defiles the Afghans are unwearied, bold, and adroit. It will therefore be necessary to adopt the procedure of General Pollock, and both in advance and retreat to occupy the sides of defiles with flanking parties. By adopting this well-recognized rule of war General Pollock both passed and repassed the Khyber Pass with very slight loss; by neglecting it General Nott suffered numerous casualties. In many cases where considerable opposition is anticipated and the communications along the summit of the heights overlooking the defile are difficult, it may be advisable to adopt the manœuvre recommended by Marshal Bugeaud. His plan was, before allowing the head of the main column to enter a defile, to occupy the nearest heights with *echelons* of sections, subdivisions, or larger bodies. As the main column advanced it sent out additional *echelons*, and the rear *echelons* successively descended to the road and closed the column.

It will be as well to bear in mind that the Afghans entertain an almost superstitious dread of artillery quite out of proportion to the material injury inflicted by the latter. Rockets likewise, from their moral effect on semi-civilized and undisciplined troops, may be employed with advantage. They do not demand much transport, and can accompany infantry over the most difficult ground. They would be particularly telling on Afghan horsemen. We now come to the question of the best formation of attack to be adopted by our infantry. They have been drilled with a view to enable them to contend on the best possible terms with a European adversary provided with breech-loading arms of precision. Both the ground and the foe will, however, in Afghanistan be of a very different nature from those our troops are normally trained to deal with. The Afghans may be good but slow shots up to 300 yards. A few of them may possess long-range rifles, but from a deficiency of ammunition and proper systematic teaching, they will probably not be very deadly. Taken altogether, we may assume that the fire of the Afghans will not be very fatal at distances over 200 yards; but that with the cold steel our enemies will be dangerous from their dash and a physique as a rule superior to that of the lads who make up the majority of our regiments. It would seem desirable, therefore, that we ought to discharge most of our cartridges at distances not exceeding 400 yards, and that when we charge we should do so in close order that we may reap the utmost advantages from our superior weapons and drill. In short, as the fire of the foe is infinitely less deadly than that of, say, the French during the Peninsular War, we should revert to a certain extent to our old tactics and formation. By that we mean that we should advance with skirmishers kept well in hand and supported by formed bodies in line, which at first might have a pace between each file, but should at the moment of delivering the assault close in until they are shoulder to shoulder. Finally, as the Afghans are incapable of manœuvring, we should advance in *echelon* from one flank the other flank occupying the attention of the enemy by a comparatively distant fire.

RUSSIA AND ENGLAND IN ASIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The antagonism between Russia and England in Asia has been so much intensified during the last three years, and our relations with her were so much stretched during the latter part of the campaign in Turkey, that little explanation is required for any movements she may have made to embarrass us on the Indian frontier. Two great nations began a course of conquest in Asia at almost the same period—the end of the 16th century. Both the conquest of Siberia and that of India were inaugurated by traders, and exactly the same course has since been pursued on either side. Englishmen and Russians have found themselves in contact with barbarians, and, by a law as natural as that of the survival of the fittest, the barbarians have been brought under dominion step by step. Short of a war and the crushing defeat of one side or the other the process will go on till all the barbarians are absorbed and the boundaries of Russia and England meet in the East. Like the Red Indians in America, the native races of Asia feel themselves being gradually encircled and approached on both sides by forces of enormous power. They are as if in the famous mediæval chamber, the walls of which slowly advanced to crush the unhappy prisoner. What wonder is it if they run from side to side seeking any niche they can find for protection, either in one wall or the other? As long as this state of things exists there will be jealousy between ourselves and Russia. It appears to me that as soon as we touch, and the firmness of great Powers is substituted for the irritability of weak ones, we may live peacefully in presence of each other—at least, as peacefully as any other Continental Powers. We cannot turn India into an island, agreeable as that process might be to us.

Now it is a curious and suggestive fact that the Russians charge us with exactly the same crimes which we ascribe to them, those crimes being exaggerations of real qualities, good or bad according to which side of the shield we examine—namely, the pride, prejudice, passion, and fierceness of Imperial nations. The Russians go further and declare that it was the diabolical cunning of England which stirred up the Eastern Question lately. In fact, it is probable that if we had not interfered there would have been no war, Russian influence would have been paramount in Bulgaria and that of Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We should be foolish to forget that Austria was the first to stir up the mud in the East. From a Russian point of view, prejudiced of course like that of any other nation, England is the cause of the war and all the suffering it entailed.

But your readers may be interested to know that they had even more to accuse us of than our moral support of Turkey. One day in Bulgaria—I think it was the day when Gourko's force captured the Shipka and we met young Skobeleff on the top of the pass—that brilliant and extraordinary young General said to me suddenly, "Have you any news from India?" I replied that the Russian postal authorities took care that I had no news from anywhere. His answer was, "I cannot find out what has become of that column of 10,000 men that has been organized by your people to raise Central Asia against us." Perhaps there was such an idea, perhaps there was not. At any rate General Skobeleff believed it, which means that the Russian Government had information to that effect. If so, is it to be wondered at that they tried to turn the tables on us? Like the Indian Mutiny, the insolence of Shere Ali is probably but the tail of a storm which has passed, and the deep designs ascribed to Russia at present are baseless in fact. She will have quite enough to do for some time to come in binding up her wounds and taking very bitter tonics. The final result is that we shall make another forward step, as we do almost annually somewhere, and "rectify our frontier" in India, as we have done quite lately in the Straits Settlements, Fiji Islands, and South Africa. If we claim the right to advance everywhere, and I do not see why we should not, is there any justice in denying the same right to another Power for moral reasons? Let us honestly say, "We cannot permit Russia to move beyond a certain point," and place our outposts there, or at least within reach of it; but to treat the question from a moral point of view is a little odd on the part of the most aggressive nation on earth.

As for the studies of the Russian Staff in Afghanistan, you would probably find the same information in every war office of Europe, except that of England, where the intelligence duties of the Staff cannot be more than half performed for want of means and a proper conviction of their importance. I was once requested in the bureaux of the General Staff at Berlin to look over their list of native troops in India, and say whether it was correct; that list came from the midst of other researches as to our Asiatic power, such as would have given most of us some very interesting information. Yet we do not suppose that Germany has designs on India. If we wish to check the advance of Russia anywhere, we shall do so with all the more ease by keeping our heads cool and our minds as far as possible disabused of false impressions.

Yours obediently, C. B. BRACKENBURY.

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TIMES, OCTOBER 5,

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—I had hoped to see in *The Times* this morning that some one of equal Indian experience and weight of character with Lord Lawrence had entered his protest against the policy started by his lordship in his letter to *The Times* of "coming to terms with the Ameer" on the ground that our dealings with Afghanistan are not as between civilized nations; and as I see that, already, a public meeting at Birmingham has been discussing the question in the spirit of this policy, I may be allowed, perhaps (as one of the people of England to whom Lord Lawrence appeals) to express my regret that his letter was written, for I fear that its plausibility will mislead people at home who are ignorant of the Asiatic character.

While admitting the gravity of the offence committed by the Ameer, Lord Lawrence urges that "we should not bear hard with him on this account." This reads well, but what is its true bearing with reference to our relations with our subject races in India? I submit, with great respect to Lord Lawrence, that no one knows better than he does the degree of appreciation in which the art of insult is used as a political weapon by all eastern potentates, and that their *finesse* in this line far surpasses that of civilized nations; and it is the manner in which such affronts are resented or submitted to that affords the index of power to their minds. There may be, as Lord Lawrence contends, no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with this Prince (although I look upon the threat to shoot Major Cavagnari at Ali Musjid as a reflex of the Macnaghten tragedy, and significant enough of the length he meant to go); but the issue is not confined to Afghanistan and England, but extends to the subject races of India, by whom the Christian-like standard of policy suggested by Lord Lawrence is not understood at all. Two hundred and forty millions of people within our frontiers, and innumerable races without, are waiting to judge from their own standpoint how we deal with this mortal affront; and I claim support for our policy on the score of the safety of our Empire alone; and in connexion with this permanent object I express my fervent hope that the passes into Afghanistan, once they are traversed by our arms, may remain for ever in our possession, whatever may be our ultimate policy with respect to that country itself.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
October 4. W. M'MURDO, General.

OUR NORTH-WEST FRONTIER IN INDIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In continuation of my letter of the 19th inst. in *The Times*, and as a war with Afghanistan appears probable, I now offer further extracts from the writings of the late General Jacob:—

"There are but two great roads into our Indian Empire from the north-west—but two roads, in fact, by which it is possible for a modern army to march. One of these, the Bolan, lies through an entirely friendly country. The Khelat territory extends to Pesheen, 40 miles beyond the head of the (Bolan) pass, in the tableland of Afghanistan, and is inhabited by Belooch and Brahooee tribes, who are of an entirely different race from the Afghans. The road through the Bolan is, even at present, generally good, and sufficiently easy for an army to proceed by it with all its artillery, stores, &c. This road is also the shortest from Herat to British India, and is the natural outlet to the ocean of the commerce of a very large portion of Central Asia. From the foot of the Bolan, one continuous and almost dead-level plain extends for nearly 600 miles through Kutchee and Scinde to the sea. The only other great road, the Khyber (pass), is very differently circumstanced. The people are unfriendly and barbarous, the country is far more difficult, and the distance is greater, while there is already a strong division of our army at Peshawur, so that we are tolerably well secured in that quarter—quite sufficiently secured, indeed, under the arrangements contemplated by me, because from Quettah we could operate on the flank and rear of any army attempting to proceed towards the Khyber Pass; so that, with a British force at Quettah, the other road would be shut to an invader, inasmuch as we could reach Herat itself before an invading army could even arrive at Cabul. Such a position would form the bastion of the front attacked, and nothing could, with hope of success, be attempted against us until this salient were disposed of. . . . . In any point of view, and under any circumstances whatever, the arrangement on the frontier of India can never be wise or safe while, *as at present, the undisturbed tranquillity of this vast Empire is dependent, not on its own mighty internal strength, but on the forbearance of our enemies or neighbours outside.*"

The italics are General Jacob's, and the opinion of an officer so distinguished and so long employed on the north-west frontier of India should have great weight in favour of Lord Lytton's policy. Yours truly,

F. A. E. DALRYMPLE, Bengal Civil Service.
St. Boswells, N.B., Sept. 28.

DAILY NEWS, OCTOBER 5,

(89)

THE meeting of the Cabinet to-day will bring Lord BEACONSFIELD face to face with some of his colleagues whose sense of responsibility is perhaps greater than his, and who are believed to feel some doubts as to the further development of his policy of adventure in Asia. But he has overborne or beguiled their scruples before, and there is little reason to look for greater steadiness of purpose in these weak and wavering minds now. In the meantime, the English public are becoming somewhat impatient for information in connection with the Afghan difficulty. In the first place, they would like to know what we are going to do; and in the second place, when we are going to do it. The present suspense is intolerable and mischievous. Parliament is not sitting; and the various indications of public opinion are just now the only restraint on the dramatic ambitions of Lord BEACONSFIELD. But, with the present Ministerial reticence, the public are but partially cognizant of the facts of the case, and therefore are only imperfectly qualified to act either as a check or a stimulus in the matter. Are the different columns to move or not before the advent of winter? If they are to move at once the immediate announcement of our intention would produce a wholesome moral effect on both the Afghans and the people of India. There would be no indiscretion in an open statement of our purpose, for we need not disclose how we intend to accomplish our object. If it be decided that no movement is to take place before the spring, it would be wise to declare as much at once, in order to show that our resolution is the result of calm deliberation. If we observe a mysterious silence, collect troops with great ostentation, and in the end do nothing, we shall create an impression of weakness. It is suggested that we shall bring pressure to bear upon the AMEER, massing troops at the mouths of the passes, and keeping them there "standing at "ease" for six months. We can hardly see how such pressure will influence our foe. He must have pretty well made up his mind before turning back our mission that the result would be war, and the mere report that our troops are ready to commence operations in March or April will scarcely shake his nerves. On the contrary, it will cause him to brace himself up, and make preparations for a vigorous struggle. It will give him a pretext for proclaiming a holy war, and calling upon all the tribes to sink internal differences, and gird on their swords for battle with the infidel English who are once more about to attempt to impose their detested yoke on the warlike and freeborn Afghans. It will give him time to obtain succour from Bokhara, and, if not troops, yet officers, money, arms, and advice from Russia. It will give him time to stir up intrigues among our feudatories in India, and thus create a peril far greater than any Central Asian difficulty. We know on what very slender foundation Orientals build up an edifice of vaunting arrogance. If we require more than a few weeks' preparation before we attempt to chastise the insolence of Afghanistan, the AMEER will be able with some plausibility to spread far and wide the boast that the British, cowed by their disasters in 1841-42, and awed by Russian power, dare not venture to resent the insult which has been inflicted upon them.

Let us now examine some of the arguments adduced by those who are the apologists of delay. It is urged that the example of the most successful of our Generals in India teaches us that we should not attempt to move until we have assured ourselves almost absolutely against the chance of failure, or even a temporary check. It seems to be forgotten that audacity is often, especially with Orientals, who are easily impressed, the truest wisdom, and that promptitude of action frequently diminishes the strength of the foe. It scarcely requires to be a passed master in the art of war to understand that what we might accomplish today with 10,000 men it would need more than double that number to do six months hence. We may also point to the fact that by keeping a large force mobilised during the winter we shall add in no slight degree to the financial burdens already too great for India to bear. But, it is alleged, between us and Afghanistan proper there is a fringe of hostile mountain tribes, and that we must be prepared to

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deal with them before we attempt to advance. As these tribes are connected with the AMEER by very loose ties of allegiance, and in some cases do not even admit his theoretical suzerainty, it by no means follows that war with SHERE ALI means also war with all the border tribes. By a mixture of silver and lead we could not only secure the neutrality of these tribes but induce them to side heartily with us. But even if incorruptible hostility is to be feared, surely we are prepared to subdue it by force of arms. In our incursions into the hills hitherto our object has been to destroy the villages and crops, and, bringing the mountaineers to bay, kill as many of them as possible. Such would not be our object in the event of an invasion of Afghanistan. We should only seek to force and guard a passage through the hills. We should not undertake the arduous task of hunting down the hill men, but only that of keeping them at bay when they sought to interfere with our communications. The zone of operations would be of necessity narrow, and consequently few men and simple arrangements would suffice. From the British entrance of the Khyber Pass to Jellalabad the distance is only seventy-five miles, and 5,000 men skilfully disposed in echelons would be ample to protect our communications; 5,000 more would more than suffice to protect the remaining 105 miles from Jellalabad up to Cabul. Indeed, we believe that we have exaggerated considerably the number of etappen troops needed, and that with a moderate expenditure and very little diplomatic skill, 5,000 men would adequately protect the entire length of our communications from the mouth of the Khyber to Cabul. As to the active force, 10,000 men could easily defeat any attempt to bar their progress by the Khyber to the capital. Of course a large quantity of supplies and transport would be indispensable; but it is understood that our stores on the frontier have been for some time past filled in view of the present emergency. The fertile and populous valley of Peshawur ought to be able to furnish much both of stores and transport, and as a secondary base there is Jhelam, the present northern terminus of the railway. There all the resources of men and food of India can be rapidly concentrated and sent on to the frontier, which is but 170 miles distant. This is the dry season, and transport through the Punjaub is attended with no difficulty. The railway certainly during the rains suffered some damage; but none that a few weeks will not suffice to remedy. For some distance beyond Jhelam the country is quite flat; and the process of continuing the railway, which has been going on for a considerable time, is now being pushed forward with vigour. Within a very short time, therefore, it will be possible to remove the terminus some twenty miles at least on the road to Rawul Pindee. The streams that have to be crossed between Jhelam and Peshawur are quite insignificant during the dry season—that is, at present, and even the passage of the Indus during this time of the year presents no difficulty.

As to the troops needed they could, had camels and elephants been available in sufficient numbers, have been collected at Peshawur within three weeks from the date of the issue of an order to that effect. They could march from Jhelam to Peshawur without exertion in a fortnight, and at Jhelam there could have been disembarked from the train at least 2,000 men a day. But Jhelam and the country north of it could unaided supply, without difficulty, 10,000 men. We are told, however, that the column assembled at Peshawur is only to make a demonstration, and that the real advance is to be made via Kandahar. If that is the case, the question of the occupation of Cabul before winter is disposed of at once, for only through the Khyber can that operation be performed. But what is the Khyber force to demonstrate against, and what effect would the demonstration have? The AMEER is a shrewd soldier, and knows that the force holding the Khyber would have plenty of time to reach, say, Ghuzni in time to anticipate the Bolan force, if it moved, as soon as a start was made from Quettah. We should simply threaten nothing by massing a force at the mouth of the Khyber, and the AMEER would soon discover from the state of our transport whether there was any real intention of advancing or not. As to the hill tribes, the presence of a field army near Peshawur would only have the effect of irritating them, and perhaps producing a general conflagation along the borders. If we intend thoroughly to subdue them before commencing the invasion of Afghanistan, the struggle with the AMEER will be deferred for an indefinite period.

IT is not generally known, we believe, that India in times of peace has the services of well-nigh as many fighting soldiers of the British Army as we possess at home for the defence of this country. A force of between sixty-two and sixty-three thousand men is necessary, it seems, to maintain our sway in the East at the best of times, consequently considerable reinforcements of British troops will be called for in the event of our being involved in war with the Afghans. Either, therefore, we must withdraw soldiers from the British establishment, or increase our standing army by fresh enlistments, or by once more calling out the Reserves. Nominally we have nearly 100,000 men in the ranks at home, but then the whole body of recruits for feeding the Indian and Colonial armies, as well as the home force, make up a large proportion of this total. There are, besides, non-efficients and time-expired men, who again reduce the number of actual fighting men in the country, so that in reality there is not much difference between the strength of the British and Indian armies. We usually maintain an artillery force twelve thousand strong in India, for among our native troops a few batteries only are to be found, armed with mountain guns. In fact, we only make use of native artillery at stations where, for sanitary reasons, we cannot well employ Europeans, since it has been found the wisest course to keep so formidable an arm almost exclusively in the hands of British soldiers. Fifteen batteries of horse artillery and forty-three of field artillery are to be found in India at this moment, together with more than a score of batteries and garrison artillery. This large artillery force is supplemented by fifty battalions of the line, mustering something like 46,000 bayonets, which share with native infantry regiments the duty of garrisoning the many Indian stations, and act as a leaven upon our vast native army. Of Royal Engineers there are but a few hundreds scattered over our Indian dominions, for in road-making and field-work the native sapper is all that is required. Of British cavalry we always maintain a strong force in India. At this moment there are nearly 4,500 sabres, or nine regiments, stationed in the East, notwithstanding the fact that our native troops are very strong in this particular arm. In a word, India calls for the assistance of twice as many British troops as are to be found in all our colonies put together.

GLOBE, OCTOBER 5.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

ADVANCE OF BRITISH TROOPS.

(REUTER'S TELEGRAM.)

SIMLA, October 4.

It is generally reported that a British force is advancing from Peshawur in the direction of Jamrood, with the view of making an attack on Ali Musjid.

The Ameer of Afghanistan is massing troops at Ali Musjid and Candahar, and threatens Quetta.

Strong hostility exists between the Khyberie tribes and the Ameer.

War material is being collected at Kohat.

THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

A committee, under the presidency of Colonel Palliser, C.B., has been drawing up in India an elaborate report on the subject of the defences of the hill station, of Kussowlie, which place it is proposed to render, if possible, impregnable, as part of a scheme now before the Government of India for providing a number of fortified posts along the frontier line.

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THE CABINET COUNCIL.

Her MAJESTY'S Ministers consult together to-day on one of the most momentous questions which has arisen for England since Russia recommenced her traditional policy of aggression. Whatever may be thought of her direct complicity in the outrageous insult offered to the Indian Government by SHERE ALI, there cannot be two opinions about her responsibility for the present complications. If her Government had acted up to its reiterated pledge that Afghanistan lay beyond the sphere of Russian politics, there would have been no Muscovite Mission to Cabul, and in the absence of that mischievous embassy, Lord LYTTON might have continued to negotiate leisurely with the AMEER until a friendly footing was established between Afghanistan and British India. But the Cabinet Council has more pressing matter to attend to just at present than the past conduct of Russia. The question of the moment is whether our advance into Afghanistan ought to take place immediately or some months later, and on this problem some of our morning contemporaries express themselves with a dogmatism which would, perhaps, be more admirable were it not necessarily based on imaginative fancies and assumed facts. The invasion of Afghanistan would seem to be the easiest matter in the world if these advisers might be trusted, while one in particular is so thoroughly conversant with military strategy that we are informed the advance must take place through the Khyber, and by no other route. Even the number of men required to overcome opposition is definitely fixed. Twenty thousand would be required, no more, no less, and these could readily be obtained, one half from the country north of the Jhelum, and the other moiety from the Punjaub by railway. If the matter were so easy as our contemporary makes out, we also should be disposed to advocate an advance through the Khyber direct on the capital. There is no question that the effect of such a bold proceeding would strike the native mind much more forcibly than slower operations. But it may be as well to bear in mind that the question is hedged round with important considerations military and political, about which we know next to nothing. For instance, there are the hill tribes—the Khyberees, Wuzarees, Afredees, Momuds, and what not. Is the *Daily News* in a position to affirm that these restless warriors would remain quiet during the invasion? It is estimated that the warlike clans can bring from 80,000 to 100,000 fighting men into the field, and even if we could guard the line of communications between Peshawur and Cabul with a force of 5,000 men, there would be a very great probability of the hill men swarming over the border in other directions.

We quite agree that punitive operations of one sort or another should be commenced without the loss of more time than is needed to insure their success. But this attempt to pin the Indian Government down to an advance through the Khyber is a piece of almost sublime self-opinionativeness in the absence of comprehensive information about the military and political exigencies of the situation. Surely Lord LYTTON and his advisers must be in a better position to judge than those who have to evolve a north-western frontier out of their inner consciousness. Our contemporary declares, for instance, that "by a mixture of silver and lead" we could not only secure the neutrality of the hill tribes, but induce them to side heartily with us. To talk of an Afredee "siding heartily" with any one for any purpose is an absurdity in itself, but passing over that blunder, our past experience proves that the proposed mixture of silver and lead only remains efficacious so long as the latter ingredient is plainly perceptible. Were a reverse to befall our arms in the Khoord Cabul and Jugdulluck Passes, the hill men would forget all about our gifts of silver, past, present, and to come, in their anxiety for plunder. Moreover, it is to be remembered that, although their allegiance to the AMEER is of rather a shadowy sort, they are Afghans pure and unmixed, and as such, are bound by ties of kinship and tradition to the more tractable subjects of SHERE ALI. Another curious error on the part of a journal aspiring to dictate its course to the Governments of England and India is its description of the Peshawur Valley as so "fertile and populous" that it ought to be able to furnish much both of stores and transport for the proposed Khyber expedition. The valley is neither fertile nor populous, taking it as a whole. Stretching out from Nowshera, the central station, are miles and miles of sandy soil on which scarcely any crops will grow, and an equally desert-like appearance is presented by many other parts of the valley. As for the quantity of transport available betweeen Attock and Peshawur, the expedition would certainly not start this side of Christmas if it had to depend in any measure upon the local supply.

The advice proffered to the Ministry in connection with the question of the source from which the cost of operations should be defrayed is no less dogmatic than the above. It is confidently laid down as a matter about which there can be no dispute that England ought to accept the whole of this burden because the war is of an "Imperial" character, and because India is a very poor country. We grant both hypotheses, but what do they come to after all? Plainly, the establishment of a precedent which would compel England to defray the cost of all future wars in which our great dependency may be engaged. For the Empire is one and indivisible, and whenever India finds herself embroiled with one of her neighbours, the strife necessarily has an Imperial character. But if we once allowed the plea that India ought not to be called upon to pay her just quota of expenses in these cases because her finances are impoverished, it would be equivalent to placing the burden during all future time on the British taxpayer. It is a somewhat suspicious circumstance that this advice should have most prominently come from a quarter not generally supposed to be over friendly to the Ministry. Certainly some of our other contemporaries, not open to that imputation, have now adopted the suggestion in a passing paroxysm of gushing generosity. But it was the most persistent and irreconcilable opponent of the Government in the metropolitan Press which first discovered that it would be a shame and a disgrace if poor India had to pay a farthing for bringing SHERE ALI to reason. We cannot but imagine, uncharitable as it may seem, that other reasons than the relief of our old friend the Indian ryot have been at work to bring about this exceptional outburst of magnanimity. It almost looks as if there were an intention of influencing the Government to do that which would bring it into odium with the taxpaying community of this country. A general election must take place within a couple of years, and it would look a solid argument against Conservative rule to point out that Lord BEACONSFIELD and his colleagues had saddled the taxpayers of England with the payment of some ten or twenty millions for an Afghan war. The greater the sum, the stronger the argument, and we can therefore imagine that while our contemporary has been ostentatiously championing the cause of the oppressed Indian, it has really had equally at heart that of dejected Liberalism. The Cabinet is not likely to fall into the trap, we fancy, and, fortunately, it can be avoided without doing injustice either to the natives of India or to the people of England. The former may be equitably called upon to provide the pay and allowances of the troops engaged in the operations, inasmuch as this obligation already falls on India, and that country would not, therefore, be put to any extra expense. On the other hand, wealthy England could not well demur to defraying the extra expenses of a war which, although its scene is on the northern frontier of Hindostan, deeply concerns the most vital interests of her wide-stretching Empire.

QUETTAH.

The *Week* says:—"Among things not generally known may be classed Mr. C. Howard's statement that 'last year Government took possession of Quettah, and collected a large force there.' Horace Walpole averred that a lady of his acquaintance had as good teeth as any one could have who had only three, and every one of them decayed. Similarly, it may be said that Mr. Howard's remark is as true as any remark can be that is divided into three parts, and all three untrue. In the first place Quettah is not a possession of the British Crown. It belongs to the Khan of Khelat, and by his permission is held by a British garrison. Secondly, it was during the brief viceroyalty of Lord Northbrook, whom the Liberals love to quote as a great Indian authority, that a British resident was appointed to Khelat and a garrison stationed at Quettah. Thirdly, and lastly, the garrison did not exceed 2,000 men, including a half battery of mountain artillery, previous to Shere Ali's demonstration of hostility. The next time Mr. Howard undertakes to instruct his constituents at Alston it might be as well if he first took a little trouble to instruct himself."

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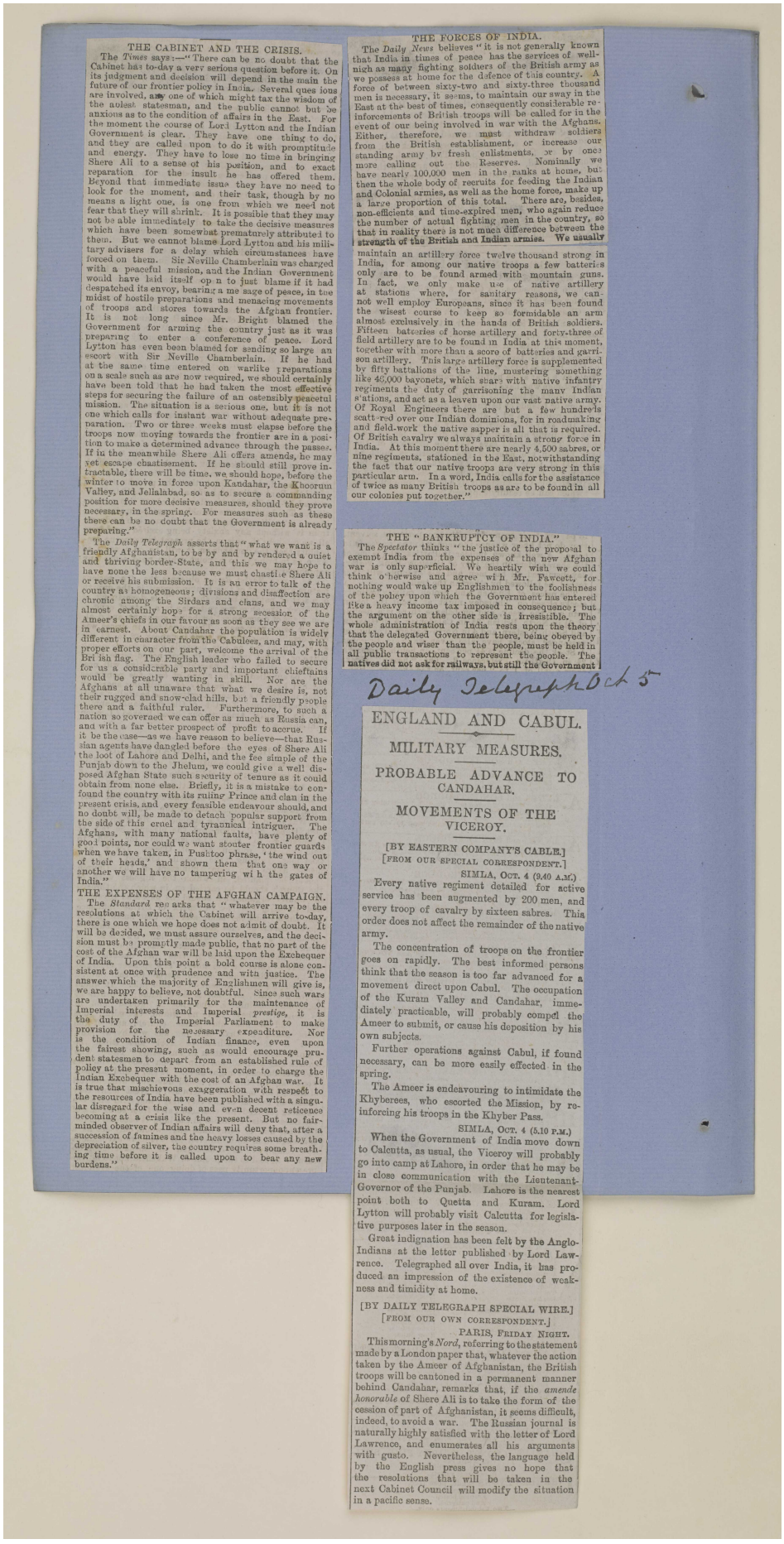

THE CABINET AND THE CRISIS.

The *Times* says:—"There can be no doubt that the Cabinet has to-day a very serious question before it. On its judgment and decision will depend in the main the future of our frontier policy in India. Several questions are involved, any one of which might tax the wisdom of the ablest statesman, and the public cannot but be anxious as to the condition of affairs in the East. For the moment the course of Lord Lytton and the Indian Government is clear. They have one thing to do, and they are called upon to do it with promptitude and energy. They have to lose no time in bringing Shere Ali to a sense of his position, and to exact reparation for the insult he has offered them. Beyond that immediate issue they have no need to look for the moment, and their task, though by no means a light one, is one from which we need not fear that they will shrink. It is possible that they may not be able immediately to take the decisive measures which have been somewhat prematurely attributed to them. But we cannot blame Lord Lytton and his military advisers for a delay which circumstances have forced on them. Sir Neville Chamberlain was charged with a peaceful mission, and the Indian Government would have laid itself open to just blame if it had despatched its envoy, bearing a message of peace, in the midst of hostile preparations and menacing movements of troops and stores towards the Afghan frontier. It is not long since Mr. Bright blamed the Government for arming the country just as it was preparing to enter a conference of peace. Lord Lytton has even been blamed for sending so large an escort with Sir Neville Chamberlain. If he had at the same time entered on warlike preparations on a scale such as are now required, we should certainly have been told that he had taken the most effective steps for securing the failure of an ostensibly peaceful mission. The situation is a serious one, but it is not one which calls for instant war without adequate preparation. Two or three weeks must elapse before the troops now moving towards the frontier are in a position to make a determined advance through the passes. If in the meanwhile Shere Ali offers amends, he may yet escape chastisement. If he should still prove intractable, there will be time, we should hope, before the winter to move in force upon Kandahar, the Khoorum Valley, and Jellalabad, so as to secure a commanding position for more decisive measures, should they prove necessary, in the spring. For measures such as these there can be no doubt that the Government is already preparing."

The *Daily Telegraph* asserts that "what we want is a friendly Afghanistan, to be by and by rendered a quiet and thriving border-State, and this we may hope to have none the less because we must chastise Shere Ali or receive his submission. It is an error to talk of the country as homogeneous; divisions and disaffection are chronic among the Sirdars and clans, and we may almost certainly hope for a strong secession of the Ameer's chiefs in our favour as soon as they see we are in earnest. About Candahar the population is widely different in character from the Cabulees, and may, with proper efforts on our part, welcome the arrival of the British flag. The English leader who failed to secure for us a considerable party and important chieftains would be greatly wanting in skill. Nor are the Afghans at all unaware that what we desire is, not their rugged and snow-clad hills, but a friendly people there and a faithful ruler. Furthermore, to such a nation so governed we can offer as much as Russia can, and with a far better prospect of profit to accrue. If it be the case—as we have reason to believe—that Russian agents have dangled before the eyes of Shere Ali the loot of Lahore and Delhi, and the fee simple of the Punjab down to the Jhelum, we could give a well disposed Afghan State such security of tenure as it could obtain from none else. Briefly, it is a mistake to confound the country with its ruling Prince and clan in the present crisis, and every feasible endeavour should, and no doubt will, be made to detach popular support from the side of this cruel and tyrannical intriguer. The Afghans, with many national faults, have plenty of good points, nor could we want stouter frontier guards when we have taken, in Pushtoo phrase, 'the wind out of their heads,' and shown them that one way or another we will have no tampering with the gates of India."

THE EXPENSES OF THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN.

The *Standard* remarks that "whatever may be the resolutions at which the Cabinet will arrive to-day, there is one which we hope does not admit of doubt. It will be decided, we must assure ourselves, and the decision must be promptly made public, that no part of the cost of the Afghan war will be laid upon the Exchequer of India. Upon this point a bold course is alone consistent at once with prudence and with justice. The answer which the majority of Englishmen will give is, we are happy to believe, not doubtful. Since such wars are undertaken primarily for the maintenance of Imperial interests and Imperial *prestige*, it is the duty of the Imperial Parliament to make provision for the necessary expenditure. Nor is the condition of Indian finance, even upon the fairest showing, such as would encourage prudent statesmen to depart from an established rule of policy at the present moment, in order to charge the Indian Exchequer with the cost of an Afghan war. It is true that mischievous exaggeration with respect to the resources of India have been published with a singular disregard for the wise and even decent reticence becoming at a crisis like the present. But no fair-minded observer of Indian affairs will deny that, after a succession of famines and the heavy losses caused by the depreciation of silver, the country requires some breathing time before it is called upon to bear any new burdens."

THE FORCES OF INDIA.

The *Daily News* believes "it is not generally known that India in times of peace has the services of well-nigh as many fighting soldiers of the British army as we possess at home for the defence of this country. A force of between sixty-two and sixty-three thousand men is necessary, it seems, to maintain our sway in the East at the best of times, consequently considerable reinforcements of British troops will be called for in the event of our being involved in war with the Afghans. Either, therefore, we must withdraw soldiers from the British establishment, or increase our standing army by fresh enlistments, or by once more calling out the Reserves. Nominally we have nearly 100,000 men in the ranks at home, but then the whole body of recruits for feeding the Indian and Colonial armies, as well as the home force, make up a large proportion of this total. There are, besides, non-efficients and time-expired men, who again reduce the number of actual fighting men in the country, so that in reality there is not much difference between the strength of the British and Indian armies. We usually maintain an artillery force twelve thousand strong in India, for among our native troops a few batteries only are to be found armed with mountain guns. In fact, we only make use of native artillery at stations where, for sanitary reasons, we cannot well employ Europeans, since it has been found the wisest course to keep so formidable an arm almost exclusively in the hands of British soldiers. Fifteen batteries of horse artillery and forty-three of field artillery are to be found in India at this moment, together with more than a score of batteries and garrison artillery. This large artillery force is supplemented by fifty battalions of the line, mustering something like 46,000 bayonets, which share with native infantry regiments the duty of garrisoning the many Indian stations, and act as a leaven upon our vast native army. Of Royal Engineers there are but a few hundreds scattered over our Indian dominions, for in roadmaking and field-work the native sapper is all that is required. Of British cavalry we always maintain a strong force in India. At this moment there are nearly 4,500 sabres, or nine regiments, stationed in the East, notwithstanding the fact that our native troops are very strong in this particular arm. In a word, India calls for the assistance of twice as many British troops as are to be found in all our colonies put together."

THE "BANKRUPTCY OF INDIA."

The *Spectator* thinks "the justice of the proposal to exempt India from the expenses of the new Afghan war is only superficial. We heartily wish we could think otherwise and agree with Mr. Fawcett, for nothing would wake up Englishmen to the foolishness of the policy upon which the Government has entered like a heavy income tax imposed in consequence; but the argument on the other side is irresistible. The whole administration of India rests upon the theory that the delegated Government there, being obeyed by the people and wiser than the people, must be held in all public transactions to represent the people. The natives did not ask for railways, but still the Government

Daily Telegraph Oct 5

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

MILITARY MEASURES.

PROBABLE ADVANCE TO CANDAHAR.

MOVEMENTS OF THE VICEROY.

[BY EASTERN COMPANY'S CABLE.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, OCT. 4 (9.40 A.M.)

Every native regiment detailed for active service has been augmented by 200 men, and every troop of cavalry by sixteen sabres. This order does not affect the remainder of the native army.

The concentration of troops on the frontier goes on rapidly. The best informed persons think that the season is too far advanced for a movement direct upon Cabul. The occupation of the Kuram Valley and Candahar, immediately practicable, will probably compel the Ameer to submit, or cause his deposition by his own subjects.

Further operations against Cabul, if found necessary, can be more easily effected in the spring.

The Ameer is endeavouring to intimidate the Khyberees, who escorted the Mission, by reinforcing his troops in the Khyber Pass.

SIMLA, OCT. 4 (5.10 P.M.)

When the Government of India move down to Calcutta, as usual, the Viceroy will probably go into camp at Lahore, in order that he may be in close communication with the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Lahore is the nearest point both to Quetta and Kuram. Lord Lytton will probably visit Calcutta for legislative purposes later in the season.

Great indignation has been felt by the Anglo-Indians at the letter published by Lord Lawrence. Telegraphed all over India, it has produced an impression of the existence of weakness and timidity at home.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

PARIS, FRIDAY NIGHT.

This morning's *Nord*, referring to the statement made by a London paper that, whatever the action taken by the Ameer of Afghanistan, the British troops will be cantoned in a permanent manner behind Candahar, remarks that, if the *amende honorable* of Shere Ali is to take the form of the cession of part of Afghanistan, it seems difficult, indeed, to avoid a war. The Russian journal is naturally highly satisfied with the letter of Lord Lawrence, and enumerates all his arguments with gusto. Nevertheless, the language held by the English press gives no hope that the resolutions that will be taken in the next Cabinet Council will modify the situation in a pacific sense.

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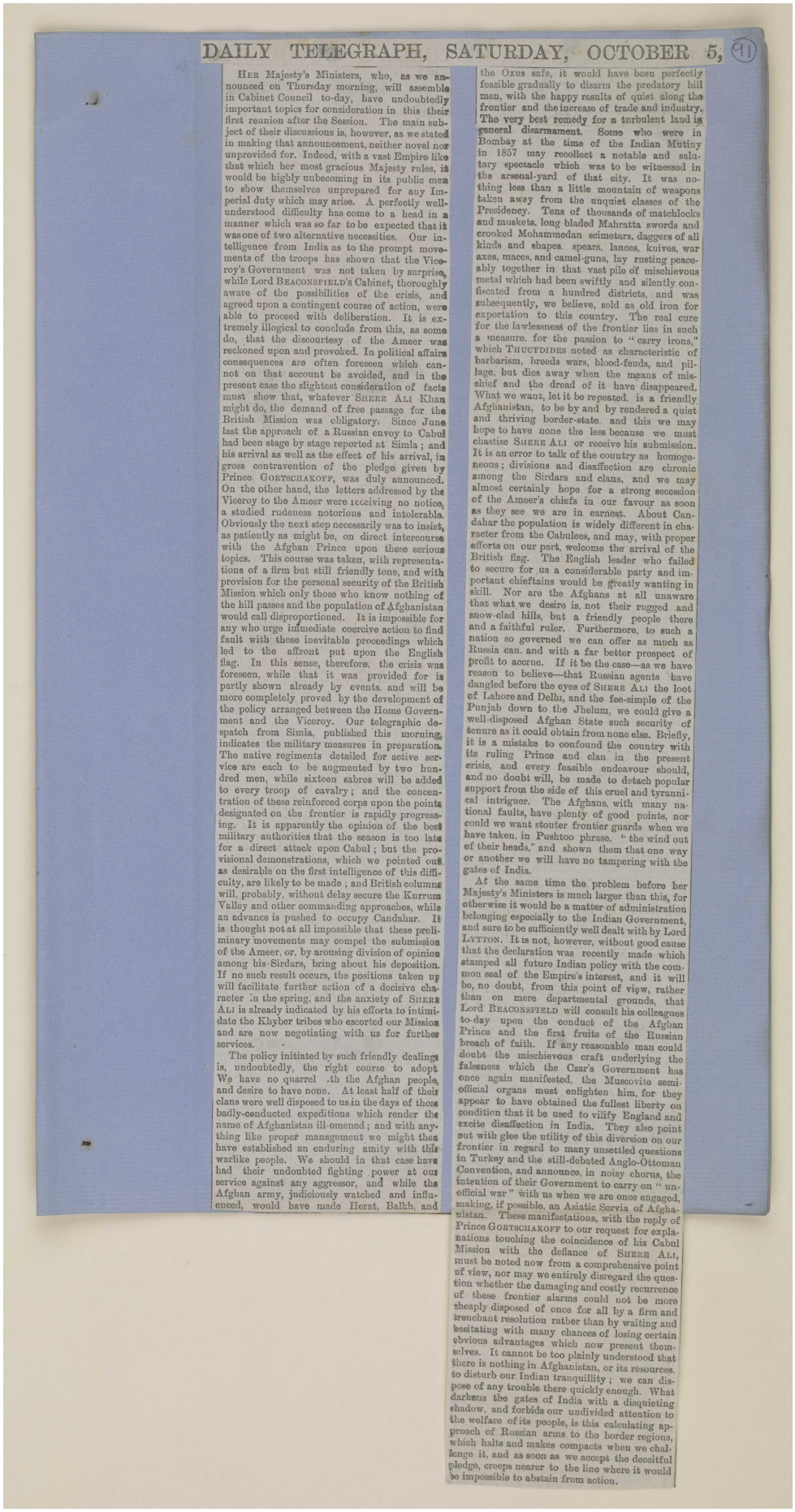

DAILY TELEGRAPH, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, (91)

HER Majesty's Ministers, who, as we announced on Thursday morning, will assemble in Cabinet Council to-day, have undoubtedly important topics for consideration in this their first reunion after the Session. The main subject of their discussions is, however, as we stated in making that announcement, neither novel nor unprovided for. Indeed, with a vast Empire like that which her most gracious Majesty rules, it would be highly unbecoming in its public men to show themselves unprepared for any Imperial duty which may arise. A perfectly well-understood difficulty has come to a head in a manner which was so far to be expected that it was one of two alternative necessities. Our intelligence from India as to the prompt movements of the troops has shown that the Viceroy's Government was not taken by surprise, while Lord BEACONSFIELD's Cabinet, thoroughly aware of the possibilities of the crisis, and agreed upon a contingent course of action, were able to proceed with deliberation. It is extremely illogical to conclude from this, as some do, that the discourtesy of the Ameer was reckoned upon and provoked. In political affairs consequences are often foreseen which cannot on that account be avoided, and in the present case the slightest consideration of facts must show that, whatever SHERE ALI Khan might do, the demand of free passage for the British Mission was obligatory. Since June last the approach of a Russian envoy to Cabul had been stage by stage reported at Simla; and his arrival as well as the effect of his arrival, in gross contravention of the pledge given by Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, was duly announced. On the other hand, the letters addressed by the Viceroy to the Ameer were receiving no notice, a studied rudeness notorious and intolerable. Obviously the next step necessarily was to insist, as patiently as might be, on direct intercourse with the Afghan Prince upon these serious topics. This course was taken, with representations of a firm but still friendly tone, and with provision for the personal security of the British Mission which only those who know nothing of the hill passes and the population of Afghanistan would call disproportioned. It is impossible for any who urge immediate coercive action to find fault with those inevitable proceedings which led to the affront put upon the English flag. In this sense, therefore, the crisis was foreseen, while that it was provided for is partly shown already by events, and will be more completely proved by the development of the policy arranged between the Home Government and the Viceroy. Our telegraphic despatch from Simla, published this morning, indicates the military measures in preparation. The native regiments detailed for active service are each to be augmented by two hundred men, while sixteen sabres will be added to every troop of cavalry; and the concentration of these reinforced corps upon the points designated on the frontier is rapidly progressing. It is apparently the opinion of the best military authorities that the season is too late for a direct attack upon Cabul; but the provisional demonstrations, which we pointed out as desirable on the first intelligence of this difficulty, are likely to be made; and British columns will, probably, without delay secure the Kurrum Valley and other commanding approaches, while an advance is pushed to occupy Candahar. It is thought not at all impossible that these preliminary movements may compel the submission of the Ameer, or, by arousing division of opinion among his Sirdars, bring about his deposition. If no such result occurs, the positions taken up will facilitate further action of a decisive character in the spring, and the anxiety of SHERE ALI is already indicated by his efforts to intimidate the Khyber tribes who escorted our Mission and are now negotiating with us for further services.

The policy initiated by such friendly dealings is, undoubtedly, the right course to adopt. We have no quarrel with the Afghan people, and desire to have none. At least half of their clans were well disposed to us in the days of those badly-conducted expeditions which render the name of Afghanistan ill-omened; and with anything like proper management we might then have established an enduring amity with this warlike people. We should in that case have had their undoubted fighting power at our service against any aggressor, and while the Afghan army, judiciously watched and influenced, would have made Herat, Balkh, and the Oxus safe, it would have been perfectly feasible gradually to disarm the predatory hill men, with the happy results of quiet along the frontier and the increase of trade and industry. The very best remedy for a turbulent land is general disarmament. Some who were in Bombay at the time of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 may recollect a notable and salutary spectacle which was to be witnessed in the arsenal-yard of that city. It was nothing less than a little mountain of weapons taken away from the unquiet classes of the Presidency. Tens of thousands of matchlocks and muskets, long-bladed Mahratta swords and crooked Mohammedan scimetars, daggers of all kinds and shapes, spears, lances, knives, war axes, maces, and camel-guns, lay rusting peaceably together in that vast pile of mischievous metal which had been swiftly and silently confiscated from a hundred districts, and was subsequently, we believe, sold as old iron for exportation to this country. The real cure for the lawlessness of the frontier lies in such a measure, for the passion to "carry irons," which THUCYDIDES noted as characteristic of barbarism, breeds wars, blood-feuds, and pillage, but dies away when the means of mischief and the dread of it have disappeared. What we want, let it be repeated, is a friendly Afghanistan, to be by and by rendered a quiet and thriving border-state, and this we may hope to have none the less because we must chastise SHERE ALI or receive his submission. It is an error to talk of the country as homogeneous; divisions and disaffection are chronic among the Sirdars and clans, and we may almost certainly hope for a strong secession of the Ameer's chiefs in our favour as soon as they see we are in earnest. About Candahar the population is widely different in character from the Cabulees, and may, with proper efforts on our part, welcome the arrival of the British flag. The English leader who failed to secure for us a considerable party and important chieftains would be greatly wanting in skill. Nor are the Afghans at all unaware that what we desire is, not their rugged and snow-clad hills, but a friendly people there and a faithful ruler. Furthermore, to such a nation so governed we can offer as much as Russia can, and with a far better prospect of profit to accrue. If it be the case—as we have reason to believe—that Russian agents have dangled before the eyes of SHERE ALI the loot of Lahore and Delhi, and the fee-simple of the Punjab down to the Jhelum, we could give a well-disposed Afghan State such security of tenure as it could obtain from none else. Briefly, it is a mistake to confound the country with its ruling Prince and clan in the present crisis, and every feasible endeavour should, and no doubt will, be made to detach popular support from the side of this cruel and tyrannical intriguer. The Afghans, with many national faults, have plenty of good points, nor could we want stouter frontier guards when we have taken, in Pushtoo phrase, "the wind out of their heads," and shown them that one way or another we will have no tampering with the gates of India.

At the same time the problem before her Majesty's Ministers is much larger than this, for otherwise it would be a matter of administration belonging especially to the Indian Government, and sure to be sufficiently well dealt with by Lord LYTTON. It is not, however, without good cause that the declaration was recently made which stamped all future Indian policy with the common seal of the Empire's interest, and it will be, no doubt, from this point of view, rather than on mere departmental grounds, that Lord BEACONSFIELD will consult his colleagues to-day upon the conduct of the Afghan Prince and the first fruits of the Russian breach of faith. If any reasonable man could doubt the mischievous craft underlying the falseness which the Czar's Government has once again manifested, the Muscovite semi-official organs must enlighten him, for they appear to have obtained the fullest liberty on condition that it be used to vilify England and excite disaffection in India. They also point out with glee the utility of this diversion on our frontier in regard to many unsettled questions in Turkey and the still-debated Anglo-Ottoman Convention, and announce, in noisy chorus, the intention of their Government to carry on "unofficial war" with us when we are once engaged, making, if possible, an Asiatic Servia of Afghanistan. These manifestations, with the reply of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF to our request for explanations touching the coincidence of his Cabul Mission with the defiance of SHERE ALI, must be noted now from a comprehensive point of view, nor may we entirely disregard the question whether the damaging and costly recurrence of these frontier alarms could not be more cheaply disposed of once for all by a firm and trenchant resolution rather than by waiting and hesitating with many chances of losing certain obvious advantages which now present themselves. It cannot be too plainly understood that there is nothing in Afghanistan, or its resources, to disturb our Indian tranquillity; we can dispose of any trouble there quickly enough. What darkens the gates of India with a disquieting shadow, and forbids our undivided attention to the welfare of its people, is this calculating approach of Russian arms to the border regions, which halts and makes compacts when we challenge it, and as soon as we accept the deceitful pledge, creeps nearer to the line where it would be impossible to abstain from action.

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DAILY TELEGRAPH, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5,

THERE is a myth in the East to the effect that when chaos was being reduced to order the spirits of the Land and of the Water met *tête-à-tête* to settle everything. They divided the earth between them to their own satisfaction, "subject to future rectification of frontier," and were retiring from the conference in a state of mutual amiability. But a terrible thunderclap over head, and a violent earthquake under their feet, startled them into the recollection that they had not heard what Air had to say to the general arrangements. And Air has never since allowed either Land or Water to forget the omission. This myth fairly illustrates the present situation with regard to Asia. We are accustomed to speak of that continent as if it were a field in dispute between ourselves and Russia only, and recognise in the solution of the Asiatic question only two interested Powers—the Empress of INDIA and the Czar. Nevertheless there were more gods in the Pantheon than two, and in settling the affairs of Asia we must not ignore the existence of the Empire of China, since it possesses all the power to make the oversight a source of trouble in the future. China covers nearly one-fourth of Asia, and one-half of the inhabitants of the whole continent are subjects of the Ruler of Pekin. This is a mighty fact indeed, and the Lord of the Vermilion Pencil, the Emperor of the Flowery Land and Son of Heaven, can be no more overlooked, as the shadow of his sway falls across the vast continent, than the Equator on the earth or the Milky Way above it. Yet so great is European vanity that we have affected hitherto not to notice China on the map of Asia, and to-day the affectation may be fairly called by a harsher name. It would, indeed, be folly of the gravest order, if not something worse, to shut our eyes to the enormous part this Empire of Pekin may be destined to play in the East. Russia has long been aware that a more formidable obstacle than nomad tribes and Turkoman Khans lies in the path of her advance. The evidences of a long-established Power confront her, as imperturbable and menacing as the Tian Shan mountains that mark its limits, and before her fellow barbarian Asiatic Russia holds back her foot for the present. Populous districts, rich in resources and trade, strong in settled government and peace, adjoin her own wastes, which, but for the Russian chains of forts and outposts that denote the aggressor's path, might still be the grazing grounds of locust-eating hordes, and not a portion of the Empire of Holy Russia.

To so strong an adversary the Cossacks dare not openly throw down the glove, but where courage was wanting fraud has often availed. No opportunity of aggravating mischief on the borders of the Chinese Empire has been lost, and from Manchuria on the eastern sea coast to Kashgar on the western frontier Russia by intriguing has nourished troubles to her own advantage. It is not so long ago that distant Japan was involved in altercation with Corea because of Muscovite interference, and China herself has often had to rue her confidence in the good faith of a Czar. Feeling their way through the pastoral nomads of Siberia to the frontier of Mongolia, the Russians struck the river Amur, and, creeping down it to the sea, established a straggling authority over a portion of independent Manchuria. Treaty after treaty, in which the subjects of the Czar accepted degrading conditions for the privilege of advancing, covered the stealthy project for a time. When, however, the forts of the Amur province were erected and garrisoned, concealment was neither necessary nor possible, and Russia openly added to the maps of her Siberian empire the seaboard facing the Islands of Japan, and thus became the neighbour of the enemy of China. Where and how far the intrigues now ramify Europe has no means of knowing, but in the Anglo-Chinese press references are often made to the aggressive interference of Russia on the northern frontier of the empire, and to Muscovite petitions addressed to Pekin for "the establishment of commercial agencies" within its borders. From Manchuria, the eastern limit of her Asiatic acquisitions, a line may be drawn westward fairly straight for three thousand miles, and this will demarcate throughout the conterminous frontiers of China and Russia, while a southward curve at the end will bring it to Kuldja, the western limit of her persevering march. The story of that theft is worthy of prominence.

The Russians had overrun Eastern Turkestan up to the Chinese province of Ili, of which the capital is Kuldja, and had ostentatiously laid down an impossible line across a wilderness of savage Tungans, Manchus, Tarantchis, and others as her "boundary." A chalk mark on the sea to keep the fishes separate would have been as effectual; and of course the Tungans and the rest continued to steal each others' cattle and cut each others' throats without any reference as to the whereabouts of the invisible barrier. But Russia gravely informed the Court of Pekin that it was impossible for her to civilise her savages unless China took steps to civilise her share of them also, and that until she was in a position to do so the Czar would temporarily take over the district of Ili. The huge province was forthwith marked down on General KAUFFMAN'S map as part of "All the Russias," but in course of time slow-moving China came up, and, thanking the Muscovites for their solicitude to keep the peace of Ili, informed them that she would now look after it herself. Upon this General KAUFFMAN presented to the Pekin delegates his bill of expenses incurred, a sum so monstrous that nothing but the bankruptcy of Russia could excuse it, and at the same time the author of the Khiva butcheries reproached the Chinese for their inhumanity to certain rebels. Having no authority to mortgage the revenues of an enormous province, the delegates retired to Pekin for instructions, and the present embassy to St. Petersburg is the result. Of this embassy the chief is CHUNG HOW, whose anti-European proclivities may be judged from the fact that both the Anglo-Chinese and the Anglo-Indian press charged him with connivance in, or indifference towards, the Tientsin massacre of French priests and Sisters of Mercy in 1870. Far more significant, however, is the fact that this exalted mandarin was at one time the opponent of Russia in Manchuria, where he effectively paraded his Krupp guns, and drilled his army into almost European discipline. Associated with him in the Embassy is SI-LUN, also a mandarin of high dignity, to whom for many years has been entrusted the duty of watching the Russians on the northern frontier, and who holds at present the post of military governor of the very next province to the ravished Ili. The selection of these particular officials could hardly have been the work of chance, and it is highly probable, therefore, that when CHUNG HOW and SI-LUN return to their posts at the two points most urgently menaced by Russia they will be encouraged in a bolder attitude towards the aggressors by knowing exactly the weakness in Europe of the Power that endeavours to terrorise them in Asia. The Chinese Army is already mustered for a trial of strength, and on the results of CHUNG HOW'S diplomacy hangs the question of Russia's supremacy in the provinces she has usurped.

For ten years past the Muscovite press has been taking notice of the "Tungan Question," but otherwise the affairs of Western China have received little attention in Europe. Yet the unfamiliar subject is one of sufficient importance to England to call for recognition by us, for it represents the first restlessness of the vast power of China on contact with invading Russia. That Power has always been notoriously slow of motion, but, like the KAMBUKHARNA of the Hindu epic, it always awakes from six days' slumber to a seventh day of enormous strength and corresponding energy. When the Taeping rebellion broke out, Pekin lay quietly watching the monster grow, but at last, like some boa or python, it slowly unwound its bulky coils, and moving to the scene deliberately crushed every bone of the gigantic outbreak, in spite of all its frantic struggles. Again, when the Mohammedans of Yunan and the surrounding area revolted, the same leisurely advance, the same utter extermination, marked the exercise of China's strength. It must be remembered that between Pekin and the western frontier of the empire some three thousand miles intervene, and that a huge army, marching with all the cumbersome appliances of barbarous warfare, has to stop on the way to let harvests ripen and be reaped before it can proceed, and that intricate mountain labyrinths and vast, barren deserts obstruct the progress of soldiers. Yet three times in the first thirty years of the present century China brought up armies each of over seventy thousand men to the frontier province of Kashgar, and each time reduced it to helpless, though only temporary, submission. But the movement against which it was striving was too strong, for it was a great ethnical revision of borders, and resistless as any other natural law, and the authority of Pekin was, therefore, formally withdrawn about fifty years ago. Russia, in fact, is rolling back the tide of Chinese civilisation—for only by that name can we call the condition of the Chinese provinces, and their substantial well-being, as compared with the Russian annexations. For centuries China had been overflowing her boundaries, and, in spite of Mohammedan resistance, extending a nominal authority, but with solid advantages, to districts beyond her regular satrapies. The Sea of Aral was at one time spoken of as "the Chinese Lake," and from that point, through Tashkend to Khokand and Kashgar, her officials were, only a century ago, as supreme as any others. In 1759 Tashkend became formally tributary to Pekin, and it remained so until 1822, when China, tired of suppressing at great expense the Turkoman disorders excited by the advance of Russia, yielded by treaty her rights over Khokand and Kashgar to the chiefs in possession. Russia at once stepped forward on the heels of the retiring Celestials, and, occupying Eastern Turkestan, pressed back the authority of Pekin behind the Tian Shan mountains. In an appeal to "the Great White Czar," in 1868, the ruler of Kashgar wrote: "After the destruction of the Chinese power, during six years all has been destroyed that was good, and that which commerce has created, so that nothing remains of it all." Nevertheless China knows her own strength well, and when her Ambassadors return she will know also her adversary's weakness; and pitted together, barbarian against barbarian, in the oft-contested battle-fields of Central Asia, the power of Pekin may fairly hope not only to stem the Cossack advance, but to render Russia impotent for mischief in the Khanates she usurps. As a future opponent of Muscovite intrigue in the East, the Buddhist Empire, therefore, comes into prominence to-day, and the "Tungan question," hitherto a purely Russian topic, acquires importance in its new relations to the real Asiatic question—the peace of India.

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STANDARD, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5,

Our Correspondent at Bombay telegraphs that the commencement of hostilities may be expected at any moment, for the AMEER has ordered the advance of four infantry regiments, who have arrived within a short distance of Jamrud, where some British troops have already appeared. The Afghans are being followed by larger numbers of the AMEER's troops, and threats are made against the Khyberees for having allowed the Mission to pass. Our Correspondent also contradicts the statement that was recently made about the return of the messenger who was sent to Cabul with the last letter to the AMEER. The Russian newspapers are still writing on the relations between England and Afghanistan. The *Golos* considers that Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN had orders to seek a quarrel, and that he did not give the AMEER time to reply.

There is no settlement yet of the Ministerial crisis in Austria. In Vienna it is thought probable that Herr TISZA will remain at the head of a reconstructed Hungarian Ministry. From Bosnia a telegram states that the Austrian troops have entered Vishegrad unopposed, the insurgents having hastily fled.

Whatever may be the resolutions at which the Cabinet will arrive to-day, there is one which we hope does not admit of doubt. It will be decided, we must assure ourselves, and the decision must be promptly made public, that no part of the cost of the Afghan war will be laid upon the Exchequer of India. Upon this point a bold course is alone consistent at once with prudence and with justice. Some half-hearted politicians and see-saw journalists, who are afraid to know their own minds, may busy themselves in finding out precedents for one course or the other, and striking a balance between them. But it becomes statesmen who have the courage of their opinions, and Englishmen, irrespective of party, who desire to maintain a truly "Imperial" policy, to judge the present situation apart from obsolete examples and changed conditions. The question before us is a simple one, and must be answered frankly. It is this: Do the circumstances out of which the war against the Ameer of CABUL has arisen justify us in imposing the burden of its cost upon the people of India? The problem is not a very complicated one, nor does it require any elaborate knowledge of Indian affairs for its elucidation. There are two elements to be taken into consideration—the political origin of the war upon which we are embarking, and the capacity of India to yield the resources needed for carrying on that war. The Cabinet will, of course, weigh these matters well; but it is impossible to believe that they can come to any other conclusion than that the war is essentially an Imperial war, and that India is unable to pay for it without the risk of a strain sufficient to disorganise her whole financial system. Justice and prudence, therefore, concur in warning us not to trifle with difficulties which, formidable enough at present, may become infinitely more so under the combined pressure of foreign war and financial disaster. We do not say that it will be a light matter to accept the whole expense entailed by the Afghan quarrel; but if faced boldly it will be less arduous, even from a pecuniary point of view, than it looks at first. However that may be, our boldness would be culpable rather than praiseworthy if we made war on the "limited liability" principle, taking to ourselves the responsibility of initiation and the glory of victory, and leaving to the people of India the payment of the bill. The larger that bill is likely to be, the more the reason for relieving the Indian exchequer of any obligation for it. I it should even prove as heavy as that which we had to pay for the chastisement of THEODORE of Abyssinia, it would be, no doubt, an unpleasant addition to the demands for which Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE will have to provide next year; but it would be no more than what, with a very slight increase of taxation, we could clear off in a couple of years. With India the case is very different; an expenditure for war of nine or ten millions sterling, if spread over five years, would involve an addition of a couple of millions a year to the wants of the Indian Exchequer, and from what sources such an increment is to be derived no Anglo-Indian statesman has undertaken, or will undertake, to tell us.

That the Afghan war is an Imperial war is as plain as that two and two make four. It has notoriously been provoked by the malign intermeddling of Russia, as a counterstroke to the check which she received when the Treaty of San Stefano was exposed in Lord SALISBURY's Circular. To meet the blow is not only a necessity of our Imperial position in the East, but a corollary from the principles we have publicly declared to be the foundations of our European policy. It cannot be described, except by a forced construction of words and of things, as a measure intended "for preventing or repelling an actual invasion of her MAJESTY'S Indian possessions," nor can it fairly be said to be undertaken "under other sudden and urgent necessity." The conduct of the Ameer of CABUL, though indirectly disturbing and threatening our power in India, does not involve any menace to it, nor is it pretended on behalf of the Government of India that the necessity for striking a return blow is sudden and urgent. On the contrary, many people feel that there has been already evinced an unwise and inexplicable amount of deliberation. In any case the Government of India Act of 1858 provides, as Mr. FAWCETT has lately pointed out, that only to repel or prevent invasion or under urgent and sudden necessity were the revenues of India to be applied, without the consent of Parliament, to defray the expenses of military operations carried on beyond the Indian frontier by her MAJESTY'S Indian troops. We feel sure that the India Office and the Indian Government will feel bound by the spirit as well as the letter of these provisions. But it may be urged that the Government will consider that it is in a position to ask Parliament to allow the whole or a considerable part of the expenses of the war to be charged upon the Indian revenues. No such plea can be admitted. The Imperial Parliament is a trustee for the Indian Empire and its millions of despotically-ruled inhabitants, and in the justice of Parliament is to be found the ultimate guarantee against errors in policy as well as abuses in administration. It is scarcely credible that Parliament would venture, without the strongest reasons, to depart from the rule which the Government of India Act lays down as the normal policy of the Indian Government in these crises. It is admitted that India must bear the cost of local and internal troubles, and that obligation is one which Anglo-Indian financiers find more and more burdensome as the order we have established in India becomes more exacting and absorbing. Jowakis and Dufflas, Lushai and Naga hill-men, have to be chastised from time to time, and though the expense of each "little war" does not look formidable, the aggregate cost is heavy. But this is a part of the police system of India, and at its infliction no one murmurs. It would be otherwise with political wars undertaken beyond the boundaries of India. Imperial policy, occupied with many grave concerns in every quarter of the globe, might find itself involved in other quarrels with Powers like Afghanistan which could be most easily encountered by the military force we possess in India. Is it to be understood, it will be asked, that whenever the Indian army is employed in Asia—for instance, against Burmah or Siam, or China, on the one side, or against Persia on the other—the Indian Exchequer is to bear the charge? The answer which the majority of Englishmen will give is, we are happy to believe, not doubtful. Since such wars are undertaken primarily for the maintenance of Imperial interests and Imperial *prestige*, it is the duty of the Imperial Parliament to make provision for the necessary expenditure.

Nor is the condition of Indian finance, even upon the fairest showing, such as would encourage prudent statesmen to depart from an established rule of policy at the present moment in order to charge the Indian exchequer with the cost of an Afghan war. It is true that mischievous exaggerations with respect to the resources of India have been published with a singular disregard for the wise and even decent reticence becoming at a crisis like the present. But no fair-minded observer of Indian affairs will deny that, after a succession of famines and the heavy losses caused by the depreciation of silver, the country requires some breathing time before it is called upon to bear any new burdens. The Estimates for 1878-1879, which Mr. STANHOPE laid before the House of Commons exactly a couple of days before the prorogation of Parliament, showed an aggregate revenue of sixty-three millions, and an aggregate expenditure of sixty-one millions, giving an estimated surplus of two millions, of which three-fourths was set aside as a famine insurance fund, and the remaining fourth as the ordinary margin which experience has shown

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to be necessary for safety. But these Estimates included a large allowance under the heads of land revenue and Excise for the improvement expected after the abatement of the famine, and for the receipt of arrears. This is a highly speculative kind of calculation, and the increase of one million and a quarter which was reckoned upon may be found to have existed only on paper. The decrease of the income from the Guaranteed Railways has also probably been taken as less than the actual figures will show at the close of the year. Thus it appears that the calculations of the Government of India, even after giving full credit for the returns from the new taxation imposed by Sir JOHN STRACHEY a few months ago, sail very close to the wind. A slight error in the hypothesis of the Finance Minister may turn the estimated surplus into a deficit. But deficit upon deficit has been piled up within the past twenty years, and the debt has more than doubled during the same period. In 1857 it was under sixty millions; in 1865 it had risen to ninety millions; and at the present time it is not far from one hundred and thirty millions. The amount of taxation levied has also increased largely; in 1867 it was forty-two millions, and in 1876 fifty-one millions. The Estimates for the current year include the provincial and local income and expenditure, which makes an exact comparison difficult. But whatever the precise proportion of the increase may be, that there is an increase of taxation is certain, and that it has been necessitated by an increasing expenditure is not less so. Sir JOHN STRACHEY lamented the fact when he introduced his last Budget at Calcutta, and it was with difficulty that new imposts were found by the aid of which the financial equilibrium was restored. In case of a war demanding large pecuniary contributions from the Indian people, the means of raising the cost by an increase of taxation would be scarcely available. The income tax has been condemned by a great number of Anglo-Indian statesmen, because it excites dangerous discontents; but even if those discontents were to be braved at a critical moment, it must be remembered that a sixpenny income tax, which in England may be counted on to produce twelve millions in the year, barely produces one tenth of that sum in India. Yet the population of India is eight times that of the United Kingdom, and Indian incomes are taxed at a far lower point than has ever been attempted in this country. The salt duties have lately been raised in Madras and Bombay, and another augmentation of them would be intolerably felt. The Customs and Excise duties in the aggregate bring in no more than five millions a year, and an increase of ten per cent. all round—a charge so severe that it would almost certainly check consumption—would yield only half a million. Thus it will be seen that it would be more than difficult—it would be well nigh impossible—to draw from India the additional taxation which would be needed to meet the charge, even for interest, upon the cost of an Afghan war, if that cost amounted to ten or twenty millions. The necessity of taking the burden on our own shoulders is clear, and the sooner we realise it the better for our self-respect.

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

HOSTILITIES IMMINENT.

ADVANCE OF THE AFGHANS.

ATTITUDE OF THE MOUNTAINEERS.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

BOMBAY, FRIDAY.

The commencement of hostilities may take place at any moment. Four of the Ameer's infantry regiments, with six guns, are stated to have arrived in front of Ali Musjid, a short way up the Khyber Pass, and have advanced to within three miles from Jamrud, at which place a detachment of British troops have already arrived.

Much larger bodies of Afghan troops are on their way down, and these threaten to attack the Khyberees for having allowed the Mission to penetrate the Pass. This would throw the Khyberees and neighbouring hill tribes into our hands, and it is expected that we shall at once render them assistance in case they are attacked by the Ameer's troops. It is probable that our first advance will now take place in the Koorum valley, as we can thus assist the Khyberees, who, in case of defeat by the Ameer, could then fall back upon us.

Afghan troops, with guns taken from the Fort of Ali Musjid, occupy some of the minor passes.

Contrary to telegrams from the frontier some days since, Nawab Goolam Hussain, our Envoy, has not yet returned. At Peshawur it is thought probable that he will, when he arrives, be accompanied by an emissary of the Ameer.

A telegram from Mooltan states that the troops are still massing at Deri Ghazi Khan.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, FRIDAY.

The winter movements of the Government are uncertain, but the Viceroy's tour through Rajputana is definitely abandoned. The Government will probably go to Calcutta early in November; the Viceroy to Lahore, reaching Calcutta by Christmas.

The death of the King of Burmah is officially announced. Prince Thiobo has ascended the throne as his successor. There is quiet at Mandalay, though all is in readiness to afford protection to the European colony if necessary.

(BY GREAT NORTHERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ST. PETERSBURG, FRIDAY.

The *Golos* of the 4th of October says:—"The collision which has suddenly arisen on the Afghan frontier will hardly astonish any diplomatist who has studied Lord Beaconsfield's recent policy. England desires at any price to secure such important strategic points as the Khyber Pass, and she considers the present moment, when Russia is exhausted by the late war, as extremely favourable to act the comedy of the episode in Reinecke Fuchs, where the rabbit was the aggressor. But comedy will hardly impose upon any one." The *Golos* considers that Sir N. Chamberlain had orders to seek a quarrel, and did not give the Ameer time to send an answer regarding the reception of the Embassy, and says the whole Mission is nothing more than a cleverly acted comedy, which will supply England with a pretext for occupying the Khyber Pass. It may be that the British Government, having learned from Hussein Khan that the Russian mission to Cabul was preparing to leave the Afghan capital, now desires, by loud demands for its departure, to win another imaginary victory over Russia. Any way, people who are versed in the secrets of English politics are certain that before the Ameer has time to offer an explanation or apology, the most important strategic points on the Afghan frontier will be in the hands of the British.

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The *Exchange News* of the 4th October says :—"The Ameer will attempt to defend his independence by force of arms, and if in such case he does not find a direct ally in Russia, he will certainly not be refused the support he has a right to calculate upon, if only for the reason that the origin of his quarrel with England was due to his friendly relations towards Russia. The possibility of these gates being opened for Russian invasion is a nightmare from which English politicians cannot free themselves ; on the other hand Russia, particularly after the lesson received at the Berlin Congress, can in no case abandon her influence in the sole point where she has a possibility to strike anything like a substantial blow at England."

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(From our own Correspondent.)

BERLIN, Friday.

This evening's *Post*, writing on England's position in Asia, says :—"We do not doubt in the least that England is able to take possession of Afghanistan. There are, indeed, Russian newspapers which declare that Russia will not suffer the conquest of Afghanistan, but a man can only prevent what he is able, and must let the rest go. England will overwhelm the Afghans even if Russia's semi-official alliance affords them the utmost possible active support." The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* publishes a semi-official letter from St. Petersburg in which it is plainly stated that Russia really planned to occupy Merv and to invade Afghanistan, where it is said they would have been received in a friendly manner by Shere Ali. They next intended to pay a visit to Herat.

Now that the troops of the Ameer of Cabul are reported by our Special Correspondent to have advanced beyond Ali Musjid, and to be within three miles of Jamrud, where the advanced guard of the British expedition has arrived, it is apparent that we may at any moment receive news of the outbreak of hostilities. Jamrud lies at the mouth of the Pass, and five hundred feet higher than Peshawur, from which town it is distant some fifteen miles. Thence the road runs up the Pass, until ten miles farther the Fort of Ali Musjid bars the way. Ali Musjid stands on the summit of an exceedingly steep flat-topped lump of rock, which appears to rise in the very middle of the valley. The road, however, winds round underneath the rock, which lies on its left. The rock upon which the fortress stands is too steep to be scaled from the front, and its fire is supported by that of a smaller fort built high up on the hill opposite to it. Both the forts, however, are commanded by higher ground on either side, and our troops, with their long-range rifles, could terribly annoy the defenders.

Fortunately, moreover, Ali Musjid can be turned by more than one minor pass. Thus, there is a road from the Attock Valley which opens on to Lalabeg, eight miles in rear of Ali Musjid ; and there are other small passes which, although not marked in the maps, are locally well known. One telegram says that Afghan troops have already been stationed in these passes. But the Khyber Pass can also be turned by an advance from our frontier fort of Abazai, north of the Attock, and some thirty miles from Peshawur. From this post an advance might be made by the Inzan Pass to Lalpura, at the Afghan end of the Khyber Pass. Lalpura and the whole country between that town and Abazai belong to the Momunds, who are, like the Khyberees, entirely independent of Cabul, and with whom an arrangement for a passage could no doubt be made. In our advance in 1839 we installed a new ruler, Torabaz Khan, at Lalpura, and this chief remained faithful to us during the whole campaign. The advance of a column in the Khurum Valley will also add to the difficulties of the defenders of the Khyber by threatening the line of their retreat to Cabul.

In estimating the difficulties of forcing a direct passage through the Khyber Pass it must be remembered that the Afghans have no knowledge of fortifications in the modern sense of the term, and that on the occasion of our last advance they fled with scarcely any resistance the instant they saw that we had crowned the heights. It is said that since that time the Ameer has raised and disciplined a regular army. Such discipline as they can have received would be of no use at all in mountain fighting, and our advance since the late war has been infinitely greater than any that they can have made. Then the Afghans were armed with long matchlocks, which carried a bullet straight and for a long distance, while our troops were armed only with Brown Bess, whose range was little over a hundred yards. It is true that the Afghans have now, in addition to their matchlocks, a certain number of Enfield rifles, with which we have presented them, and with other rifles which they have bought through Persia, and perhaps Russia. But these arms ,in hands undrilled in their use, are little better than the native matchlock, with which each Afghan had been trained to shoot from childhood. Upon the other hand, the English troops have exchanged Brown Bess for the Martini-Henry, and can shoot now as accurately at 1500 yards as they then could at 100. Rifled cannon and shell have taken the place of smooth bores and round shot, and our troops will, in addition, be well provided with rockets, missiles which have a terrible effect upon the nerves of men unaccustomed to them. With such advantages as these we may be sure that when the time comes that our troops receive the order to advance they will prove themselves as far superior to the Afghans as did the men of Nott and Pollock thirty-six years ago.

Evening Standard - Oct 5

SECOND EDITION.

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

Our Correspondent at Bombay telegraphs that the commencement of hostilities may be expected at any moment, for the Ameer has ordered the advance of four infantry regiments, who have arrived within a short distance of Jamrud, where some British troops have already appeared. The Afghans are being followed by larger numbers of the Ameer's troops, and threats are made against the Khyberees for having allowed the Mission to pass. Our Correspondent also contradicts the statement that was recently made about the return of the messenger who was sent to Cabul with the last letter to the Ameer. The Russian newspapers are still writing on the relations between England and Afghanistan. The *Golos* considers that Sir Neville Chamberlain had orders to seek a quarrel, and that he did not give the Ameer time to reply.

SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 5.

Every good little boy who has been well brought up is aware that he who governs his temper wins a greater victory than he who conquers a city, and knows quite by heart many other pleasing little sayings about forgiveness and meekness under wrong. But, unfortunately, all our Indian fellow-subjects have not been well brought up and do not see with the eyes of the good little boy ; and it is upon this fact that General M'Murdo basis a letter published this morning. The General admits that Lord Lawrence's plea, that grave as is the Ameer's offence "we should not bear hardly with him on that account," "reads well ;" but, he continues, "the issue is not confined to Afghanistan and England, but extends to the subject races of India, by whom the Christian-like standard of policy suggested by Lord Lawrence is not understood at all. Two hundred and forty millions of people within our frontiers, and innumerable races without, are waiting to judge from their own standpoint how we deal with this mortal affront ; and I claim support for our policy on the score of the safety of our Empire alone ; and in connection with this permanent object I express my fervent hope that the passes into Afghanistan, once they are traversed by our arms, may remain for ever in our possession, whatever may be our ultimate policy with respect to that country itself." These, it must be borne in mind, are not the words of a theoretical politician arguing for his own side, but of a practical soldier who distinguished himself, when little more than a boy, in the Scinde war nearly forty years ago, under Sir Charles Napier, his military tutor and also his father-in-law. Happily, the Cabinet meets to-day, and it cannot be doubted that the opinions of such men as General M'Murdo will receive the consideration which is due to them.

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EVENING STANDARD, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5.

The *Mémorial Diplomatique* alleges that the German Ambassador at Constantinople is pressing the Sultan to advise the Ameer to receive the English Mission, and that the Emperor William has begged the Czar to avoid raising any fresh complication.

Last night's Paris *Univers* publishes the following letter, dated St. Petersburg, Sept. 29 :—"About three months ago two emissaries, as unofficial as possible, sent by the Indian Government, arrived at Cabul. They were two merchants, or at least two persons professing to be so, who after numberless vicissitudes succeeded in failing at Cabul. 'Fail' is the right word; they entirely failed in all their enterprises. The chief of these was aimed at obtaining a passport for some English officers, whose mission would have been to follow from a distance the operations of the Russian columns then on the march. Great personages, confidential advisers of Shere Ali, were especially the object of the assiduities and flattering insinuations of these singular merchants. General Stolieteff, who had then been five weeks at Cabul, having learned the arrival and proceedings of these two persons, spoke to Shere Ali of them. The Russian General had no great difficulty, as you may imagine, considering the Ameer's suspiciousness, and Anglophobia, in convincing him of the danger, or at least imprudence, of letting such travellers stay in Cabul. The Ameer ordered the expulsion of the two self-styled merchants, having them escorted to the frontier. This unofficial attempt of the Indian Government with Shere Ali—if, indeed, there was any attempt, and if the two persons in question really acted for the Indian Government—must be regarded as an enormous blunder on the part of the English. It began with an avowable proposal. Moreover, it occasioned a first check for the English and a success for the Russians. The fact is that the whole Russian Mission, and probably also Shere Ali and his advisers, had no doubt that the two expelled persons were envoys of the Indian Government directed to negotiate the free passage of English spies through Afghanistan. Now, all who have to do with Orientals know the importance in their eyes of a first success or failure; how the former inspires them, and how the latter disheartens them. General Abramoff, though forming part of the Russian Mission, has never entered Cabul. As the military head of the Mission, he remained with the bulk of the escort at Chita, about 200 kilometres from Cabul. Later on, when there was no longer any doubt of the success of the Mission, he drew further back with his detachment, and finally quitted the Ameer's territory, installing himself in a village not far from the Afghan frontier. There are only vague *data* as to the distribution of Russian troops in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan. On this point there is the greatest reserve, and it seems that even in the office of the War Ministry nothing definite is known. All that has leaked out is that not far from the frontier, or rather on the frontier, are now encamped three pretty strong detachments, without reckoning General Abramoff's escort, composed of four sotnias of Cossacks. General Stolieteff, accompanied by nine officers, three of them of the staff, two interpreters, and 40 Cossacks, is still at Cabul. I can inform you almost positively that he will not be recalled. He will at most leave Cabul itself for some other locality within reach. From the middle of July to the end of August six caravans entered Cabul, comprising about 700 camels. Many men, a great part of them in European dress, accompanied these caravans. Succeeding each other at tolerably equal intervals, they all carried letters and enclosures for the Russian Mission. Three of them have already returned empty, and accompanied by at most a fifth part of the original escort."

Replying to Lord Lawrence's recently-published letter, in which he dwelt upon the advisability of "coming to terms with the Ameer," General M'Murdo writes as follows to a contemporary :—"While admitting the gravity of the offence committed by the Ameer, Lord Lawrence urges that 'we should not bear hard with him on this account.' This reads well, but what is its true bearing with reference to our relations with our subject races in India? I submit, with great respect to Lord Lawrence, that no one knows better than he does the degree of appreciation in which the art of insult is used as a political weapon by all Eastern potentates, and that their *finesse* in this line far surpasses that of civilised nations; and it is the manner in which such affronts are resented or submitted to that affords the index of power to their minds. There may be, as Lord Lawrence contends, no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with this Prince (although I look upon the threat to shoot Major Cavagnari at Ali Musjid as a reflex of the Macnaghten tragedy, and significant enough of the length he meant to go); but the issue is not confined to Afghanistan and England, but extends to the subject races of India, by whom the Christian-like standard of policy suggested by Lord Lawrence is not understood at all. Two hundred and forty millions of people within our frontiers, and innumerable races without, are willing to judge from their own standpoint how we deal with this mortal affront, and I claim support for our policy on the score of the safety of our Empire alone; and in connection with this permanent object I express my fervent hope that the passes into Afghanistan, once they are traversed by our arms, may remain for ever in our possession, whatever may be our ultimate policy with respect to that country itself."

The Paris *Temps* remarks :—"When we endeavour to consider the difficulties and consequences of an expedition which appears inevitable, we must admit that the war itself must occupy the least care of the English Government. The war will, without doubt, be conducted with a foresight and prudence which will wipe away the remembrance of the expedition of 1839-42. We also think that the fear of an armed conflict with Russia does not enter into the provisions of England. Russia has evidently sought to inflict humiliation and to create an embarrassment for England, but she can have no desire to engage in a struggle, the principal seat of which would certainly not be the valley of the Oxus, and which she feels at the present time altogether unable to sustain. Russian diplomacy has reserved for itself a most simple means of eluding the representations and demands for explanations which it must have expected from England. Russia will repel any suspicion of bad faith. She will disavow all hostile intentions. England will be obliged to accept the assurances, of which she will believe as much as she likes, and there will only remain of this new passage of arms a secret grievance the more, and an increase of coolness in the relations of the two Powers. The real and principal difficulty of the expedition which the English are now preparing against Afghanistan is to know what object is to be attributed to the expedition itself. Will the English content themselves with deposing Shere Ali, and putting in his place a Prince devoted to them? They would thereby reap from success a precarious result altogether out of proportion to the efforts which it will have cost, since England will remain exposed to the obligation of some day beginning over again a costly war. It may, therefore, be taken for certain that England will desire to obtain besides the dethronement of Shere Ali positive guarantees—that she will, for instance, require the cession of positions capable of assuring the free passage of the defiles which separate Afghanistan from the Punjaub; and we are sure that in so acting England will only be conforming to an imperious necessity, at the same time feeling the inconvenience of an occupation which must later be extended, thus reducing the distance between themselves and that Russia which they flattered themselves they were keeping at a distance by making Afghanistan a neutral zone. This is an entire change of positions. Instead of arresting the progress of the Russians by the independence of Afghanistan in the future, the English must oppose to them strategic positions taken up in that country itself."

The *Times of India* of the 13th ult. contains the following :—Sir Neville Chamberlain and staff left Simla on the 8th, preceded to Peshawur by Major St. John and Dr. Bellew. The following is the correct name and style of the native envoy who has gone to herald Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission :—Nawab Gholam Hussun Khan, Khan Bahadur, C.S.I., native commandant 15th Bengal Cavalry. The Viceroy's messenger also has the third-class Order of Merit. Sirdar Yakoob Khan has not made his escape from the clutches of the Ameer, but is still a prisoner at Cabul. Maharajah Pertab Singh, brother of the Maharajah of Joudhpore, has accepted a post on Sir Neville Chamberlain's personal staff in the Cabul Mission. Nawab Obed-Oollah, a Mussulman nobleman, and uncle of the Nawab of Tonk, has joined the personal staff of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and will accompany the Mission to Cabul. According to the latest advices from Cabul, a portion of the Russian Embassy have proceeded thence to General Kauffmann's headquarters on the Oxus.

THE AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.

The high authority of Lord Lawrence will, the *Saturday Review* thinks, probably disturb the apparent unanimity which prevailed in England as to the necessity of invading Afghanistan. Lord Lawrence's judgment is entitled to respect, even when his arguments are not convincing but it is remarkable that he seems neither to recognise the change of circumstances which arises from the reception of a Russian Envoy at Cabul nor the possible share of Russia in the recent policy of the Ameer. It may have been prudent to tolerate the sullen isolation of a semi-barbarous ruler as long as it was indiscriminate or impartial, and nevertheless to resent his ostentatious preference of a rival Power. If the enterprise is undertaken, the mode of prosecution must be determined exclusively by professional judgment. The intention of the Viceroy to transfer the seat of Government to Mooltan during the winter is compatible with the design either of an autumn or a spring campaign. If no decisive movement is to be made at present, questions will hereafter arise as to the expediency of having hurried on the quarrel with the Ameer at a moment when it was impossible to resent a probable act of contumacy. The appointment of a Commander in Chief will soon be announced; and it may be hoped that in the conduct of the war he will be allowed a large discretion. The ulterior intentions of the English Government and the Viceroy have naturally not been disclosed. The army which is to march on Cabul will not be encumbered by the presence of a pretender; nor will there be any disposition to dethrone Shere Ali, if it is found possible to exact sufficient pledges for his future submission and fidelity. If Asiatic potentates can be convinced at a moderate cost that it is not safe to defy England at the instigation of Russia, the war will not have been undertaken in vain. For the present it will be prudent to accept the assurances of the Russian Government that it has taken no part in provoking the quarrel. Russian journalists who announce that the Afghan war has been arranged for the purpose of correcting the miscarriages of Berlin may libel their own country with impunity. All their efforts will be insufficient to lower them to the level of the Irish brawlers who affect enthusiastic sympathy for Shere Ali, as their predecessors, nearly 40 years ago, applauded in prose and verse the bloodthirsty treason of Akbar Khan.

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THE COST OF THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN.

Whatever may be the resolutions at which the Cabinet will arrive to-day, there is (says the *Standard*) one which it hopes does not admit of doubt. It will be decided, we must assure ourselves, and the decision must be promptly made public, that no part of the cost of the Afghan war will be laid upon the Exchequer of India. Upon this point a bold course is alone consistent at once with prudence and with justice. Some half-hearted politicians and see-saw journalists, who are afraid to know their own minds, may busy themselves in finding out precedents for one course or the other, and striking a balance between them. But it becomes statesmen who have the courage of their opinions, and Englishmen, irrespective of party, who desire to maintain a truly "Imperial" policy, to judge the present situation apart from obsolete examples and changed conditions. The question before us is a simple one, and must be answered frankly. It is this: Do the circumstances out of which the war against the Ameer of Cabul has arisen justify us in imposing the burden of its cost upon the people of India? The problem is not a very complicated one, nor does it require any elaborate knowledge of Indian affairs for its elucidation. There are two elements to be taken into consideration—the political origin of the war upon which we are embarking, and the capacity of India to yield the resources needed for carrying on that war. The Cabinet will, of course, weigh these matters well; but it is impossible to believe that they can come to any other conclusion than that the war is essentially an Imperial war, and that India is unable to pay for it without the risk of a strain sufficient to disorganise her whole financial system. No fair-minded observer of Indian affairs will deny that, after a succession of famines and the heavy losses caused by the depreciation of silver, the country requires some breathing time before it is called upon to bear any new burdens. In case of a war demanding large pecuniary contributions from the Indian people, the means of raising the cost by an increase of taxation would be scarcely available. Indeed, it would be more than difficult—it would be well nigh impossible—to draw from India the additional taxation which would be needed to meet the charge, even for interest, upon the cost of an Afghan war, if that cost amounted to ten or twenty millions. The necessity of taking the burden on our own shoulders is clear, and the sooner we realise it the better for our self-respect.

The *Times* cannot doubt that the serious financial question involved will receive the close attention of the Cabinet. It is a subordinate question for the moment, for no nation which respects itself and its honour can afford to say that it shrinks from the cost of a necessary war; but it is none the less an important one. Lord Lawrence assures us that the expenses of a war will ruin the finances of India. But it will rest with Parliament to determine whether the finances of India shall be charged with such expenses, and, if so, in what proportion. It is clear that the Afghan question, whatever its issue, is partly an Imperial, partly an Indian one. But it is an Imperial question simply and solely because it is an Indian question first. It is in the interests of India that we have entered into relations with Afghanistan, and if we have to go to war it will be in the interest of India that we do so. But for India we should have no more interest in Afghanistan than we have in the moon; and if we are forced into a war which is none of our seeking, it is only just that India, whose security is endangered, should bear a portion at least of the cost. What portion it should bear, if any, it will be for the Government in the first place to suggest, and for Parliament to decide. We shall do well to be generous in the matter, no doubt. India is poor; if some authorities are to be trusted, it is yearly growing poorer, and many parts of it have lately been devastated by famine. But constant alarm and disturbance, such as we are threatened with through the hostility of Afghanistan, would be as disastrous to India as famine or even war itself, and the cost of a war which restored its tranquillity might prove, after all, to be not the greatest disaster that it could suffer. In view of the condition of Indian finance, we trust the Government will think it right to recommend Parliament to undertake a share of the expenses of such operations as may prove to be necessary in Afghanistan; but, if so, it will be rather as an act of generosity towards a suffering country than one of strict justice. India must be defended, and it is our task to defend it; but it would certainly not be just in principle to relieve India of the whole burden of measures acknowledged to be necessary for its defence.

Saturday Review - Oct 5

THE AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.

THE high authority of Lord Lawrence will probably disturb the apparent unanimity which prevailed in England as to the necessity of invading Afghanistan. Lord Lawrence's judgment is entitled to respect, even when his arguments are not convincing; but it is remarkable that he seems neither to recognize the change of circumstances which arises from the reception of a Russian Envoy at Cabul nor the possible share of Russia in the recent policy of the Ameer. It may have been prudent to tolerate the sullen isolation of a semi-barbarous ruler as long as it was indiscriminate or impartial, and nevertheless to resent his ostentatious preference of a rival Power. If the enterprise is undertaken, the mode of prosecution must be determined exclusively by professional judgment. Mr. Fawcett, in a letter to the *Daily News*, raises the important question whether the cost of the war is to be borne by the English or the Indian Treasury. The late Lord Derby, when the government of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown, stated that the expense of wars beyond the Indian frontier, undertaken for English objects, would not be paid out of Indian revenues; but, as might be expected, no definition was attempted of Imperial or of Indian interests. The expense of the subsequent Persian war was divided between the English and the Indian Governments. Mr. Fawcett relies on a vague declaration, attributed to the Viceroy, that he had, before he left England, arranged with the Secretary of State the due subordination of his measures to the policy of the Government at home. It was proper that the two Governments should act in concert; but it may perhaps have been intended that any military operations which might be necessary in India should be considered as local in their character. The expense of the last Afghan war was borne by the Company, although the Directors steadily opposed the warlike enterprise which was undertaken by Lord Auckland at the instigation of Lord Palmerston. On that, as on other occasions, the pacific inclinations of the Company were overruled by the Ministers of the Crown acting through the Board of Control. Mr. Fawcett fails to show that the punishment of the Ameer's insolence is not a duty primarily devolving on the Indian Government. The share of Russia in the transaction has not been officially ascertained; nor is it possible at present to determine how far the incitement of trouble in Afghanistan was, as some Russian newspapers assert, intended to react on the mode of executing the Berlin treaty. The strongest part of Mr. Fawcett's argument is founded on the financial necessities of the Indian Government; yet it is impossible to maintain a vast Empire, garrisoned by a powerful army, if means cannot be found for prosecuting a frontier war. The money must in the first instance be raised by loan, and the payment of interest with or without a sinking fund would not impose on the taxpayers an intolerable burden. It may be a question whether England ought not to bear a portion of the expense, if the Government is satisfied with the proofs of the baleful activity of Russian intrigue, which was stimulated by the antagonism which prevailed before, if not after, the Treaty of Berlin. A check to the menacing encroachments of Russia in Central Asia would be an advantage to England as well as to India. But for the war between Russia and Turkey, no Envoy might perhaps have been despatched to Cabul for the purpose of inflaming the enmity of Sheer Ali against England.

The military preparations which must for some time past have been deemed contingently necessary appear to proceed with commendable promptitude. Two forces, numbering together twelve thousand men, are to be distributed between Quettah and the nearer end of the Bolan Pass. It is not yet known whether a more direct advance on Cabul will be made from Peshawur through the Khyber. The Viceroy and his advisers prudently abstain from any public announcement of the time or the plan of the impending campaign. Some military writers strongly urge an immediate advance, in the belief that both Cabul and Candahar might be occupied before the winter sets in in December. The political advantages of an early invasion are so obvious that, if the movement is postponed, the delay may confidently be attributed to reasons of military prudence. A Correspondent of the *Times* who is generally well informed positively asserts that a winter campaign would be rash or impracticable. His opinions are entitled to much weight, if they are founded on a knowledge of the policy which is in favour at headquarters. The intention of the Viceroy to transfer the seat of government to Mooltan during the winter is compatible with the design either of an autumn or a spring campaign. If no decisive movement is to be made at present, questions will hereafter arise as to the expediency of having hurried on the quarrel with the Ameer at a moment when it was impossible to resent a probable act of contumacy. The appointment of a Commander-in-Chief will soon be announced; and it may be hoped that in the conduct of the war he will be allowed a large discretion. The names of the principal subordinate officers appear to command confidence in India; nor is there reason to apprehend a repetition of the disgraceful favouritism which prevailed during the former Afghan war, and beyond the days of the Crimea. It is unlucky, but perhaps unavoidable, that generals of competent rank have passed the age of sixty. Respect rather than confidence is suggested by the statement that a brave officer first rose to distinction forty years ago.

The former Afghan war was declared in a proclamation by Lord Auckland, dated October 1, 1838, and it began in the following spring. Then, as now, the war originated in jealousy of Russian intrigues; but the quarrel was unnecessarily forced on Dost Mahommed; whereas his son has wantonly offered a gross affront to the Indian Government. The Persians, who have long been instruments of Russian aggression, besieged Herat in the early part of 1838; and, on the obstinate refusal of Lord Auckland to protect the Afghan ruler against the threatened encroachments of Russia and Persia, the Ameer announced his intention of making terms with the invader; but, before a rupture had taken place, the siege of Herat was raised through the efforts of Eldred Pottinger, then a lieutenant in the Indian army, who undertook the conduct of the defence. It would have been easy to make terms with Dost Mahommed; but unfortunately Lord Auckland, under the direction of Lord Palmerston, or nominally of Sir John Hobhouse, had determined to restore Shah Soojah, a legitimist pretender to the throne of Afghanistan. With some opposition from the highlanders in the passes, and under the commissariat difficulties which are common in wild countries, the invading army marched without serious opposition by the Bolan Pass and by Quettah, Candahar, and Ghuznee to Cabul. A circuitous route was preferred, because the Punjaub and the Afghan territory of Peshawur were then in possession of Runjeet Singh. The chiefs of Scinde, though also nominally inde-

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CONDITIONS OF AN ADVANCE ON CABUL.

THE Calcutta Correspondent of the *Daily News* naïvely complains that the Indian Government continues its habit of acting first and talking afterwards, so that the newspapers have to deal either with accomplished facts or vague forecasts. If the flux of information now being telegraphed to Europe every day is the result of secresy, we may well wonder what would happen under a leaky Government. Happily telegrams will be of less value to an enemy in Central Asia than they would be to a more civilized adversary; and, still more fortunately, the sort of information with which the papers are now being filled contains little that can be turned to useful account. The strength of an assembling force, and the names of its leaders, are facts which in any case it would be impossible to conceal. The difference between success and failure in a campaign will probably turn mainly on the capacity of the commander and his staff, the temper of the troops, and the state of the supplies; and these are just the facts which will never be divulged. A general may be known to be incompetent by all those immediately about him; but, if he is personally popular, they will keep the secret, and try, as the phrase goes, to pull him through. No one ever ventures to say that an army about to take the field is not perfect as to spirit and discipline. For example, has any one dared to whisper in public, what is nevertheless perfectly well known, that all the regiments which formed the late Indian contingent at Malta were not very fine specimens of troops? The condition of the equipment and commissariat will always, with a respectable staff, be a secret known only to few, and scrupulously kept from newspaper correspondents. As regards the present case, we probably never had to deal with one in which the line of action to be taken would be determined more distinctly by certain ruling conditions which can be known only to the Government of India and its immediate advisers; and it would be amusing to note the assumption of certainty with which some of our contemporaries lay down the law about the coming war, were it not that the tone of the press suggests a doubt whether it will not soon become impossible for a British general to lead an army to success, under the glare of publicity given to all his proceedings. For the present, indeed, correspondents have not got to the point of laying bare all the shortcomings of our leading officers on the scene of action. But it is evident that the Viceroy is to receive no mercy if he does not do exactly what each paper suggests. Difficult though the task of decision may be to those on the spot, who have the facts to guide them, it is all plain sailing to certain writers for the press, although no two of them are agreed about the subject. Our sprightly contemporary who from the recesses of Wellington Street tells us exactly what is passing in Shere Ali's mind is only one degree more absurd than several others.

Widely as these authorities differ—from the opinion expressed in one quarter that we shall be indelibly disgraced if we do not get to Cabul before Christmas, to the solemn nonsense of last Monday's *Times*, that in war no risks must be run—they are, one and all, agreed about the vastness and completeness of our military resources in India. Yet it is exactly on this point that there is just cause for anxiety. The Indian army resembles the British in that, while enormously expensive and immensely over-officered in the higher grades, it wants men, who are, after all, a very necessary ingredient in an army. Happily the two cases are so far different that while at home we have not even got to the point of suggesting a practicable plan for getting men, in India no difficulty will be felt on that head. The North and North-west of India offer an unlimited supply of excellent material for soldiers; but then it must take time to train recruits, and the Indian Government might reasonably wish to delay advancing till the rank and file of the native army should be brought up to a respectable strength. Never more than a small army relatively to the extent of territory it has to guard, the Indian army has of late years been largely reduced, and is now but little more than a congeries of skeleton cadres, but cadres which, under the long-service system in force, there are no reserves immediately available to fill. The country which before the Mutiny was garrisoned by the seventy-four regiments of Bengal Sepoys, each eleven hundred strong, besides numerous contingents and so-called irregular troops, is now barely occupied by forty-five weak battalions, mustering about seven hundred men each of all ranks. A large part of this force is of course not available for service beyond the frontier, but must be left to garrison various important points within our own territories; but about one-half of it is stationed westward of the Jumna, and therefore within four hundred miles of the frontier. There are also five regiments of Ghoorkas at different points of the Lower Himalaya, and therefore near at hand, splendid troops, and the well-known Punjab frontier force of ten regiments. Altogether there are sixty battalions of infantry in the Bengal army and the North of India, occupying the great plain, fifteen hundred miles in extent, from Calcutta to Peshawur, or as far as from London to Constantinople, of which perhaps, by running things very fine, thirty battalions might be made available for service beyond the frontier, or about twenty thousand native infantry, the greater part of it of excellent quality. This number might be doubled or trebled in six months by recruiting, but the young soldier would not be thoroughly efficient for some months longer. The number of European infantry battalions in India has been largely increased since the Mutiny, fifty-two being now stationed there as against twenty-two before the Mutiny; but the establishment of these also has been greatly reduced. The British cavalry regiments also have been increased from four to nine; but whereas a dragoon regiment on the Indian establishment used to muster nearly seven hundred sabres, it is now actually weaker than one at home. In this matter Indian interests have been entirely subordinated to the supposed interests of the British army. For India, where it takes time to make good losses in its European troops, strong cadres, which can still be respectable bodies after some considerable stress of campaigning, give a much better organisation than small cadres with their expensive staff and attendant charges for colonels commandant; but the requirements of the English service demand the latter organisation, and so Indian interests have to give way.

The Indian army is thus organised at present on a very expensive and far from efficient pattern. By pressing on every available man to the front, and leaving the country unguarded for the time, the Bengal army may be made to furnish perhaps thirty thousand fighting men, natives and Europeans, for service on the frontier. This is ample for the purpose in hand, and is quite as large a force as transport can be supplied for in the difficult country which is to become the scene of operations. And there is, after all, but little risk in leaving the country without garrisons for a time. The *Spectator's* forebodings about a Mahratta rising may be safely dismissed from the mind. The attitude of the people of India will, no doubt, be one of expectation in the first instance; the internal danger would come afterwards, if we suffered reverses in Afghanistan; but it has to be remembered that, during the crisis of the last Afghan war, when India was bare of troops, and when the overthrow of the Mahratta empire was still rankling in the recollection of the Mahrattas, no rising took place. What is more remarkable, the Sikhs, through whose country we had to advance in order to reach the entrance to the passes into Afghanistan, did not take advantage of the opportunity afforded for destroying the army thus separated from its base by many hundred miles. Of course it does not follow that things will turn out now exactly as they did then; but common sense dictates that we need not go out of our way to conjure up every possible danger as a reason for inaction. And although the native troops can be augmented only by the slow process of recruiting, the European portion of the army may be reinforced at once. Whatever other measures may be necessary, not a day should be lost in sending out troops from England; and, if sent at once, they will arrive at the very best season of the year. Half-a-dozen battalions of infantry, with three or four batteries, and perhaps a regiment of dragoons, sent out at once to take the place, at the most important points, of the troops which have been moved to the frontier, will effectually prevent any internal trouble while the war is going on, and the Government will be inexcusable if so much of precaution is not taken.

Given the thirty thousand men available for active service, how may they be most effectively employed? Every consideration points to the advantage of striking a blow at once. We know what sort of resistance we are likely to meet if we invade Afghanistan now; but the operation might become vastly more difficult if the Ameer is allowed time to prepare for our coming, especially if he gets the assistance of Russian officers; nor can we expect that India will be free from excitement till we have put ourselves right with him. And, at first sight, there would appear to be no particular difficulty in getting to Cabul before the winter. The history of Pollock's successful advance, with a much smaller force than is now available, shows that this would not be much of a military operation. But there are other considerations which will no doubt carry weight with those who have to decide. The month of September is one of the hottest, and is quite the unhealthiest, in the year in the plains of Upper India, and a good deal of sickness may be saved which would otherwise inevitably occur, if the movement of the troops to the frontier is delayed till colder weather sets in. Yet, if they are to go through the Kyber before Christmas, not an hour is to be lost. Of course sickness must, if necessary, be faced, and some of our most successful Indian campaigns have been carried out at the worst seasons. Not to mention Plassey, Assaye was fought in September, and during the Mutiny the troops were under canvas and on the move during the whole year, with, it must be added, terrible loss in consequence. A more serious question by far is that of carriage. We at home, who have had no experience of the wants of an army in the field since the beginning of the century—for the efforts we made to feed the Crimean army encamped half-a-dozen miles from the shore do not count for anything—can hardly form a conception of what is involved in the way of carriage for an Indian army. We must not, indeed, estimate the needs of the case by what used to be allowed. The enormous multiplication of camp followers permitted thirty or forty years ago was merely one of the many indications visible of the general state of indiscipline and inefficiency into which the Indian army had been suffered to fall. We have improved in this respect since the days of the Mutiny, and it must be remembered that the brigade which was destroyed at Cabul, with its host of camp followers, was living in a fancied security, the officers and soldiers having their wives and families with them, and business generally being carried on as if it had been stationed in the most peaceful part of India. Still, when the greatest economy shall be practised, the baggage of an Indian army must always attain to enormous dimensions. This is partly due to the circumstance, in which the Indian army excels all others, that the fighting men are kept strictly for their proper work. With European armies a large deduction must always be made from the nominal strength for the men taken away as officers' servants, hospital orderlies, and the like. In India officers find their own servants; the artillery artificers are native mechanics; and the hospital service is conducted in the same way. These all help to swell the host, but the excessive number of camp followers is mainly due to the much better care taken of the soldier in India than in Europe. Such tents as our soldiers have been grilling under in Cyprus would be thought unfit in India even for Sepoys; the sick soldier must be carried in a comfortable litter, each requiring four bearers; and the whole genius of Indian warfare assumes that there shall always be a sufficiency of these to prevent any of our wounded from being left on the field. Then every horse needs a man to scour the line of march right and left to cut grass, for no stores of forage are to be had. For all these camp followers food must be carried, and food again for the men who drive the carts and camels on which this food is carried. Thus each additional follower creates a new burden, and the baggage of an Indian army, with all care taken, becomes an enormous drag on its movements, the first nucleus arising from the need of taking care of the British soldier, and bringing him up to the fighting point in good trim. It is easy to understand, therefore, that the question whether it is possible to go to Cabul before the winter will depend, not on the power of moving up the troops in time, but on whether the needful supplies can be collected. Supposing this to be satisfactorily accomplished, the next point to be considered is the strategical difficulties which would have to be encountered in undertaking an immediate campaign.

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Pall Mall Gazette - Oct 5

(13)

THE CABINET, AND THE BILL FOR THE WAR.

THERE is a common impression abroad—an impression largely encouraged by the ministerial papers yesterday—that at the Cabinet Council to-day immediate operations against the Ameer will be sanctioned. We believe this impression to be erroneous. Of course the Afghans themselves may precipitate matters, and perhaps will do so; otherwise, nothing will be done till the spring. It is calculated that the spectacle of our preparations may awe the Ameer into submission—though of what use or benefit it will be to force a Resident on him (a very different thing to his reception of a Resident as a friend) is not clear. It is thought, too, that at sight of our forces the chiefs may depose Shere Ali if he does not give in; or before the spring he may die: though how we shall stand then, if Russia (who has a candidate of her own in hand to succeed him) remains dissatisfied with us, is equally uncertain. But then the winter may be employed in satisfying Russia; and, considering what has been done in that way heretofore, we may safely assume that upon this the Government mainly rest their hopes of averting the war or of rendering it comparatively easy.

Meanwhile the financial difficulty of the Government is rightly described as the most pressing for the moment; and we have reasons for thinking that the *Times* of this morning faithfully expounds the mind of the Government on that subject. It is said "the Afghan question, whatever its issue, is partly an Imperial, partly an Indian one." But—"it is an Imperial question simply and solely because it is an Indian question first. It is in the interests of India that we have entered into relations with Afghanistan, and if we have to go to war it will be in the interest of India that we do so. But for India we should have no more interest in Afghanistan than we have in the moon; and it is only just that India, whose security is endangered, should bear a portion at least of the cost. We shall do well to be generous in the matter, no doubt. India is poor; if some authorities are to be trusted, it is yearly growing poorer, and many parts of it have lately been devastated by famine. But constant alarm and disturbance, such as we are threatened with through the hostility of Afghanistan, would be as disastrous to India as famine or even war itself, and the cost of a war which restored its tranquillity might prove, after all, to be not the greatest disaster that it could suffer. In view of the condition of Indian finance, we trust the Government will think it right to recommend Parliament to undertake a share of the expenses of such operations as may prove to be necessary in Afghanistan; but if so, it will be rather as an act of generosity towards a suffering country than one of strict justice."

Against this line of argument we protest, as a series of misrepresentations leading to a dangerous conclusion. The question is strictly an Imperial one; and that the Government at home well know. It has been raised through their own mismanagement (they may call it management if they please) of the Eastern Question; and that likewise they know. To talk of sharing with India the expense of a war like this as "an act of generosity towards a suffering country rather than one of strict justice" is itself an offence not only to generosity but to justice. What says the Government of India Act (1858)? It is there decreed that, "except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues o India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues." Now, this is not a case of actual invasion; it is not a case of sudden emergency; and Afghanistan *is* beyond the external frontier of her Majesty's Indian possessions. Moreover, India cannot bear this burden, or any considerable share of it, without being brought to the verge of financial collapse, or over the verge; and what of the most natural discontent it must occasion? The truth is that if the Government cast this burden upon India it will be because they know their own conduct led to the war, and fear to see that fact brought home to the constituencies by the presentation of the bill.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, Oct. 4.—It is generally reported that a British force is advancing from Peshawur in the direction of Jamrood, with the view of making an attack on Ali Musjid.

The Ameer of Afghanistan is massing troops at Ali Musjid and Candahar, and threatens Quetta. Strong hostility exists between the Khyberee tribes and the Ameer. War material is being collected at Kohat.

According to a Bombay telegram published this morning in the *Standard* the commencement of hostilities with Afghanistan may be expected at any moment, for the Ameer has ordered the advance of four infantry regiments, who have arrived within a short distance of Jamrud, where some British troops have already appeared. A despatch from Simla in the *Daily Telegraph*, on the other hand, says that the "best informed persons think that the season is too far advanced for a direct movement on Cabul." The Afghan troops who are advancing to the frontier are, it is stated, being followed by large numbers of the Ameer's troops, and the Khyberees are threatened with an attack for having allowed the mission to enter the pass.

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THE AFGHAN DIFFICULTY.

The *Saturday Review* thinks the high authority of Lord Lawrence will probably disturb the apparent unanimity which prevailed in England as to the necessity of invading Afghanistan. Lord Lawrence's judgment is entitled to respect, even when his arguments are not convincing; but it is remarkable that he seems neither to recognize the change of circumstances which arises from the reception of a Russian Envoy at Cabul nor the possible share of Russia in the recent policy of the Ameer. It may have been prudent to tolerate the sullen isolation of a semi-barbarous ruler as long as it was indiscriminate or impartial, and nevertheless to resent his ostentatious preference of a rival Power. If the enterprise is undertaken, the mode of prosecution must be determined exclusively by professional judgment. As regards cost, the money must in the first instance be raised by loan, and the payment of interest with or without a sinking fund would not impose on the taxpayers an intolerable burden. It may be a question whether England ought not to bear a portion of the expense, if the Government is satisfied with the proofs of the baleful activity of Russian intrigue, which was stimulated by the antagonism which prevailed before, if not after, the Treaty of Berlin. If Asiatic potentates can be convinced at a moderate cost that it is not safe to defy England at the instigation of Russia, the war will not have been undertaken in vain. For the present it will be prudent to accept the assurances of the Russian Government that it has taken no part in provoking the quarrel. Russian journalists who announce that the Afghan war has been arranged for the purpose of correcting the miscarriages of Berlin may libel their own country with impunity. All their efforts will be insufficient to lower them to the level of the Irish brawlers who affect enthusiastic sympathy for Shere Ali, as their predecessors, nearly forty years ago, applauded in prose and verse the bloodthirsty treason of Akbar Khan.

The *Spectator* says Lord Lytton has neither repented nor stood firm; but has adopted, it is greatly to be feared, a compromise combining most of the evils of delay with all the evils of rash haste. Unless the great bulk of the telegrams received from India are intended to deceive, the broad course of events must have been in this wise:—The Viceroy, on receiving intelligence of the rebuff at Jumrood, determined off-hand on a dramatic coup. Afghanistan should be entered, Cabul occupied, the Ameer dethroned, and Britain avenged all at once, just as if the world were an opera-house and he stage-manager. The mission was recalled and dispersed by telegraph, Sir Neville Chamberlain, by far the ablest soldier in the business, not being even called to Simla for consultation on his way south, much less entrusted with command. Orders were issued for three partially prepared corps to move "in three days"—the three days being telegraphed particularly—and General Roberts, a man of skill and energy, was sent flying to Kohat to begin the work. An extraordinary appeal was at the same time made through the *Times* correspondent direct to Lord Salisbury, begging, in language very rarely used, for support from the Foreign Office, because the business in its present phase was "Imperial," and not local. The object of that prayer was twofold—to neutralize any distaste Lord Salisbury might feel for a wild project, and to intimate that England, and not India, must pay the bill. The reply evidently made, if the *Times* has any inspiration at all, that the affair was exclusively Indian, that Lord Lytton must take his own course, and that England at most could only afford help in "extraordinary expenses," a reply accentuated by a refusal to call a Cabinet, rather cooled Lord Lytton, as did also his discovery that "ready" in the mouth of an Indian departmental chief does not mean the same as "ready" in the mouth of Count von Moltke or even of Sir Garnet Wolseley. At all events, Lord Lytton drew back, but apparently—there is still a little haze over this—not completely. He could not "rush" the Ameer, as he hoped, but he could not bear to put off vengeance till the spring. Lord Lytton, therefore, decided that something must be done, and that something was the occupation of Candahar through the Bolan. As regards preparations, the *Spectator* reads and re-reads the lists of the columns with a sense of bewilderment, asking each time whether the Government is concealing its plans, or whether Lord Lytton is really going to invade a country exactly the size of Germany—so say the Russian staff—and with a million of fighting men in it, with less than one Prussian regiment and four or five thousand Indians.

The *Economist* admits that it is possible that the ill effect which any delay in exacting reparation from the Ameer may have upon the Indian people has been exaggerated, but observes that six months of inaction will afford ample opportunity for scheming of every kind, and it must be a sanguine mind that can suppose that either the intent or the result of this scheming will be to the advantage of England. If nothing can be done till the spring the Government ought certainly to explain why Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission was thus ill-timed. The general belief is that the adoption of a new frontier policy was the particular commission which Lord Lytton went out to execute. If so, the demand addressed to Shere Ali must have been for some time resolved on, and there seems no reason why the refusal to receive it should not have been extracted from him in the spring instead of in the autumn. If it were of any avail the *Economist* would go further than this, and say that a change so important as the adoption of a new frontier policy in India ought not to have been made without some communication with Parliament. The Ameer, left to himself, could do India but little harm. It is his relations with Russia that make it necessary to insist upon his doing this or that; and if once this is admitted, an invasion of Afghanistan becomes as much an incident of Imperial policy as an invasion of the Baltic provinces.

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ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times* observes that there can be no doubt that the Cabinet has to-day a very serious question before it. On its judgment and decision will depend in the main the future of our frontier policy in India. For the moment the course of Lord Lytton and the Indian Government is clear. They have one thing to do, and they are called upon to do it with promptitude and energy. It is possible that they may not be able immediately to take the decisive measures which have been somewhat prematurely attributed to them. But we cannot blame Lord Lytton and his military advisers for a delay which circumstances have forced on them. The Indian Government would have laid itself open to just blame if it had despatched its envoy, bearing a message of peace, in the midst of hostile preparations and menacing movements of troops and stores towards the Afghan frontier. If Lord Lytton is to be blamed at all, it is for having risked the failure of an important mission at a moment when the swift approach of winter might make it difficult, in case of failure, to take ulterior measures. We are asked by our candid friends to believe that we cannot rely on our Indian troops. It is not impossible that we may be as well-informed on that point as our neighbours. When it became known in India that a native contingent was to be brought to Europe, our difficulty was not to find troops on whom we could rely, but to select from those who were only too eager to come. Such proofs of eager loyalty are worth a good deal more than the surmise of a neighbour whose disinterestedness is not entirely beyond question. Indeed, we should not hesitate, if need were, to increase the strength of our native army without fear of diluting its loyalty, and if it becomes necessary to employ it in an Afghan campaign, we shall do so without misgiving. On the other hand, bitter experience has long ago taught us the folly of under-estimating the magnitude of the task that may be before us. It is far better to wait a few weeks now and make sure of our course, than to rush headlong into a struggle of which no man can yet see the end.

The *Standard* says that whatever may be the resolutions at which the Cabinet will arrive to-day, there is one which it hopes does not admit of doubt. It will be decided, we must assure ourselves, and the decision must be promptly made public, that no part of the cost of the Afghan war will be laid upon the Exchequer of India. Upon this point a bold course is alone consistent at once with prudence and with justice. There are two elements to be taken into consideration—the political origin of the war upon which we are embarking, and the capacity of India to yield the resources needed for carrying on that war. The Cabinet will, of course, weigh these matters well; but it is impossible to believe that they can come to any other conclusion than that the war is essentially an Imperial war, and that India is unable to pay for it without the risk of a strain sufficient to disorganize her whole financial system. Justice and prudence, therefore, concur in warning us not to trifle with difficulties which, formidable enough at present, may become infinitely more so under the combined pressure of war and financial disaster. If the cost should even prove as heavy as that which we had to pay for the chastisement of Theodore of Abyssinia, it would be no more than what, with a very slight increase of taxation, we could clear off in a couple of years. With India the case is very different. That the Afghan war is an Imperial war is as plain as that two and two make four. It has notoriously been provoked by the malign intermeddling of Russia, as a counterstroke to the check which she received when the Treaty of San Stefano was exposed in Lord Salisbury's Circular. To meet the blow is not only a necessity of our Imperial position in the East, but a corollary from the principles we have publicly declared to be the foundations of our European policy.

This Evening's News.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The Bombay correspondent of the *Standard* telegraphs yesterday as follows :—

The commencement of hostilities may take place at any moment. Four of the Ameer's infantry regiments, with six guns, are stated to have arrived in front of Ali Musjid, a short way up the Khyber Pass, and have advanced to within three miles from Jamrud, at which place a detachment of British troops has already arrived. Much larger bodies of Afghan troops are on their way down, and these threaten to attack the Khyberees for having allowed the mission to penetrate the Pass. This would throw the Khyberees and neighbouring hill tribes into our hands, and it is expected that we shall at once render them assistance in case they are attacked by the Ameer's troops. It is probable that our first advance will now take place in the Koorum Valley, as we can thus assist the Khyberees, who, in case of defeat by the Ameer, could then fall back upon us. Afghan troops, with guns taken from the Fort of Ali Musjid, occupy some of the minor passes. Contrary to telegrams from the frontier some days since, Nawab Goolam Hussain, our envoy, has not yet returned, At Peshawur it is thought probable that he will, when he arrives, be accompanied by an emissary of the Ameer. A telegram from Mooltan states that the troops are still massing at Deri Ghazi Khan.

The *Daily Telegraph* publishes a despatch from Simla which says :—

Every native regiment detailed for active service has been augmented by 200 men, and every troop of cavalry by sixteen sabres. This order does not affect the remainder of the native army. The concentration of troops on the frontier goes on rapidly. The best informed persons think that the season is too far advanced for a movement direct upon Cabul. The occupation of the Kooram Valley and Candahar, immediately practicable, will probably compel the Ameer to submit, or cause his deposition by his own subjects. Further operations against Cabul, if found necessary, can be more easily effected in the spring.

According to the same authority, great indignation has been felt by Anglo-Indians at the letter published by Lord Lawrence. Telegraphed all over India, it has, the correspondent says, "produced an impression of the existence of weakness and timidity at home."

INDIA.

The news from India chiefly relates to the Afghan mission, which, when the mail left, was on its way to Peshawur. The native noblemen who accompanied the mission were, the Indian papers state, Maharajah Pertab Singh, brother of the Maharajah of Joudhpore and Nawab Obed-Oollah, a Mussulman nobleman, and uncle of the Nawab of Tonk. The *Times of India* states that the Indian Government had forbidden any newspaper special correspondents to accompany the expedition.

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THE TIMES, MONDAY, OCTOBER 7,

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

BOMBAY, Oct. 6.

Despatches published by the Indian newspapers announce that the Khyberees have declared in favour of the British.

The report that it is intended to make a dash upon Ali Musjid requires confirmation.

The Momunds are marching to join the Cabulees.

Great enthusiasm prevails in the ranks of the Indian army at the prospect of military operations.

LONDON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1878.

The intelligence which reaches us from India this morning unhappily renders fainter the little hope that still remains that the Indian Government will be able to come to a peaceful understanding with Shere Ali. Four Afghan regiments, it is said, accompanied by six guns, have advanced to the mouth of the Khyber Pass. This movement must be taken to indicate a determined purpose on the Ameer's part, for, as is well known, the tribes which dwell in the mountains overhanging the Khyber are by no means well disposed towards their nominal ruler. They readily gave guarantees for the safe conduct of Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission, and had the matter depended on them alone, he would have found no obstacle at Ali Musjid. The advance of the Ameer's troops and the severity with which he is not unlikely to treat the defection of tribes which have proved friendly to us are hardly measures calculated to recover their loyalty. It is probable, too, that their disaffection may prove a contagious example among other tribes situated along the frontier. We are rather too apt, perhaps, to regard Afghanistan as a compact and united State devoted to its ruler by personal loyalty and strong national feeling. It would be both easy and dangerous to under-estimate the real strength of Shere Ali, who is a determined and practised soldier; but it would be a mistake to suppose that he exercises undisputed sway over all the territories nominally subject to his rule. He has an army, and he rules by the right of the strongest; but he is by no means secure against domestic intrigue and the revolt of his own subjects. The opinion is current in India that the mere entry of British troops into Afghan territory might kindle intestine disturbance, and even bring about the deposition of Shere Ali himself. This is a result which, taken by itself, we certainly should have no reason to desire. We wish for nothing better than the tranquillity of Afghanistan and the friendship of its ruler. But if Shere Ali has miscalculated his own strength and the loyalty of his subjects, we cannot be held responsible for the consequences of his own obstinacy and wrong-headedness. As the case stands at present, the relation of Shere Ali to his own subjects is his affair rather than ours. But, in considering the issue of the present difficulty and the means to be taken for removing it, we must naturally take into account the troubles which confront Shere Ali at home. We cannot afford to show weakness in a matter of such vital moment; but there is no reason for a greater display of strength than the occasion, calmly considered, demands.

It seems now to have been determined by the Indian Government, as we surmised last week, that any attempt on our part to penetrate into Afghanistan in force is to be deferred until next year. This certainly does not mean that nothing will be done, for it is quite possible that the measures now in progress will effect all that we have in view. But no attempt will at present be made to march on Cabul, nor even, in all probability, on Candahar. It may not be necessary to do so at all. The full purpose of the Indian Government is not yet revealed; but it seems evident that Lord Lytton and his advisers are determined to try the effect of a strong military demonstration on the Afghan frontier before proceeding to ulterior and more decisive measures. For this purpose troops will be collected at Peshawur and the garrison at Jumrood strengthened so as to command the entrance to the Khyber, and, if necessary, to seize the stronghold of Ali Musjid; the issue of the Bholan will be secured beyond the possibility of attack; and troops will be advanced into the Khoorum Valley. Troops are now in motion for the purpose of reinforcing the garrison of Quetta, but it is not considered expedient to hazard an advance on Candahar at present, unless, which is most improbable, an opportunity offers for seizing it by a *coup de main*. Notwithstanding the reported advance of the Ameer's troops to Ali Musjid, it is probable that our forces will meet with little difficulty in the neighbourhood of the Khyber. The tribes are still friendly towards us according to the latest accounts, and, if judiciously dealt with, they are not likely to waver in their allegiance. The most important of the military operations now in contemplation will be the occupation of the Khoorum Valley. It gives us an alternative route to Cabul, in some respects superior to that of the Khyber. There are reasons, perhaps, for doubting whether it possesses all the advantages which our Correspondent claims for it; but if it can be effectively occupied, and the friendship of its inhabitants secured, it will advance us several stages on the road to Ghuznee and Cabul. The valley is fertile, the climate is comparatively mild, and the passes over the mountains into the interior of Afghanistan are free from serious difficulty. The inhabitants, however, are wild, lawless, and treacherous, and it is certain that an advance in this direction will have to be conducted with all possible caution. These three measures, then—the reinforcement of the garrison of Quetta, the advance up the Khoorum Valley, and the occupation of the Khyber Pass as far, at least, as Ali Musjid—though about the last there still seems to be some doubt—are all that are immediately contemplated. The winter will be occupied in serious preparations, in the movement of reinforcements and reserves towards the frontier, and in the collection of the necessary stores and transport. If our relations with Shere Ali do not improve in the course of the next few months, if he does not yield to a demonstration of which it will be impossible for him to mistake the purpose, there will remain no alternative but to resort to more decisive measures in the spring, when the weather is again favourable, and when all our preparations are complete.

It is very possible that eager and impatient critics of the Indian Government will chafe at this apparent delay in striking a decisive blow. The delay is partly the result of necessity no doubt, for, as we pointed out on Saturday, Lord Lytton was debarred from making warlike preparations at the very moment that he was despatching a peaceful mission; but it may nevertheless rest on a sound basis of policy as well. However faint the hope may be, it is still possible to hope that the need for more decisive measures may pass away before the time comes for them to be undertaken. Shere Ali is not omnipotent even in Afghanistan, and though he may have made up his own mind to defy the power of England and to provoke its hostility, he may yet find that he has reckoned without his people. They will be the first to feel the pressure of the English advance, and they are not so unfamiliar with a change of rulers, nor so submissive to the ruler whom they may for the time acknowledge, as to yield tamely to his will if it is opposed to their own. The course hitherto pursued by Lord Lytton has been as moderate and conciliatory as the circumstances would permit, and though it would now be fatal to show weakness, there is no reason why we should not still proceed with moderation. A peaceful mission has been proposed and has been peremptorily rejected. It is necessary to show at once that we will not brook the affront, and that, unless amends are promptly made, we are prepared to resent it. This purpose is sufficiently shown by the military operations now in course of execution. But, having made our purpose clear beyond the possibility of mistake, we are strong enough to be able to afford Shere Ali another opportunity of repentance. If he avails himself of it, we shall have averted a troublesome war by our forbearance. If he still remains intractable, he will have to take the consequences. We have sought his friendship and proffered ours in return. It is still his to take or to leave. But if he prefers our enmity, his fate must be upon his own head.

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AFGHANISTAN.

The very interesting telegram from India we publish this morning confirms the view we have heretofore expressed that a winter campaign in Cabul would not be undertaken. Troops are being massed at the various frontier stations in readiness for a forward movement, and reinforcements are being hurriedly pushed on to Quettah, whither General Biddulph has already gone. Commissariat arrangements appear to cause dissatisfaction, and much difficulty is experienced in procuring carriage for the troops. A record of past wars in India shows that this branch of our Eastern Army has generally proved itself most efficient, and there is no reason why it should now be unequal to the task before it. Unfortunately, the Punjab, the great carriage depôt for India, has for the past 15 years been steadily drained of beasts of burden. Mules, the most invaluable animals for mountain warfare, were purchased by thousands for the Bhootan, Abyssinian, Looshae, and Duffla expeditions, and no means taken to keep up the supply or inducements offered to the zemindars to continue the breeding of them. The Punjab camel is too light a beast to stand the heavy work of the Afghan mountains, and over the flooded country in Northern Scinde would most assuredly split up in the feet; fortunately in a few days now large caravans of Ghilzae merchants will be pouring into the Derajat through the passes in the Suliman mountains. For a sufficient consideration these men will be willing to place their camels at the disposal of the Indian Government for the invasion of their own country, so that we may shortly hear of the difficulty regarding carriage being removed.

Previous arrangements with regard to the distribution of the columns appear to hold good. General Biddulph commands the Southern Column, which is being mobilized at Sukkur and Dera Ghazee Khan. In all probability the Bombay Column will move from the former place by the Bolan, and the Bengal troops from Ghazee Khan by the Boogti Derah route on Quettah.

The central column has for its object the permament occupation of the Kuroom Valley, through which runs a fairly good road to Ghuzni and Cabul. The hardships experienced by Lumsden's Mission in 1857 do not quite bear out the favourable impression given of the road by our Correspondent; while the turbulent conduct of the Jajis, who with difficulty were restrained by the Ameer's troops from massacring the Mission, scarcely permits us to indulge in the belief that the inhabitants are very friendly to us. As far as the Peiwar Kotul they may be so, and, indeed, we know they are. British columns have on one occasion, at any rate, penetrated as far as this pass without meeting any opposition. The Peiwar Pass is not very formidable. The ascent is by a zigzag road with an easy gradient, but drag ropes would be necessary for guns.

The climate of Kuroom is described as being magnificent; for about six weeks the winter is severe, but during the spring and autumn it is most charming. The valley is very fertile, filled with orchards, and exceedingly well cultivated. The principal tribes are the Baugash, a large section of whom dwell in the Hungoo and Kohat districts under our rule, and who are peaceably disposed, and the Turis, who are far better fighting material than their neighbours. These two tribes are estimated at a strength of 5,000 able-bodied men each. The Jajis can put about 2,500, and the Mangals about 2,100 fighting men into the field. There are upwards of 40 walled villages in the valley capable of stubborn defence against assailants unarmed with artillery. The chief crops of the valley are rice, wheat, cotton, and barley, which the inhabitants bring down to the Friday fair at our cantonment of Bunnoo. Water, forage, and firewood are abundant throughout the district. The whole of the inhabitants are Mahomedans of the Shia persuasion, and are consequently inimical to the Suni rulers of Cabul. So long ago as 1849, when the late Sir Herbert Edwardes was employed in the Bunnoo district, the then ruler of Kuroom officially informed the British officer that his tribes were anxious to place themselves under our rule. The occupation of Kuroom and the adjacent Valley of Khost has often been considered as a possible measure by the Indian Government, to be carried out in much the same way as the occupation of Cyprus has been recently achieved—that is, that we were to pay the Ameer his usual annual taxes, amounting to £1,500 per annum. It was calculated there would be a very trifling loss to the Indian Exchequer, but the gain in a strategical sense it was supposed would counterbalance it. There is no doubt that, with strong military posts in the valley, we should be far nearer Cabul and Ghuzni than we are at present, and far more able to inflict a blow either on the Ameer or on the Afridis of the Safaid Koh, should such steps be desirable. The fort of Kuroom is garrisoned by the Ameer's soldiers, and was visited not only by Lumsden's Mission in 1857, but also by a force under Sir Neville Chamberlain in 1856. It is by no means a formidable work, and is not likely to give much trouble to General Roberts's brigade. It is situated nearly in the centre of the valley, 25 miles east of the Peiwar Pass, 115 west of Kohat, 120 from Cabul, and 150 from Ghuzni. Like the majority of Eastern forts, it is a square mud building; the faces are about 120 yards in length, with circular towers at the angles. A second work, with loftier parapets, is built inside. In this are the magazines, storehouses, &c. The outer work is surrounded by a ditch, which can be flooded at pleasure. Enough has been said of this district to show that the occupation of this valley as far as the Peiwar Kotal can be undertaken with ease. Its communications with Kohat, the base of operations of the central column, are easy, and the valley itself will form an admirable secondary base for the ulterior advance on Cabul. Its seizure will undoubtedly be a great blow to the Ameer's *prestige*. Lord Lytton will probably be satisfied this year, at any rate, with the occupation of the province, and no movement over the Peiwar or the Shutargurdan will be undertaken by General Roberts's brigade until the spring.

The news from Peshawur is conflicting. That troops should be massed at Jumrood is a most necessary step, and it is stated that the mobilization presages an attack on Ali Musjid. We learn that the Ameer has brought down a considerable body of men to the mouth of the Khyber, and to prevent these troops debouching into our plains and destroying our villages is all important. As to the plan of moving on to Ali Musjid with the intention of remaining there during the winter, the following sketch of the part this little fort played from 1839 to 1842 may not be uninteresting. It takes its name from the ruins of a small Mahomedan mosque in its vicinity, and is situated midway between Peshawur and Dhaka, about eight miles from the eastern, 26 from the western end of the Khyber Pass, and 70 from Jelalabad. It stands on the south side of the Pass, on the summit of beetling crags which tower perpendicularly above the roadway. The crests of the hills at this spot are barely 150 yards from each other, and as on the northern slopes a smaller masonry block-house is constructed, a very effective cross-fire can be poured on troops advancing through the defile. Fortunately the fort is commanded both from the south and from the west, and it was on these faces that Colonel Wade delivered his attack in 1839. Although he commenced his operations on the 25th of July, and was enabled in a few hours to drive the defenders from their outworks by the accuracy of his shell fire, they only being armed with matchlocks, it was not until three days later that the place surrendered. Its garrison was under 1,000 strong, of whom 500 were Irregular Jezailchees, the remainder levies from the Afridi and Shinwarri tribes. Wade's loss was over 150 killed and wounded. As the occupation of the place was absolutely necessary in order to keep open free communication with our forces in Jelalabad and Cabul, a garrison of Yusufzae Pathans was placed in it. In November, 1841, a desperate attack was made on the fort by a body of about 2,000 men belonging to the neighbouring Afghan tribes. They cut off the water supply and reduced the place to dreadful straits; but Mackeson, ever fertile of resource, bought them off. A force under Colonel Moseley, consisting of 2,500 men, was then sent to hold it, but owing to insufficiency of provisions that officer was compelled to retire in eight days, with a loss of 180 killed and wounded. Sir George Pollock on his advance through the Khyber left a garrison in Ali Musjid, and on evacuating Afghanistan in November, 1842, he destroyed the works, but they were speedily reconstructed by the orders of Dost Mahomed.

The great drawback to Ali Musjid is its insalubrity. In 1839 the mortality in the British detachment holding it under Colonel Wade was something terrible. In less than eight weeks there were 250 deaths out of a strength of a little over 2,400 men. This was mainly owing to the water, which is strongly impregnated with antimony, and even this supply is only obtained from the Khyber stream below, so that the place can easily be forced into capitulation, should time be no object with the advancing army. At the present moment, as there is no immediate intention of an advance on Cabul, it would be possibly a simple matter to force the garrison to surrender; but by its occupation we might be exposing our own troops to the sickness which proved so fatal 40 years ago. The sight of a British detachment in the Khyber Pass might also rouse dormant hatred of the various Khyberee clans, who have never been favourable to us. The Zaka Khail Afridis for years suffered a blockade at our hands and ever have been the greatest thieves on the Peshawur border; while the Shinwanis, implicated in the murder of a British officer a few years ago, are or were openly hostile toward us.

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LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

(By Indo-European Telegraph *vid* Teheran.)

(from our correspondent.)

DARJEELING, Oct. 6.

The latest news from Peshawur states that 200 men of each regiment in garrison, together with Horse Artillery and 40-pounder batteries, and Sappers and Miners, proceed at once to Jamrood. The guides and a regiment from Kohat will join them there. It is believed that this force, under the command of General Roberts, will attack the fort of Ali Musjid.

Reports are current that a body of the Ameer's soldiers, consisting of four regiments and six guns, has advanced to the mouth of the Khyber Pass. A bazaar rumour states that the Ameer is massing troops and has no intention of submitting. The neighbouring tribes are perfectly quiet.

The latest Press news from Lahore states that the advance on Cabul has for the present been abandoned. The armed demonstration on the frontier is intended to coerce the Ameer to accept our terms without compelling us to go to war. The 1st Sikhs and the 1st Mountain Battery will march immediately from Kohat to Peshawur. Colonel Villiers, the Viceroy's military secretary, accompanies the Jamrood Expedition. Grave complaints are made of the commissariat arrangements with reference to carriage for the troops.

It is reported from Umballa that the 26th Regiment of Native Infantry had arrived; that the 70th and 59th Foot proceed forthwith to Mooltan; and that a detachment of the 18th Royal Irish left Rauvind by special train for Mooltan. The Indus Valley Railway is preparing for the carriage of the Bombay column to Sukhur. The 15th Sikhs have marched from Sealkote to join the force assembling at Mooltan. The 23d Pioneers have marched from Simla *en route* for the frontier. General Biddulph and Major Worsley left Nynee Tal for Quettah on Friday. The troops will consist of two divisions. The 2d Division will be divided into two columns, one under General Roberts moving up the Kuroom Valley; the second column joining at Dera-Ghazi-Khan, will reinforce the Pioneers at Quettah. The 1st Division will for the present remain in support. Colonel Hills proceeds at once to Dera Ghazi Khan to hasten the advance of the troops to Quettah. There is considerable delay consequent on defective carriage.

Colonel Lane has been ordered to Mooltan to superintend and expedite the commissariat arrangements for the Quettah force, carriage being again the difficulty.

It is reported that the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederic Haines, will command in person should an expedition against Cabul be determined upon.

It is stated from Lahore that according to influential native opinion the mere entry of British troops into Afghanistan would lead to the deposition and possibly the assassination of the Ameer by his subjects, with whom he is very unpopular.

The Government are very reticent as to the ulterior destination of the troops, but as far as any conclusion can be drawn from the movements of troops and other *indicia* of military policy, the Viceroy's plan of operation would appear to be to endeavour to coerce the Ameer to yield an unqualified submission by a strong military demonstration on his frontier, and so prove to him that the Government have both the power and the will to occupy, and if necessary to annex, his territory in the event of his proving unsubmissive. It is hoped, in addition, that when once the Afghans have tangible proof that the Government are determined to insist upon absolute compliance with its demands, they themselves will impose great pressure upon the Ameer, and that should this pressure not prove successful, the Ameer will probably be dethroned, as it is believed that the people would be most unwilling to draw upon themselves the inevitable alternative of an armed occupation in order to further the Ameer's individual proclivities in favour of a Russian alliance. In order effectually to carry out this policy it will be necessary to occupy in force the debouches of both the Bolan and the Khyber Passes. This is with the twofold object of preparing against active aggressive measures by the Ameer and of being prepared at the commencement of the spring for an immediate march upon Cabul and Candahar. Should the present measures prove barren of successful results, there can be little doubt that the Government will use every endeavour to avoid a winter campaign, and, unless driven to adopt immediate offensive operations by aggressive military movements on the part of the Ameer, they will in all probability rest content until the winter is over with consolidating the necessary military and commissariat preparations for the very serious undertaking of a prolonged Afghan war. Possibly if a favourable chance should happen a seizure of Candahar by a *coup de main* might be attempted; but this is not thought a very probable occurrence, more especially as the Ameer has been long forewarned by our occupation of Quettah and is said to have greatly strengthened the fortifications and to have adopted other precautionary measures to guard against both surprise and attack.

The occupation of the Kuroom Valley by British troops is all-important. The valley turns the Khyber Pass and stretches almost to Cabul, and the difficulties to be encountered in crossing the pass are trivial compared with those of the passing of the Khyber. The people of the valley are reported to be well-disposed towards our Government. It is stated that the occupation of the Kuroom Valley would place us, supposing our cantonment to be located in the centre of the valley and our border to be defined by the present limits of Barngash and Turi lands, just nine marches from Cabul. It would also give us possession of the Peiwar and Shutar-gurdan Passes, the ascent to which on the Kuroom side is comparatively easy, though the descent into Logar in Afghanistan is long and steep. From this position we should master Cabul. Without crossing any chain of mountain we secure a military position which would prevent any hostile power from attacking the advance of an army the flanks and rear of which would be directly exposed, by either the Khyber or Gomul routes. This position would be distant about 119 miles from Cabul, 110 from Kohat, and 90 from Banu. This Kuroom route is described by competent authorities as possibly the best of all the roads between Afghanistan and the Punjab, both on account of the easiness of the roads and the abundance of water, fuel, grazing, and procurable supplies. The whole of the tribes are said to be Shia Mahomedans and thus opposed in faith to the Suni rulers of Cabul. The roads from the valley to Ghuzni and Cabul are also good. With a military force therefore located at Thall and the whole valley under military dominion and the Khyber we shall be enabled to commence military operations in the spring under the most favourable auspices.

My opinion that no immediate advance upon Cabul is about to be attempted is corroborated in some degree by a telegram which I have received from Simla, and which states that the winter movements of the Indian Government are still unsettled, and that it is probable the Government will go to Calcutta for the winter after all, and that the Viceroy only will visit Lahore in the winter in order that he may have an opportunity of consulting with the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab as to the movements of both the Kuroom and Quettah forces. The former official announcement of the resolution of the Government to remain for the winter at Lahore was evidently consequent on the probability of a winter campaign. That probability having now been removed by later counsels, the urgency for the location of the Government at Lahore has ceased to exist. The Viceroy's visit to Rajpootana has been definitely given up.

Scindiah was invested with the order of the Empire of India in full Durbar at Gwalior on the 21st. Many guests were present. The Maharajah was gracious and conciliatory.

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BERLIN, OCT. 5.

The St. Petersburg Correspondent of the Berlin Ministerial *Norddeutsche Zeitung*, who reflects the views prevailing in Governmental circles on the Neva, says :—

"In the event of an Anglo-Russian war in Europe, General von Kaufmann would have occupied Merve and Herat. Russia, regarding Afghanistan as a good buffer between England and herself, has always kept on friendly terms with the Ameer, but never committed the mistake of subsidizing an Oriental who deems it an honour to break his word to an infidel. If Shere Ali selected this moment for the beginning of the long-planned war, he was probably actuated by the belief that the Indian semi-independent Princes, exasperated by the English demand of a reduction of their troops, will mutiny in the rear of the expeditionary corps. Should Shere Ali be beaten and his territory be annexed, Russia will occupy Merve and Balkh, when the fiction of a neutral country intervening between the Russian and British sentinels will cease to exist. To support the mutiny of the Indian Princes would be contrary to the principles of Russia, who never encourages rebellion, and, moreover, has had quite enough of the one sentimental war in Turkey ; while should England be defeated, Russia would require her central Asiatic troops to prevent a Mahomedan revival in her own dominions."

The same subject is treated with less reserve in a leader of the St. Petersburg *Golos*, which says :—

"England evidently aims at occupying a few positions in the hills to frighten the Ameer into concessions. But as it is equally obvious that Shere Ali has long planned this campaign, he is not likely to be coerced by mere demonstrations. The Ameer may count upon the friendly neutrality of both Russia and Persia, as well as upon the sympathies and possible co-operation of the Indian semi-independent Princes. With these points in his favour, he can quietly await an attack, which must begin by the forcing of formidable passes. The British Press evidently endeavours to persuade its readers that the Afghan war would be a mere local and unimportant affair. Notwithstanding the affront sustained, the caution displayed by people and politicians and their unwillingness to embark in the venture are a characteristic sign of the times."

Improving upon this, the Russian *Telegraph* says :—

"Russia and England require a definite delimination of their respective spheres of influence. An arrangement must be come to, whether in peace or by force of arms. Russia sent an embassy to the Ameer to inquire whether she might count upon him in the coming crisis, and Russia, if the Ameer deems it expedient to side with her, will have to protect him. Relying upon the accession of strength he has gained by joining Russia, the Ameer has thrown down the gauntlet to England. Whatever may happen, Russia will never permit the incorporation of Afghanistan by the English. They may punish the Ameer ; but if they attempt to do away with him, an Anglo-Russian war is sure to ensue."

Similar language is held by more papers than one. The elation at the embarrassment experienced by England is universal.

TELEGRAPH, OCTOBER 7,

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

SHERE ALI AND THE KHYBER PASS.

PROBABLE ADVANCE FROM PESHAWUR.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, OCT 6 (10.30 P.M.)

It is understood that the native envoy was permitted by the Ameer to leave Cabul for Peshawur on Sept. 29.

The strong reinforcements sent by Shere Ali to the Khyber Pass render probable an immediate advance in force from Peshawur.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

SIMLA, OCT. 4.

It is generally reported that a British force is advancing from Peshawur in the direction of Jamrood, with the view of making an attack on Ali Musjid.

The Ameer of Afghanistan is massing troops at Ali Musjid and Candahar, and threatens Quetta.

Strong hostility exists between the Khyberie tribes and the Ameer.

War material is being collected at Kohat.

BOMBAY, OCT. 6.

Despatches published by the Indian newspapers announce that the Khyberees have declared in favour of the British.

The report that it is intended to make a dash upon Ali Musjid requires confirmation.

The Momunds are marching to join the Cabulees.

Great enthusiasm prevails in the ranks of the Indian Army at the prospect of military operations.

ON Saturday last the situation upon our Indian frontier was the subject of consideration by her Majesty's Ministers, and, since there has been, as we have before intimated, nothing either unexpected or unprovided for in the conjuncture, judicious persons will not look for any abrupt announcement. Of two courses open to him—friendly understanding with the British, or unfriendly treatment of them—SHERE ALI Khan has chosen the latter, and he has emphasised his illwill towards us by a public affront admitted everywhere and almost unanimously to be insufferable. If he did not welcome our Mission it was obviously probable that he would repulse it with more or less offensiveness ; and the rebuff having proved as insolent as it could well be, the Indian forces of her Majesty have been put in motion towards the commanding points previously decided upon. Such, in a few words, is the nature of what has happened ; and however long we might dwell upon it, whether to examine the grounds of SHERE ALI'S defiance or to estimate the importance of the political question which his conduct has aroused, the imperative character of the situation could not be more plainly shown than it is by the bare facts. It is one of those instances in Imperial history where only a single road is open—at least until events disclose fresh avenues—and that road was pointed out in the very first sentences which we published upon the matter. England must at once take possession of the posts needful for a further advance into Afghanistan, if this becomes necessary, and, while showing our amicable sentiment towards the hill people, and to the Afghans as a nation, we must make it perfectly clear to SHERE ALI that he had better have us for friends than enemies. By the present time, no doubt, such a persuasion is dawning upon his mind, if it be not blinded by anger or deceived by treacherous counsellors ; but the news from the frontier certainly conveys no intimation of this change. On the contrary, it is reported from Simla that the Ameer is massing troops at Ali Musjid and Candahar, and that he has even made some kind of menacing demonstration towards Quettah, our advanced station beyond the Bolan Pass. The same telegraphic message states, in terms which might mislead, that "a British force is advancing in the direction of Jamrood, with a view of making an attack on Ali Musjid." It should be borne in mind, however, that Jamrood is as much an English fort as the Tower of London, and that these might be, after all, merely movements of troops to the frontier line. At the same time they undoubtedly bring the levies of the Afghan Prince and the regiments of her Majesty into proximity, and our own despatch from Simla clearly suggests that Jamrood is to be strongly reinforced from Peshawur. Unless the Ameer meant to leave the Khyber open this movement was inevitable, and the reinforcement of Ali Musjid is perhaps intended more to coerce the Khyberees than to intimidate the British commander. The operations preconcerted in view of what has happened will go forward steadily as soon as the considerable distances involved can be traversed by our troops ; and, if SHERE ALI is relying upon his own strength, and not upon secret promises from a greater Power, events are likely very soon to put before him the alternative of an *amende*, with serious guarantees, or a conflict.

All the information coming from St. Petersburg confirms the belief that Russia has throughout the summer been engaged in carrying on that unofficial war which she so successfully waged in South-Eastern Europe. How much of what is spoken may be mere brag, and how much represents reality, we need not attempt to guess, because, looking to the past history of Muscovite enterprises, it will be wise to assume that there is little exaggeration in the statements put forth. Naturally fine phrases and plausible explanations accompany the bolder and more open announcements. With these manifestations we have also become familiar. Each successive step onwards from Orenburg to the Oxus was preceded or followed by promises, pledges, and an ostentatious array of professed friendly intentions. They were paraded after the capture of Tashkent ; they duly came forth when ROMANOFFSKI seized Samarcand ; they were heard again before KAUFFMAN and his coadjutors marched from Khiva ; and they were all falsified so soon as duplicity had served its purpose. It is the deeds of Russian Generals, not the words of Russian statesmen, however exalted their rank, that we should steadily watch and accept as the basis of our policy. Not a single sentence framed on Prince

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GORTSCHAKOFF'S most finished model—and he has supplied abundance of examples—should be allowed to weigh for one moment against the concentration of troops in the Oxus Valley and the presence of a Muscovite Mission in Cabul. They are actualities; while the language of the Chancellor is mere ink or breath. It would have been an evil omen to India's peace had an English and a Russian Envoy met in the streets of Cabul; but it is far more sinister when the Czar's General is welcomed and the Viceroy's representative is turned back. The mischief is enhanced by the assistance as well as countenance that Russia lends, and has for five months lent, to the Ameer. It is no longer allowable to doubt that something more effective than promises has been transported to Cabul; and, however the Porte may have shrunk from calling Russia to account when her soldiers and Generals occupied Alexinatz, no English Government dare overlook or treat as trifling similar underhand, yet none the less hostile, proceedings in Afghanistan. All India will readily comprehend that SHERE ALI is a mere puppet moved by the White Czar, and sound statesmanship, which is the highest duty to the Empire, demands that we should recognise and deal with realities.

So far there is no reason to complain either of the plans or the firmness of the Indian Government. The imaginative or "lying spirit," however, is again abroad, and unscrupulousness imputes all kinds of mad schemes to Lord LYTTON, apparently to gratify a wanton appetite for censure, or an inordinate self-conceit. A march on Cabul at this season could only have entered into the mind of a lunatic, and when such a move is described as the Viceroy's policy the allegation betrays a perverse and discreditable animosity. Nor is there any ground for the hints and charges that the Indian Executive has been guilty of delay. A fortnight has elapsed since the Ameer's agent gave his rough answer to Major CAVAGNARI. Immediately on the receipt of that unwelcome intelligence, Lord LYTTON directed the assembly of troops at specified rendezvous. No act surpassing this in promptitude has ever been done in India. The points indicated implied a settled military policy which we have often described, and that policy is now being pushed forward as rapidly as time and spaces will permit. Any one who has a rudimentary knowledge of the subject must be well aware that if it were possible to plant in fourteen days from the receipt of the order a properly-equipped column of five thousand men at Thul, a much longer term would be required to array eight thousand in the camp at Quettah. Indian armies can be promptly got together, and Indian troops can march long distances; but even they are men, and their efforts must be limited by human capacities. It is absolutely essential to collect, transport, and arrange for commissariat supplies, as well as to bring up batteries, squadrons, and battalions to the scene of action. The slightest reflection and a common-sense allowance for the conditions of all military operations, especially in India, will show that the charge of delay or absence of firmness, if not ignorant fault-finding, is utterly groundless. Neither Sir PAUL HAINES nor Generals BIDDULPH, ROBERTS, and STEWART are the men to trifle with an emergency, or, if a lower motive is preferred, peril their well-won reputation by slowness and neglect. With ample railway accommodation and a prearranged route system, it took the German armies a fortnight to reach the French frontier, from which they were not separated by either mountains or deserts. That, during a like interval of time, the Indian War Department has been ceaselessly active there is not the least reason to doubt. Zeal is a fine quality, but efficiency is better; and the Indian Government would commit a grave error if it issued hasty orders to march. From the known energy of the Indian military and civil authorities it is only common fairness to assume that the means placed at their disposal will be found ready and able to carry out successfully the active policy so wisely adopted by the Government.

THE AFGHAN WAR.

FORWARD MOVEMENT OF TROOPS.

OCCUPATION OF JUMROOD.

CAPTURE OF FORT ALI MUSJID.

(BY EASTERN COMPANY'S TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)
BOMBAY, SUNDAY.

The Ameer has summoned the tribal *jirgahs*, or councils, to afford him assistance. All, even the recently-conquered Jowakis, are believed to have assented.

The frontier tribes from the Khyber to the Bholan number 180,000 fighting men, of which 150,000 are of Afghan blood and 30,000 of Belooch. There are 23,000 Afreedees. The Belooch tribes and the Afreedees will probably remain neutral.

The Ameer has reinforced the garrisons of Candahar, Jellalabad, and Ali Musjid, and has also freed Yakoob Khan.

An Afghan army is proceeding to Khurum.

We have occupied Jumrood with three companies of Sepoys.

The whole of the Peshawur garrison is marching against Ali Musjid, which it is intended to attack to-morrow. Our troops are hastening to the frontier from all directions.

War is considered to be inevitable, but we still await the possibility of the Ameer making overtures. Dissensions are reported to have broken out among the great Afghan chiefs.

SUNDAY NIGHT.

The capture of Ali Musjid is reported, but has not yet been officially announced. If confirmed, this event must exercise great influence upon the conduct of the bordering clans, and it also, practically speaking, secures the Khyber Pass for us.

A Proclamation announcing the intentions of Government will be issued to-morrow. The troops have been telegraphed to advance from Dera Ghazi Khan, thus threatening Afghanistan from a new point.

(BY EASTERN COMPANY'S TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)
CALCUTTA, SATURDAY.

Jumrood has been occupied. The Khyberees have declared for us. The Momunds are marching to join the Ameer's forces at Ali Musjid.

(BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)
SIMLA, SATURDAY.

The death is reported of Adhan Khan, chief of the southern Ghiljies, a very powerful Afghan tribe. It is impossible to say yet whether this may affect the position or not.

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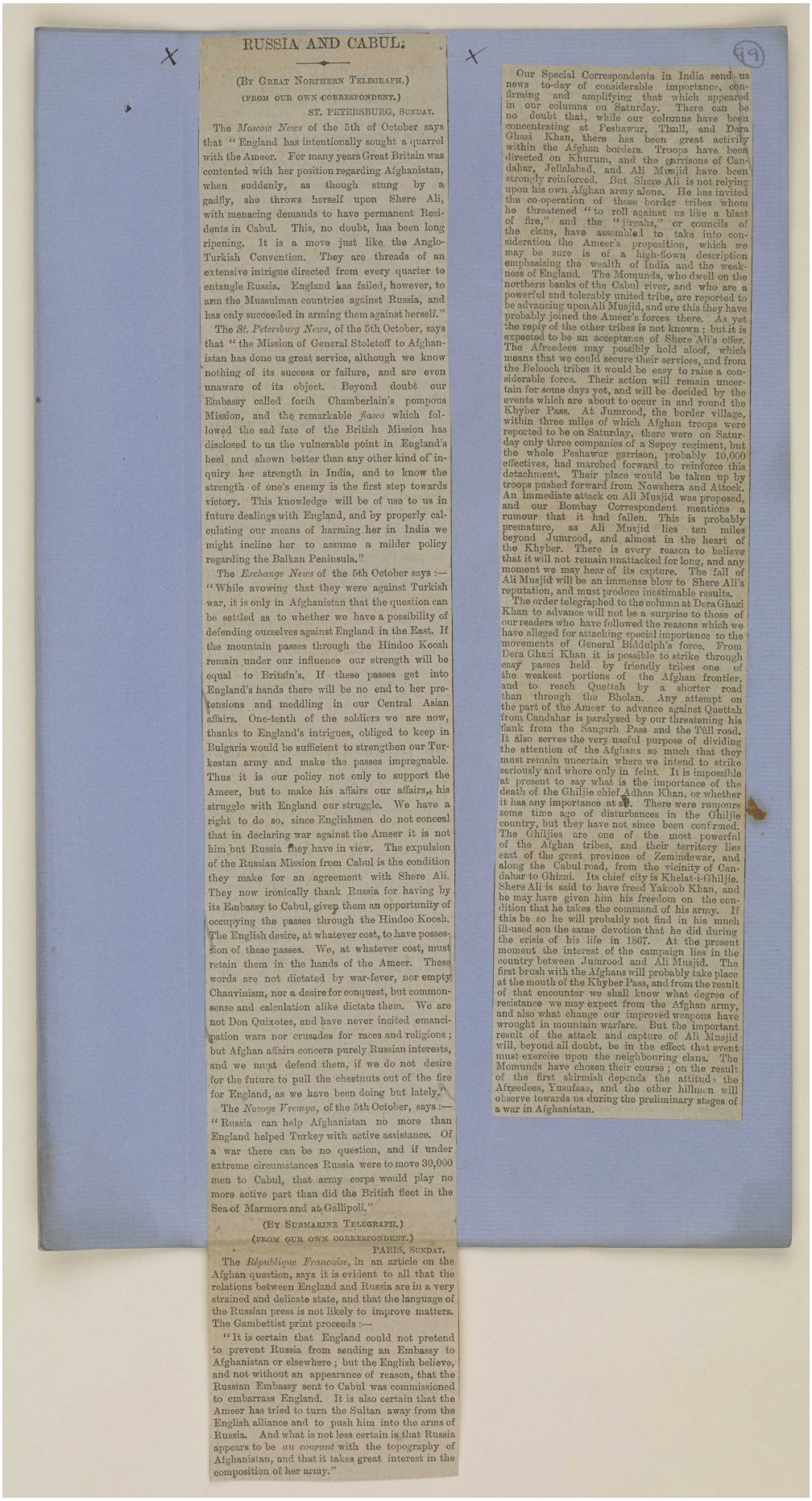

RUSSIA AND CABUL.

(By Great Northern Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
ST. PETERSBURG, Sunday.

The *Moscow News* of the 5th of October says that "England has intentionally sought a quarrel with the Ameer. For many years Great Britain was contented with her position regarding Afghanistan, when suddenly, as though stung by a gadfly, she throws herself upon Shere Ali, with menacing demands to have permanent Residents in Cabul. This, no doubt, has been long ripening. It is a move just like the Anglo-Turkish Convention. They are threads of an extensive intrigue directed from every quarter to entangle Russia. England has failed, however, to arm the Mussulman countries against Russia, and has only succeeded in arming them against herself."

The *St. Petersburg News*, of the 5th October, says that "the Mission of General Stoletoff to Afghanistan has done us great service, although we know nothing of its success or failure, and are even unaware of its object. Beyond doubt our Embassy called forth Chamberlain's pompous Mission, and the remarkable *fiasco* which followed the sad fate of the British Mission has disclosed to us the vulnerable point in England's heel and shown better than any other kind of inquiry her strength in India, and to know the strength of one's enemy is the first step towards victory. This knowledge will be of use to us in future dealings with England, and by properly calculating our means of harming her in India we might incline her to assume a milder policy regarding the Balkan Peninsula."

The *Exchange News* of the 5th October says:—"While avowing that they were against Turkish war, it is only in Afghanistan that the question can be settled as to whether we have a possibility of defending ourselves against England in the East. If the mountain passes through the Hindoo Koosh remain under our influence our strength will be equal to Britain's. If these passes get into England's hands there will be no end to her pretensions and meddling in our Central Asian affairs. One-tenth of the soldiers we are now, thanks to England's intrigues, obliged to keep in Bulgaria would be sufficient to strengthen our Turkestan army and make the passes impregnable. Thus it is our policy not only to support the Ameer, but to make his affairs our affairs, his struggle with England our struggle. We have a right to do so, since Englishmen do not conceal that in declaring war against the Ameer it is not him but Russia they have in view. The expulsion of the Russian Mission from Cabul is the condition they make for an agreement with Shere Ali. They now ironically thank Russia for having by its Embassy to Cabul, given them an opportunity of occupying the passes through the Hindoo Koosh. The English desire, at whatever cost, to have possession of these passes. We, at whatever cost, must retain them in the hands of the Ameer. These words are not dictated by war-fever, nor empty Chauvinism, nor a desire for conquest, but common-sense and calculation alike dictate them. We are not Don Quixotes, and have never incited emancipation wars nor crusades for races and religions; but Afghan affairs concern purely Russian interests, and we must defend them, if we do not desire for the future to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for England, as we have been doing but lately."

The *Novoye Vremya*, of the 5th October, says:—"Russia can help Afghanistan no more than England helped Turkey with active assistance. Of a war there can be no question, and if under extreme circumstances Russia were to move 30,000 men to Cabul, that army corps would play no more active part than did the British fleet in the Sea of Marmora and at Gallipoli."

(By Submarine Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
PARIS, Sunday.

The *République Française*, in an article on the Afghan question, says it is evident to all that the relations between England and Russia are in a very strained and delicate state, and that the language of the Russian press is not likely to improve matters. The Gambettist print proceeds:—

"It is certain that England could not pretend to prevent Russia from sending an Embassy to Afghanistan or elsewhere; but the English believe, and not without an appearance of reason, that the Russian Embassy sent to Cabul was commissioned to embarrass England. It is also certain that the Ameer has tried to turn the Sultan away from the English alliance and to push him into the arms of Russia. And what is not less certain is that Russia appears to be *au courant* with the topography of Afghanistan, and that it takes great interest in the composition of her army."

Our Special Correspondents in India send us news to-day of considerable importance, confirming and amplifying that which appeared in our columns on Saturday. There can be no doubt that, while our columns have been concentrating at Peshawur, Thull, and Dera Ghazi Khan, there has been great activity within the Afghan borders. Troops have been directed on Khurum, and the garrisons of Candahar, Jellalabad, and Ali Musjid have been strongly reinforced. But Shere Ali is not relying upon his own Afghan army alone. He has invited the co-operation of those border tribes whom he threatened "to roll against us like a blast of fire," and the "jirgahs," or councils of the clans, have assembled to take into consideration the Ameer's proposition, which we may be sure is of a high-flown description emphasising the wealth of India and the weakness of England. The Momunds, who dwell on the northern banks of the Cabul river, and who are a powerful and tolerably united tribe, are reported to be advancing upon Ali Musjid, and ere this they have probably joined the Ameer's forces there. As yet the reply of the other tribes is not known; but it is expected to be an acceptance of Shere Ali's offer. The Afreedees may possibly hold aloof, which means that we could secure their services, and from the Belooch tribes it would be easy to raise a considerable force. Their action will remain uncertain for some days yet, and will be decided by the events which are about to occur in and round the Khyber Pass. At Jumrood, the border village, within three miles of which Afghan troops were reported to be on Saturday, there were on Saturday only three companies of a Sepoy regiment, but the whole Peshawur garrison, probably 10,000 effectives, had marched forward to reinforce this detachment. Their place would be taken up by troops pushed forward from Nowshera and Attock. An immediate attack on Ali Musjid was proposed, and our Bombay Correspondent mentions a rumour that it had fallen. This is probably premature, as Ali Musjid lies ten miles beyond Jumrood, and almost in the heart of the Khyber. There is every reason to believe that it will not remain unattacked for long, and any moment we may hear of its capture. The fall of Ali Musjid will be an immense blow to Shere Ali's reputation, and must produce inestimable results.

The order telegraphed to the column at Dera Ghazi Khan to advance will not be a surprise to those of our readers who have followed the reasons which we have alleged for attaching special importance to the movements of General Biddulph's force. From Dera Ghazi Khan it is possible to strike through easy passes held by friendly tribes one of the weakest portions of the Afghan frontier, and to reach Quettah by a shorter road than through the Bholan. Any attempt on the part of the Ameer to advance against Quettah from Candahar is paralysed by our threatening his flank from the Sangarh Pass and the Tull road. It also serves the very useful purpose of dividing the attention of the Afghans so much that they must remain uncertain where we intend to strike seriously and where only in feint. It is impossible at present to say what is the importance of the death of the Ghiljie chief Adhan Khan, or whether it has any importance at all. There were rumours some time ago of disturbances in the Ghiljie country, but they have not since been confirmed. The Ghiljies are one of the most powerful of the Afghan tribes, and their territory lies east of the great province of Zemindewar, and along the Cabul road, from the vicinity of Candahar to Ghizni. Its chief city is Khelat-i-Ghiljie. Shere Ali is said to have freed Yakoob Khan, and he may have given him his freedom on the condition that he takes the command of his army. If this be so he will probably not find in his much ill-used son the same devotion that he did during the crisis of his life in 1867. At the present moment the interest of the campaign lies in the country between Jumrood and Ali Musjid. The first brush with the Afghans will probably take place at the mouth of the Khyber Pass, and from the result of that encounter we shall know what degree of resistance we may expect from the Afghan army, and also what change our improved weapons have wrought in mountain warfare. But the important result of the attack and capture of Ali Musjid will, beyond all doubt, be in the effect that event must exercise upon the neighbouring clans. The Momunds have chosen their course; on the result of the first skirmish depends the attitude the Afreedees, Yusufzas, and the other hillmen will observe towards us during the preliminary stages of a war in Afghanistan.

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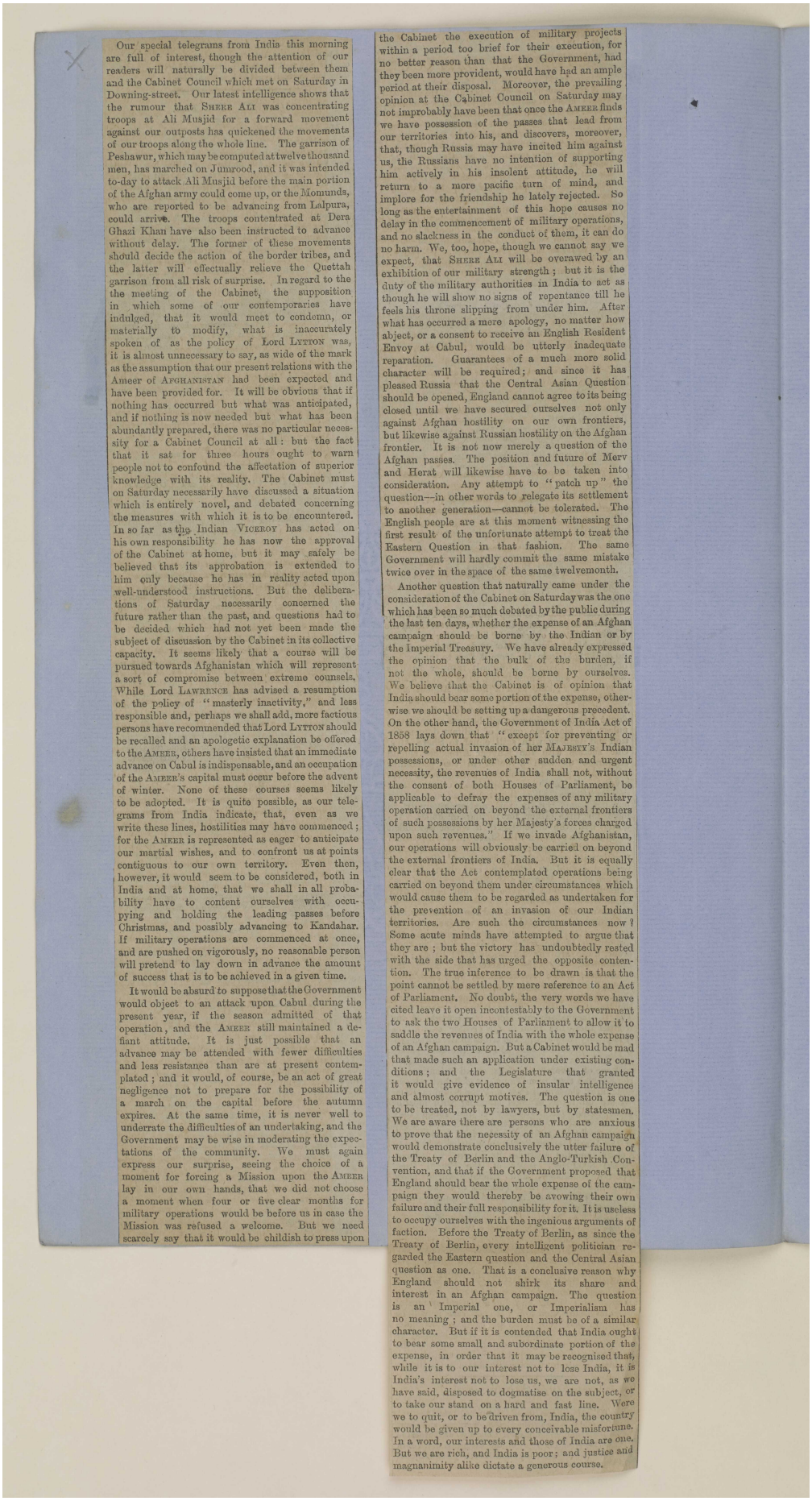

Our special telegrams from India this morning are full of interest, though the attention of our readers will naturally be divided between them and the Cabinet Council which met on Saturday in Downing-street. Our latest intelligence shows that the rumour that SHEER ALI was concentrating troops at Ali Musjid for a forward movement against our outposts has quickened the movements of our troops along the whole line. The garrison of Peshawur, which may be computed at twelve thousand men, has marched on Jumrood, and it was intended to-day to attack Ali Musjid before the main portion of the Afghan army could come up, or the Momunds, who are reported to be advancing from Lalpura, could arrive. The troops contentrated at Dera Ghazi Khan have also been instructed to advance without delay. The former of these movements should decide the action of the border tribes, and the latter will effectually relieve the Quettah garrison from all risk of surprise. In regard to the the meeting of the Cabinet, the supposition in which some of our contemporaries have indulged, that it would meet to condemn, or materially to modify, what is inaccurately spoken of as the policy of Lord LYTTON was, it is almost unnecessary to say, as wide of the mark as the assumption that our present relations with the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN had been expected and have been provided for. It will be obvious that if nothing has occurred but what was anticipated, and if nothing is now needed but what has been abundantly prepared, there was no particular necessity for a Cabinet Council at all: but the fact that it sat for three hours ought to warn people not to confound the affectation of superior knowledge with its reality. The Cabinet must on Saturday necessarily have discussed a situation which is entirely novel, and debated concerning the measures with which it is to be encountered. In so far as the Indian VICEROY has acted on his own responsibility he has now the approval of the Cabinet at home, but it may safely be believed that its approbation is extended to him only because he has in reality acted upon well-understood instructions. But the deliberations of Saturday necessarily concerned the future rather than the past, and questions had to be decided which had not yet been made the subject of discussion by the Cabinet in its collective capacity. It seems likely that a course will be pursued towards Afghanistan which will represent a sort of compromise between extreme counsels. While Lord LAWRENCE has advised a resumption of the policy of "masterly inactivity," and less responsible and, perhaps we shall add, more factious persons have recommended that Lord LYTTON should be recalled and an apologetic explanation be offered to the AMEER, others have insisted that an immediate advance on Cabul is indispensable, and an occupation of the AMEER'S capital must occur before the advent of winter. None of these courses seems likely to be adopted. It is quite possible, as our telegrams from India indicate, that, even as we write these lines, hostilities may have commenced; for the AMEER is represented as eager to anticipate our martial wishes, and to confront us at points contiguous to our own territory. Even then, however, it would seem to be considered, both in India and at home, that we shall in all probability have to content ourselves with occupying and holding the leading passes before Christmas, and possibly advancing to Kandahar. If military operations are commenced at once, and are pushed on vigorously, no reasonable person will pretend to lay down in advance the amount of success that is to be achieved in a given time.

It would be absurd to suppose that the Government would object to an attack upon Cabul during the present year, if the season admitted of that operation, and the AMEER still maintained a defiant attitude. It is just possible that an advance may be attended with fewer difficulties and less resistance than are at present contemplated; and it would, of course, be an act of great negligence not to prepare for the possibility of a march on the capital before the autumn expires. At the same time, it is never well to underrate the difficulties of an undertaking, and the Government may be wise in moderating the expectations of the community. We must again express our surprise, seeing the choice of a moment for forcing a Mission upon the AMEER lay in our own hands, that we did not choose a moment when four or five clear months for military operations would be before us in case the Mission was refused a welcome. But we need scarcely say that it would be childish to press upon the Cabinet the execution of military projects within a period too brief for their execution, for no better reason than that the Government, had they been more provident, would have had an ample period at their disposal. Moreover, the prevailing opinion at the Cabinet Council on Saturday may not improbably have been that once the AMEER finds we have possession of the passes that lead from our territories into his, and discovers, moreover, that, though Russia may have incited him against us, the Russians have no intention of supporting him actively in his insolent attitude, he will return to a more pacific turn of mind, and implore for the friendship he lately rejected. So long as the entertainment of this hope causes no delay in the commencement of military operations, and no slackness in the conduct of them, it can do no harm. We, too, hope, though we cannot say we expect, that SHEER ALI will be overawed by an exhibition of our military strength; but it is the duty of the military authorities in India to act as though he will show no signs of repentance till he feels his throne slipping from under him. After what has occurred a mere apology, no matter how abject, or a consent to receive an English Resident Envoy at Cabul, would be utterly inadequate reparation. Guarantees of a much more solid character will be required; and since it has pleased Russia that the Central Asian Question should be opened, England cannot agree to its being closed until we have secured ourselves not only against Afghan hostility on our own frontiers, but likewise against Russian hostility on the Afghan frontier. It is not now merely a question of the Afghan passes. The position and future of Merv and Herat will likewise have to be taken into consideration. Any attempt to "patch up" the question—in other words to relegate its settlement to another generation—cannot be tolerated. The English people are at this moment witnessing the first result of the unfortunate attempt to treat the Eastern Question in that fashion. The same Government will hardly commit the same mistake twice over in the space of the same twelvemonth.

Another question that naturally came under the consideration of the Cabinet on Saturday was the one which has been so much debated by the public during the last ten days, whether the expense of an Afghan campaign should be borne by the Indian or by the Imperial Treasury. We have already expressed the opinion that the bulk of the burden, if not the whole, should be borne by ourselves. We believe that the Cabinet is of opinion that India should bear some portion of the expense, otherwise we should be setting up a dangerous precedent. On the other hand, the Government of India Act of 1858 lays down that "except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of her MAJESTY'S Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues." If we invade Afghanistan, our operations will obviously be carried on beyond the external frontiers of India. But it is equally clear that the Act contemplated operations being carried on beyond them under circumstances which would cause them to be regarded as undertaken for the prevention of an invasion of our Indian territories. Are such the circumstances now? Some acute minds have attempted to argue that they are; but the victory has undoubtedly rested with the side that has urged the opposite contention. The true inference to be drawn is that the point cannot be settled by mere reference to an Act of Parliament. No doubt, the very words we have cited leave it open incontestably to the Government to ask the two Houses of Parliament to allow it to saddle the revenues of India with the whole expense of an Afghan campaign. But a Cabinet would be mad that made such an application under existing conditions; and the Legislature that granted it would give evidence of insular intelligence and almost corrupt motives. The question is one to be treated, not by lawyers, but by statesmen. We are aware there are persons who are anxious to prove that the necessity of an Afghan campaign would demonstrate conclusively the utter failure of the Treaty of Berlin and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and that if the Government proposed that England should bear the whole expense of the campaign they would thereby be avowing their own failure and their full responsibility for it. It is useless to occupy ourselves with the ingenious arguments of faction. Before the Treaty of Berlin, as since the Treaty of Berlin, every intelligent politician regarded the Eastern question and the Central Asian question as one. That is a conclusive reason why England should not shirk its share and interest in an Afghan campaign. The question is an Imperial one, or Imperialism has no meaning; and the burden must be of a similar character. But if it is contended that India ought to bear some small and subordinate portion of the expense, in order that it may be recognised that, while it is to our interest not to lose India, it is India's interest not to lose us, we are not, as we have said, disposed to dogmatise on the subject, or to take our stand on a hard and fast line. Were we to quit, or to be driven from, India, the country would be given up to every conceivable misfortune. In a word, our interests and those of India are one. But we are rich, and India is poor; and justice and magnanimity alike dictate a generous course.

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Daily News Oct 7

LONDON, MONDAY, OCT. 7.

A telegram from our Special Correspondent at Simla announces that the Viceroy's emissary left Cabul on the 28th ult., having been detained by the Ameer to bring an answer to the Viceroy's letters. It was reported that the Ameer is greatly surprised at our sudden anger at his treatment of the mission, previous rebuffs having been borne in silence. He was also said to be strengthening his forces at Candahar, Jellalabad, and Ali Musjid. On the 4th inst. a large portion of the Peshawur garrison moved to Jumrood, the object being, however, kept secret. The Government considers it highly improbable that the Ameer will humble himself or agree to our terms, without which, our Correspondent says, no apology will be accepted. By the 1st of November Quetta will be reinforced, and an advance on Candahar and the Koorum Valley is certain.

ACCORDING to the report which we receive from our Correspondent at Simla, her MAJESTY'S Ministers could not have had much fresh material on which to form a decision at the Cabinet Council of Saturday. There is still an impression at Simla that the AMEER may repudiate the act of his commandant, but we are warned significantly that the authorities do not consider it probable that he will humble himself and accept the terms they would impose upon him. No apology, it is believed, would be accepted without some such complete submission. We should indeed be greatly surprised if it turned out that the policy of the PRIME MINISTER and the Indian VICEROY had no other object than that of teaching the AMEER a lesson in politeness. We greatly doubt whether Lord BEACONSFIELD feels deeply wounded in spirit by the fact that the AMEER declined to receive the visit of our Envoy, or would be perfectly satisfied if SHERE ALI said he had made a mistake and was willing to apologise for it. We know that the annexation of Scinde was resolved on by our Indian authorities whether the Ameers of that day made acknowledgment of their shortcomings or not; and the annexation of Scinde was accepted, although every member of the English Cabinet would gladly have opposed it if there were any way of undoing what had been done. The purpose of the Government in their present policy is, we may be sure, far too ambitious to be satisfied with SHERE ALI'S saying—what Dr. JOHNSON declared the utmost any gentleman should be asked to say—that he was sorry if he had given offence. Nor, we must add, does it seem by any means probable that the AMEER would, without trying the issue farther, make such a submission as the Indian Government would consider satisfactory. Our Correspondent mentions the report that SHERE ALI is greatly surprised at our sudden anger because of the manner in which our mission has been treated. We had borne previous rebuffs in quiet, he is reported to argue, and why should we not bear this? His reasoning, if it be his, would be plausible enough if it were merely a question of politeness. If a man is habitually discourteous and his neighbour has often put up with his rudeness, there seems no particular reason why the neighbour should furiously resent on Saturday what he had passed over with apathy or contempt on each preceding day of the week. But SHERE ALI is doubtless well convinced for his part that the English Government have some other purpose than that of teaching him good manners. Lady SALE and other witnesses have told that when AKBAR KHAN, son of DOST MOHAMMED, was busying himself to save the English prisoners from the fury of his own followers, some of the latter gravely remonstrated with him. "We told your "father," they said, "when BURNES came here, "that if he allowed him to return BURNES would "come back with an army to take our country "from us." This is what SHERE ALI doubtless expects—an army to take his country from him.

This is, beyond question, what some of our statesmen and their advisers have been contemplating all along. To this, no doubt, it may possibly come in the end. The wish for delay which seems to possess so many is probably in some cases at least, the result of a conviction that the longer decisive measures are postponed the more comprehensive they must be in the end. This is one of the reasons why we have urged that our action should be instantaneous. We have shown more than once that an immediate movement could be made with complete success in a military sense. Such a course would secure for England all the effect which we really ought to consider legitimate—that of showing to India and the East generally that we are not to be insulted with impunity. So far as the Ameer and the Afghans are concerned, it matters little to us whether SHERE ALI is rough or polished—whether he shuts his door like the rude Carinthian boor, or keeps it open in perpetual hospitality like the good AXYLUS in Homer. What we cannot afford, for the sake of India as well as ourselves, is to have it believed all over the East that the deliberate purpose and policy of our Government could be frustrated by a word of command from an Afghan prince. Whether SHERE ALI is supposed to stand alone or to have powerful backers, the effect upon our influence in the East would be deplorable if we allowed it to go abroad that he had insulted us with impunity. The policy of the Government has unfortunately left the English people with little or no choice as to that point. Nine out of every ten men might have said a month ago that it would be better not to send any mission unless we knew it would be received. But not one man in ten now probably would say that, the mission having been sent, and having been turned back, we can afford to let the matter drop and leave SHERE ALI to the censure of the polite world. The great difficulty is, however, that we cannot assume the Government to have no further purpose in their minds than the mere bringing of SHERE ALI to his senses. This movement, we have been told again and again, is part of a great scheme of Imperial policy; and no great scheme of Imperial policy can include the teaching of politeness and respect for the laws of hospitality to all the independent rulers of the East. It can hardly be doubted that the AMEER regards all this later policy as levelled against his independence. The course he has taken to resist the attempt is singularly ill-chosen. Whether it be his own device or comes of the prompting of others, it has had the effect of giving plausible excuse for an enterprise that otherwise might have been morally impossible. It has done more: it has rendered it difficult even for a statesmanship of greater moderation and higher moral principle than we now see in power to say that that movement once set on foot shall stop at any particular line of limitation.

So far as the English public in general are concerned, we do not however see the slightest gleam of evidence to show that there is any particular sympathy with the enterprise which the Government are believed to be undertaking. We are willing to leave out of consideration altogether, for the moment, the very large proportion of Englishmen who are opposed to the policy which would seek an occasion for war with SHERE ALI. We leave out of consideration, too, the numbers who are opposed to any kind of war which is not strictly defensive. Of the former, it would be said by supporters of the Government that they judge of this particular enterprise from the wrong point of view; of the latter, that they judge of all warlike enterprise from the same point of view. But, even among the classes who gave to the Government during the sitting of Parliament a support that was, like the daughter of CHAOS, "laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and "blind"—even among those there is no enthusiasm about the invasion of Afghanistan. There is no glory to be gained by it, and there is no additional security to our Indian Empire to come of it. Of the immediate result in a military sense there can hardly be any doubt. We are infinitely better armed now than we were in the beginning of the reign, and we have the blunders then made as warnings to keep us out of mistakes now. But even then we were always able to hold our own in arms against any force Afghanistan could bring against us, and we were sure of complete victory in the end. It was not a military difficulty which in any way embarrassed us. The most ardent lover of martial glory can find nothing, therefore, to gratify his passion in a military occupation of Cabul. In point of fact, not one Englishman in ten thousand cares a straw for such a demonstration of our power. Nor is there the faintest popular anxiety to have

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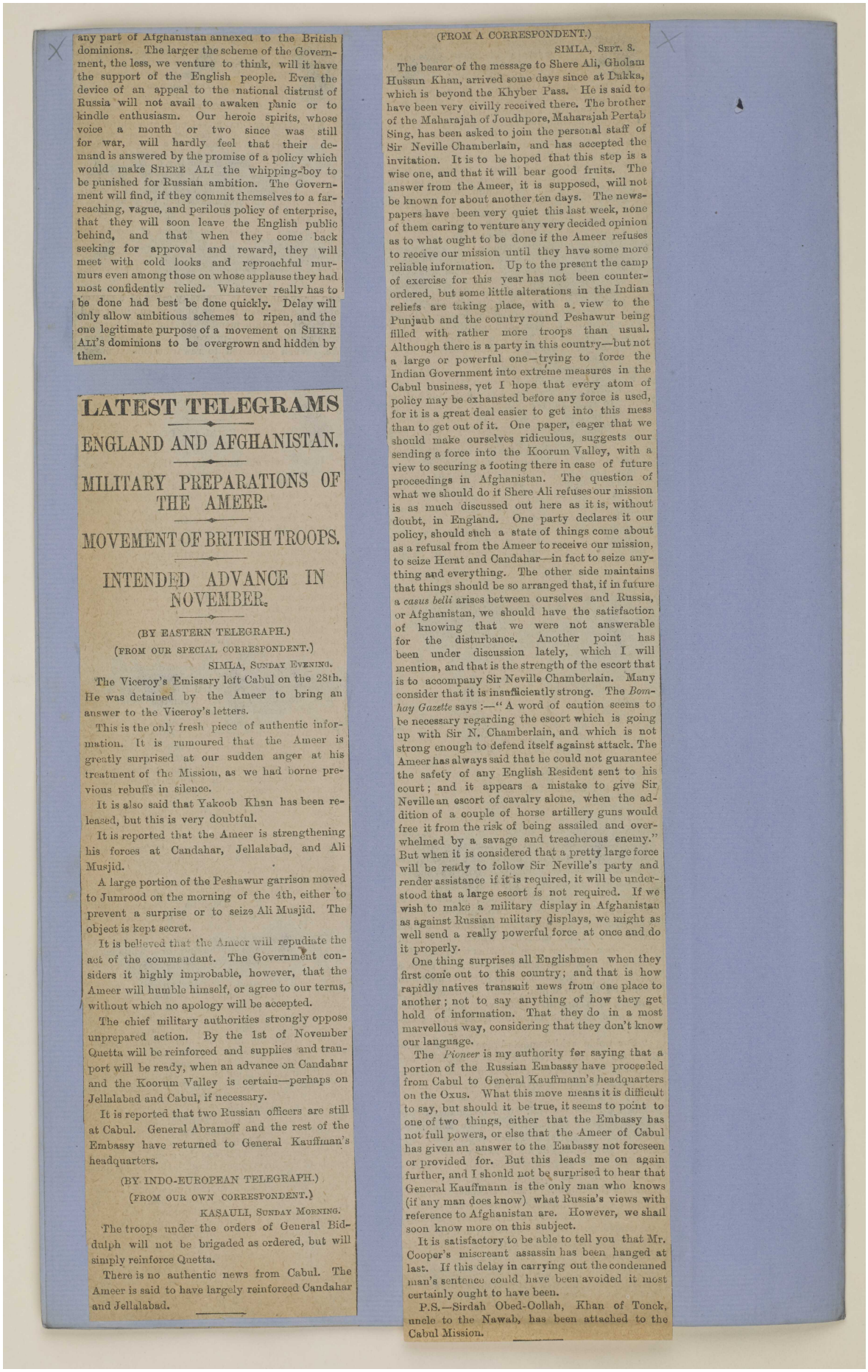

any part of Afghanistan annexed to the British dominions. The larger the scheme of the Government, the less, we venture to think, will it have the support of the English people. Even the device of an appeal to the national distrust of Russia will not avail to awaken panic or to kindle enthusiasm. Our heroic spirits, whose voice a month or two since was still for war, will hardly feel that their demand is answered by the promise of a policy which would make SHERE ALI the whipping-boy to be punished for Russian ambition. The Government will find, if they commit themselves to a far-reaching, vague, and perilous policy of enterprise, that they will soon leave the English public behind, and that when they come back seeking for approval and reward, they will meet with cold looks and reproachful murmurs even among those on whose applause they had most confidently relied. Whatever really has to be done had best be done quickly. Delay will only allow ambitious schemes to ripen, and the one legitimate purpose of a movement on SHERE ALI'S dominions to be overgrown and hidden by them.

LATEST TELEGRAMS

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

MILITARY PREPARATIONS OF THE AMEER.

MOVEMENT OF BRITISH TROOPS.

INTENDED ADVANCE IN NOVEMBER.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SUNDAY EVENING.

The Viceroy's Emissary left Cabul on the 28th. He was detained by the Ameer to bring an answer to the Viceroy's letters.

This is the only fresh piece of authentic information. It is rumoured that the Ameer is greatly surprised at our sudden anger at his treatment of the Mission, as we had borne previous rebuffs in silence.

It is also said that Yakoob Khan has been released, but this is very doubtful.

It is reported that the Ameer is strengthening his forces at Candahar, Jellalabad, and Ali Musjid.

A large portion of the Peshawur garrison moved to Jumrood on the morning of the 4th, either to prevent a surprise or to seize Ali Musjid. The object is kept secret.

It is believed that the Ameer will repudiate the act of the commandant. The Government considers it highly improbable, however, that the Ameer will humble himself, or agree to our terms, without which no apology will be accepted.

The chief military authorities strongly oppose unprepared action. By the 1st of November Quetta will be reinforced and supplies and transport will be ready, when an advance on Candahar and the Koorum Valley is certain—perhaps on Jellalabad and Cabul, if necessary.

It is reported that two Russian officers are still at Cabul. General Abramoff and the rest of the Embassy have returned to General Kauffman's headquarters.

(BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

KASAULI, SUNDAY MORNING.

The troops under the orders of General Biddulph will not be brigaded as ordered, but will simply reinforce Quetta.

There is no authentic news from Cabul. The Ameer is said to have largely reinforced Candahar and Jellalabad.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SEPT. 8.

The bearer of the message to Shere Ali, Gholam Hussun Khan, arrived some days since at Dukka, which is beyond the Khyber Pass. He is said to have been very civilly received there. The brother of the Maharajah of Joudhpore, Maharajah Pertab Sing, has been asked to join the personal staff of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and has accepted the invitation. It is to be hoped that this step is a wise one, and that it will bear good fruits. The answer from the Ameer, it is supposed, will not be known for about another ten days. The newspapers have been very quiet this last week, none of them caring to venture any very decided opinion as to what ought to be done if the Ameer refuses to receive our mission until they have some more reliable information. Up to the present the camp of exercise for this year has not been countermanded, but some little alterations in the Indian reliefs are taking place, with a view to the Punjaub and the country round Peshawur being filled with rather more troops than usual. Although there is a party in this country—but not a large or powerful one—trying to force the Indian Government into extreme measures in the Cabul business, yet I hope that every atom of policy may be exhausted before any force is used, for it is a great deal easier to get into this mess than to get out of it. One paper, eager that we should make ourselves ridiculous, suggests our sending a force into the Koorum Valley, with a view to securing a footing there in case of future proceedings in Afghanistan. The question of what we should do if Shere Ali refuses our mission is as much discussed out here as it is, without doubt, in England. One party declares it our policy, should such a state of things come about as a refusal from the Ameer to receive our mission, to seize Herat and Candahar—in fact to seize anything and everything. The other side maintains that things should be so arranged that, if in future a *casus belli* arises between ourselves and Russia, or Afghanistan, we should have the satisfaction of knowing that we were not answerable for the disturbance. Another point has been under discussion lately, which I will mention, and that is the strength of the escort that is to accompany Sir Neville Chamberlain. Many consider that it is insufficiently strong. The *Bombay Gazette* says:—"A word of caution seems to be necessary regarding the escort which is going up with Sir N. Chamberlain, and which is not strong enough to defend itself against attack. The Ameer has always said that he could not guarantee the safety of any English Resident sent to his court; and it appears a mistake to give Sir Neville an escort of cavalry alone, when the addition of a couple of horse artillery guns would free it from the risk of being assailed and overwhelmed by a savage and treacherous enemy." But when it is considered that a pretty large force will be ready to follow Sir Neville's party and render assistance if it is required, it will be understood that a large escort is not required. If we wish to make a military display in Afghanistan as against Russian military displays, we might as well send a really powerful force at once and do it properly.

One thing surprises all Englishmen when they first come out to this country; and that is how rapidly natives transmit news from one place to another; not to say anything of how they get hold of information. That they do in a most marvellous way, considering that they don't know our language.

The *Pioneer* is my authority for saying that a portion of the Russian Embassy have proceeded from Cabul to General Kauffmann's headquarters on the Oxus. What this move means it is difficult to say, but should it be true, it seems to point to one of two things, either that the Embassy has not full powers, or else that the Ameer of Cabul has given an answer to the Embassy not foreseen or provided for. But this leads me on again further, and I should not be surprised to hear that General Kauffmann is the only man who knows (if any man does know) what Russia's views with reference to Afghanistan are. However, we shall soon know more on this subject.

It is satisfactory to be able to tell you that Mr. Cooper's miscreant assassin has been hanged at last. If this delay in carrying out the condemned man's sentence could have been avoided it most certainly ought to have been.

P.S.—Sirdah Obed-Oollah, Khan of Tonck, uncle to the Nawab, has been attached to the Cabul Mission.

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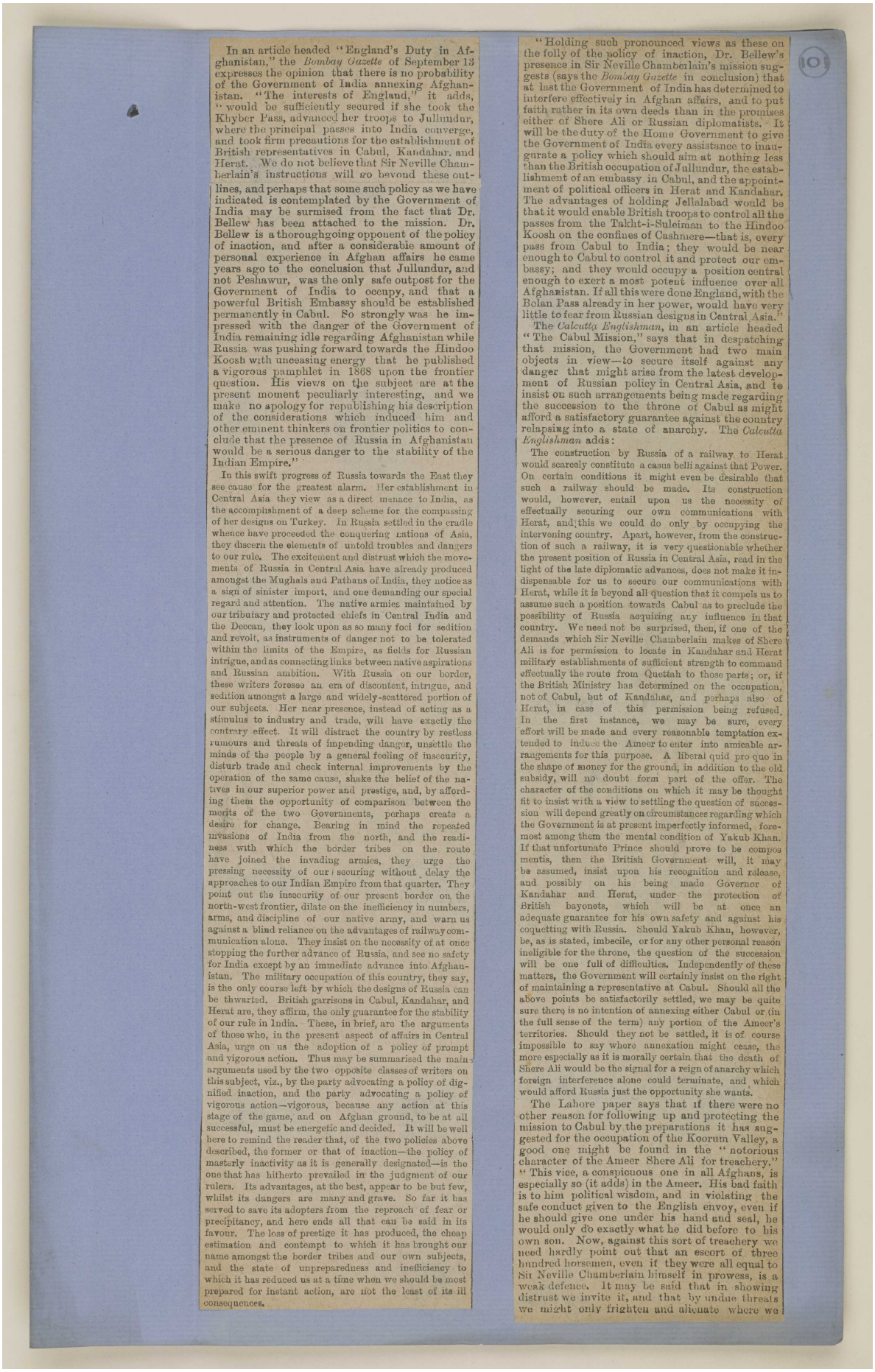

In an article headed "England's Duty in Afghanistan," the *Bombay Gazette* of September 13 expresses the opinion that there is no probability of the Government of India annexing Afghanistan. "The interests of England," it adds, "would be sufficiently secured if she took the Khyber Pass, advanced her troops to Jullundur, where the principal passes into India converge, and took firm precautions for the establishment of British representatives in Cabul, Kandahar, and Herat. We do not believe that Sir Neville Chamberlain's instructions will go beyond these outlines, and perhaps that some such policy as we have indicated is contemplated by the Government of India may be surmised from the fact that Dr. Bellew has been attached to the mission. Dr. Bellew is a thoroughgoing opponent of the policy of inaction, and after a considerable amount of personal experience in Afghan affairs he came years ago to the conclusion that Jullundur, and not Peshawur, was the only safe outpost for the Government of India to occupy, and that a powerful British Embassy should be established permanently in Cabul. So strongly was he impressed with the danger of the Government of India remaining idle regarding Afghanistan while Russia was pushing forward towards the Hindoo Koosh with unceasing energy that he published a vigorous pamphlet in 1868 upon the frontier question. His views on the subject are at the present moment peculiarly interesting, and we make no apology for republishing his description of the considerations which induced him and other eminent thinkers on frontier politics to conclude that the presence of Russia in Afghanistan would be a serious danger to the stability of the Indian Empire."

In this swift progress of Russia towards the East they see cause for the greatest alarm. Her establishment in Central Asia they view as a direct menace to India, as the accomplishment of a deep scheme for the compassing of her designs on Turkey. In Russia settled in the cradle whence have proceeded the conquering nations of Asia, they discern the elements of untold troubles and dangers to our rule. The excitement and distrust which the movements of Russia in Central Asia have already produced amongst the Mughals and Pathans of India, they notice as a sign of sinister import, and one demanding our special regard and attention. The native armies maintained by our tributary and protected chiefs in Central India and the Deccan, they look upon as so many foci for sedition and revolt, as instruments of danger not to be tolerated within the limits of the Empire, as fields for Russian intrigue, and as connecting links between native aspirations and Russian ambition. With Russia on our border, these writers foresee an era of discontent, intrigue, and sedition amongst a large and widely-scattered portion of our subjects. Her near presence, instead of acting as a stimulus to industry and trade, will have exactly the contrary effect. It will distract the country by restless rumours and threats of impending danger, unsettle the minds of the people by a general feeling of insecurity, disturb trade and check internal improvements by the operation of the same cause, shake the belief of the natives in our superior power and prestige, and, by affording them the opportunity of comparison between the merits of the two Governments, perhaps create a desire for change. Bearing in mind the repeated invasions of India from the north, and the readiness with which the border tribes on the route have joined the invading armies, they urge the pressing necessity of our securing without delay the approaches to our Indian Empire from that quarter. They point out the insecurity of our present border on the north-west frontier, dilate on the inefficiency in numbers, arms, and discipline of our native army, and warn us against a blind reliance on the advantages of railway communication alone. They insist on the necessity of at once stopping the further advance of Russia, and see no safety for India except by an immediate advance into Afghanistan. The military occupation of this country, they say, is the only course left by which the designs of Russia can be thwarted. British garrisons in Cabul, Kandahar, and Herat are, they affirm, the only guarantee for the stability of our rule in India. These, in brief, are the arguments of those who, in the present aspect of affairs in Central Asia, urge on us the adoption of a policy of prompt and vigorous action. Thus may be summarised the main arguments used by the two opposite classes of writers on this subject, viz., by the party advocating a policy of dignified inaction, and the party advocating a policy of vigorous action—vigorous, because any action at this stage of the game, and on Afghan ground, to be at all successful, must be energetic and decided. It will be well here to remind the reader that, of the two policies above described, the former or that of inaction—the policy of masterly inactivity as it is generally designated—is the one that has hitherto prevailed in the judgment of our rulers. Its advantages, at the best, appear to be but few, whilst its dangers are many and grave. So far it has served to save its adopters from the reproach of fear or precipitancy, and here ends all that can be said in its favour. The loss of prestige it has produced, the cheap estimation and contempt to which it has brought our name amongst the border tribes and our own subjects, and the state of unpreparedness and inefficiency to which it has reduced us at a time when we should be most prepared for instant action, are not the least of its ill consequences.

"Holding such pronounced views as these on the folly of the policy of inaction, Dr. Bellew's presence in Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission suggests (says the *Bombay Gazette* in conclusion) that at last the Government of India has determined to interfere effectively in Afghan affairs, and to put faith rather in its own deeds than in the promises either of Shere Ali or Russian diplomatists. It will be the duty of the Home Government to give the Government of India every assistance to inaugurate a policy which should aim at nothing less than the British occupation of Jullundur, the establishment of an embassy in Cabul, and the appointment of political officers in Herat and Kandahar. The advantages of holding Jellalabad would be that it would enable British troops to control all the passes from the Takht-i-Suleiman to the Hindoo Koosh on the confines of Cashmere—that is, every pass from Cabul to India; they would be near enough to Cabul to control it and protect our embassy; and they would occupy a position central enough to exert a most potent influence over all Afghanistan. If all this were done England, with the Bolan Pass already in her power, would have very little to fear from Russian designs in Central Asia."

The *Calcutta Englishman*, in an article headed "The Cabul Mission," says that in despatching that mission, the Government had two main objects in view—to secure itself against any danger that might arise from the latest development of Russian policy in Central Asia, and to insist on such arrangements being made regarding the succession to the throne of Cabul as might afford a satisfactory guarantee against the country relapsing into a state of anarchy. The *Calcutta Englishman* adds:

The construction by Russia of a railway to Herat would scarcely constitute a casus belli against that Power. On certain conditions it might even be desirable that such a railway should be made. Its construction would, however, entail upon us the necessity of effectually securing our own communications with Herat, and this we could do only by occupying the intervening country. Apart, however, from the construction of such a railway, it is very questionable whether the present position of Russia in Central Asia, read in the light of the late diplomatic advances, does not make it indispensable for us to secure our communications with Herat, while it is beyond all question that it compels us to assume such a position towards Cabul as to preclude the possibility of Russia acquiring any influence in that country. We need not be surprised, then, if one of the demands which Sir Neville Chamberlain makes of Shere Ali is for permission to locate in Kandahar and Herat military establishments of sufficient strength to command effectually the route from Quetlah to those parts; or, if the British Ministry has determined on the occupation, not of Cabul, but of Kandahar, and perhaps also of Herat, in case of this permission being refused. In the first instance, we may be sure, every effort will be made and every reasonable temptation extended to induce the Ameer to enter into amicable arrangements for this purpose. A liberal quid pro quo in the shape of money for the ground, in addition to the old subsidy, will no doubt form part of the offer. The character of the conditions on which it may be thought fit to insist with a view to settling the question of succession will depend greatly on circumstances regarding which the Government is at present imperfectly informed, foremost among them the mental condition of Yakub Khan. If that unfortunate Prince should prove to be compos mentis, then the British Government will, it may be assumed, insist upon his recognition and release, and possibly on his being made Governor of Kandahar and Herat, under the protection of British bayonets, which will be at once an adequate guarantee for his own safety and against his coquetting with Russia. Should Yakub Khan, however, be, as is stated, imbecile, or for any other personal reason ineligible for the throne, the question of the succession will be one full of difficulties. Independently of these matters, the Government will certainly insist on the right of maintaining a representative at Cabul. Should all the above points be satisfactorily settled, we may be quite sure there is no intention of annexing either Cabul or (in the full sense of the term) any portion of the Ameer's territories. Should they not be settled, it is of course impossible to say where annexation might cease, the more especially as it is morally certain that the death of Shere Ali would be the signal for a reign of anarchy which foreign interference alone could terminate, and which would afford Russia just the opportunity she wants.

The Lahore paper says that if there were no other reason for following up and protecting the mission to Cabul by the preparations it has suggested for the occupation of the Koorum Valley, a good one might be found in the "notorious character of the Ameer Shere Ali for treachery." "This vice, a conspicuous one in all Afghans, is especially so (it adds) in the Ameer. His bad faith is to him political wisdom, and in violating the safe conduct given to the English envoy, even if he should give one under his hand and seal, he would only do exactly what he did before to his own son. Now, against this sort of treachery we need hardly point out that an escort of three hundred horsemen, even if they were all equal to Sir Neville Chamberlain himself in prowess, is a weak defence. It may be said that in showing distrust we invite it, and that by undue threats we might only frighten and alienate where we

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should do better to conciliate. With any other nation than Afghanistan, and with any other Prince than 'Shere Ali, these might be words of wisdom and objections of weight; but not so here. We have tried fair means, fair words, and gifts and promises too long already. We should give the Ameer distinctly and clearly to understand that we come forward, not in a hostile spirit, but with a determination to be recognised as the paramount Power in insisting on a certain line of action. To do this we must display force in order that we may not have to employ it. For this essential purpose we would not only occupy the Koorum Valley, but we would reinforce largely the outpost of Quettah, and we would increase the escort of the envoy by a battery of mountain artillery, a regiment of Goorkhas, and the wing of a British regiment of infantry. The firing of a single shot in anger should be the signal for the advance of three columns, one for the support of the escort, another from Quettah on Kandahar, and the third from the Koorum direct on Cabul. Then we might trust our mission to attain its end and defeat Russian intrigue; but not otherwise."

The same paper says:—"In advocating a present advance into the Koorum Valley we had forgotten to mention that a considerable portion of it did once in effect belong to British territory. Immediately after the subjugation of the Punjaub, in the days when Lord Dalhousie was Governor-General, when Edwardes was Commissioner of Peshawur, and Coke Deputy-Commissioner of Kohat, the Turis of Koorum represented to the latter that they were tributaries of the Sikhs (not that they ever paid anything), and requested they might be considered British subjects. They were accordingly admitted to that privilege. But the next year, when it came to the paying of their assessment, no revenue was forthcoming, and a difficulty arose which led to an expedition in the Meeranzye country. Edwardes, very much against Coke's wishes and advice, decided that the Turis of Koorum should not thereafter be considered within British territory, but without specifying to whom the country should belong. It consequently fell under the Cabul authority, which raises the required tribute in a very summary fashion each year by force. Edwardes, we believe, afterwards admitted having made a mistake in giving up that country, but Lord Dalhousie decided that once done it could not be undone, so the unhappy Turis have remained Afghan subjects ever since."

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

SIMLA, Oct. 4.

It is generally reported that a British force is advancing from Peshawur in the direction of Jamrood, with the view of making an attack on Ali Musjid.

The Ameer of Afghanistan is massing troops at Ali Musjid and Kandahar, and threatens Quettah.

Strong hostility exists between the Khyberie tribes and the Ameer.

War material is being collected at Kohat.

BOMBAY, Oct. 6.

Despatches published by the Indian newspapers announce that the Khyberees have declared in favour of the British.

The report that it is intended to make a dash upon Ali Musjid requires confirmation.

The Momunds are marching to join the Cabulees.

Great enthusiasm prevails in the ranks of the Indian army at the prospect of military operations.

THE INDUS AND TRIBES OF THE FRONTIER.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

The Indus forms a part of that wonderful boundary of Hindostan, a boundary which is so remarkable for a series of physical features constituting on nearly all sides an impassible barrier against invasion. Within these boundaries is the sacred land of Aryavarta, the old name of India in the Institutes of Menu, a land so sacred that the Hindoo still entertains the idea that he loses caste if he leaves it. This is the reason that he dreads to go to foreign countries, and the prejudice which makes him avoid the Kalapanee, or black water of the sea, also supposes that crossing the Indus could only be done at the risk of caste contamination. Brahmins are, perhaps, more given than the lower castes to being particular on this matter, for there are a good number of the Kshetrie caste to be found all over Afghanistan. They are principally in the towns, and business is the attraction which leads them across the Indus.

The great interest of the moment is naturally centred on that part of the Indus between Attock on the north-east and Sukkur, Bukkur, and Roree on the south-west. Attock being on the line of communications with Peshawur and the Khyber, while Sukkur, Bukkur, and Roree is where the river is crossed for Shikarpoor and the Bholan Pass. Sukkur, Bukkur, and Roree are in Scinde, and the three names represent different towns which are only separated by the water of the river. Sukkur is on the west, and Roree is on the east bank of the Indus; while Bukkur is an island in the middle of the stream, with a town and fort upon it. One of our forces is gathering at this point, under General Stewart, while General Biddulph is on ahead with the Quetta Division. Dera Ghazee Khan is on another line of communication, and there also troops are being directed. This place is about 200 miles above Sukkur, Bukkur, and Roree. It is on the west, or right bank of the river, and stands about two or three miles away from the stream. There is no bridge of boats here, nor at any of the places except Attock, where it has to be removed during the rainy season, when the river rises. At Dera Ghazee Khan, where the country is flat, the Indus spreads out during the rains in a very uncertain way, and may be some miles wide at times, a point of consideration when communications have to be kept up with an army, on account of the difficulty and time it requires to ferry over men and materials. The boats are large flat barges, and safe enough for taking over troops, artillery, horses, or camels. The flood in the river begins about the end of June, and continues till the close of September when it commences to fall. The town itself is some size, and has a brick fort in it, with a garrison of our troops. About 25 or 30 miles to the west the lower hills of the Sulieman range begin—these are the Kala-roh, or Black hills. The Ligaries, Khosa, Ghoorchanies, and other tribes on these slopes, forming the western bank of the Indus, are within our boundary, which is defined by the summit of the Sulieman range, and are consequently subjects and friendly. Those people of the British Isles, who, according to the editor of an illustrated paper, must have palm trees in all pictures of India, will be happy when sketches of Dera Ghazee Khan and places along this part of the frontier make their appearance. The tradition of the natives is that they owe the palms to Alexander and his soldiers. The notion is that they brought dates along with them as part of their supplies, and finding grain on their route, that dates and chupatties, or cakes of flour, were their food; as they threw away the stones of the dates, the trees grew up, and remain yet as an evidence of the conquest of India by Sikander. What is here said of Dera Ghazee Khan may be also taken as a description of Dera Ismael Khan—as the first word in each of these names means "tent" or "camp." They were both originally camps, but as ferries were established at them on lines of communication with Afghanistan, the camps grew into permanent towns. As yet we have no news of troops assembling at Dera Ismael Khan, but we may assume that there will also be a concentration at that point, as it leads by a pass in the Sulieman range along the Gomal River, threatening Ghuzni and cutting off nearly the whole of Southern Afghanistan. This position on a line going straight to a vital point makes it, in a military sense, of more importance than Dera Ghazee Khan.

Dera Ismael Khan has also an importance as a commercial route. As the hot season in India draws to a close, kafillas, or caravans, of all the tribes of Afghanistan, and even from places beyond, begin to pour through the pass which leads to this station. In one season over 60,000 camels used to arrive, with merchandise from all parts of Central Asia. Silks, furs, and woollen fabrics of every kind; the wares of Iran, or Persia; Turkish and Bokhara rugs, carpets, or tissues of every texture which Samarkand or Khasghar may produce, here make their way into India. Grapes, in dhubbies, or round wooden boxes, pomegranates, and dried fruits of all descriptions are brought. Churris, the produce of hemp, from which hashish is manufactured, and which in a simpler form is used in smoking, being one of the articles of commerce passing along this line, where also may be found such celebrated articles as the wine of Shiraz, which poets have celebrated, and Mohammedan poets too, Hafiz being among the number. With the wine of Shiraz poetic verse has associated the annar, or pomegranate, of Kandahar, and the gul, or rose, of Samarkand, as things worthy to be classed together. Very little of this choice wine reaches the South now; but still a few small buttuks

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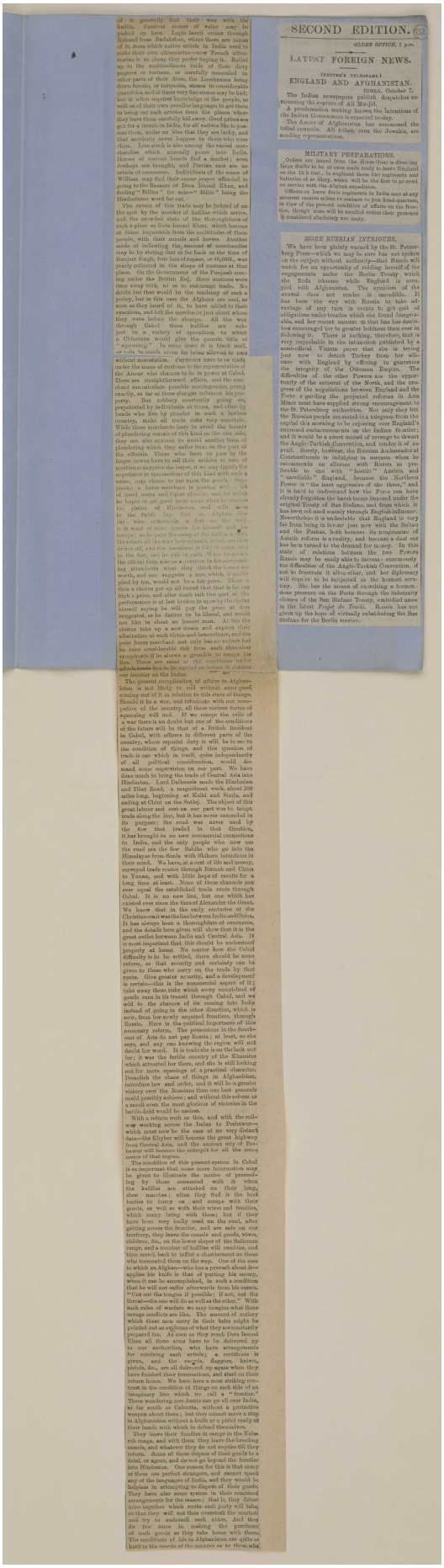
Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings about Afghanistan [102r] (207/312)



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of it generally find their way with the kafilla. Precious stones of value may be picked up here. Lapis lazuli comes through Kohand from Badakshan, where there are mines of it, from which native artists in India used to make their own ultramarine—now French ultramarine is so cheap they prefer buying it. Rolled up in the multitudinous folds of their dirty pagrees or turbans, or carefully concealed in other parts of their dress, the Lucchanees bring down ferozia, or turquoise, stones in considerable quantities, and at times very fine stones may be had; but it often requires knowledge of the people, as well as of their own peculiar language, to get them to bring out such articles from the places where they have them carefully hid away. Good prices are got for a ferozia in India, for all natives like to possess them, under an idea that they are lucky, and that accidents never happen to those who wear them. Live stock is also among the varied merchandise which annually pours into India. Horses of various breeds find a market; even donkeys are brought, and Persian cats are an article of commerce. Individuals of the name of William may find their *nuccar pryer* offended in going to the Bassars of Dera Ismael Khan, and finding "Billies" for sale—"Billie" being the Hindostanee word for cat.

The extent of this trade may be judged of on the spot by the number of kafillas which arrive, and the crowded state of the thoroughfares of such a place as Dera Ismael Khan, which become at times impassable from the multitudes of these people, with their camels and horses. Another mode of indicating the amount of merchandise may be by stating that as far back as the time of Ranjeet Singh, four lacs of rupees, or 40,000*l.*, was yearly collected in the shape of customs at that place. On the Government of the Punjaub coming under the British Raj, these customs were done away with, so as to encourage trade. No doubt but that would be the tendency of such a policy, but in this case the Afghans are said, as soon as they heard of it, to have added to their exactions, and left the merchants just about where they were before the change. All the way through Cabul these kafillas are subject to a variety of operations, to which a Chinaman would give the generic title of "squeezing." In some cases it is black mail, or tolls to shade, given for being allowed to pass without molestation. Payments have to be made under the name of customs to the representative of the Ameer who chances to be in power at Cabul. These are straightforward affairs, and the merchant can calculate possible contingencies, pretty exactly, so far as these charges influence his property. But robbery constantly going on, perpetrated by individuals at times, and often by bands who live by plunder in such a lawless country, make all trade risks very uncertain. While these merchants have to avoid the haunts of plundering rascals of this kind on the one side, they are also anxious to avoid another form of plundering which they suffer from on the part of the officials. Those who have to pass by the larger towns have to sell their articles to men of position at anywhere the sayer, it we may dignify the negotiator in transactions of this kind with such a name, may choose to put upon the goods. Suppose, a horse merchant is passing with a lot of good mules and Cabul ghoods, and for which he hopes to get good large sums when he reaches the plains of Hindostan, and sells them to the Sahib log. But an Afghan Sirdar who commands a fort on the way, is in want of some horses for himself and troops; so he pays the camp of the kafilla a visit. He assists all the very best animals, which are then driven off, and the merchant is told to come over to the fort, and he will be paid. When he arrives the official then makes a question to his surrounding attendants what they think the horses are worth, and one suggests a sum which, if multiplied by ten, would not be a fair price. There is then a chorus got up all round that that is far too high a price, and after much talk this part of the performance is at last broken in upon by the Sirdar himself saying he will pay the price at first suggested, as he desires to be liberal, and would not like to cheat an honest man. At this the chorus take up a new strain and express their admiration at such virtue and benevolence, and the poor horse merchant not only has no redress but he runs considerable risk from such shameless sycophants if he allows a grumble to escape his lips. These are some of the conditions under which trade has to be carried on before it reaches our frontier on the Indus.

The present complication of affairs in Afghanistan is not likely to call without some good coming out of it in relation to this state of things. Should it be a war, and terminate with our occupation of the country, all these various forms of squeezing will end. If we escape the evils of a war there is no doubt but one of the conditions of the future will be that of a British Resident in Cabul, with officers in different parts of the country, whose especial duty it will be to see to the condition of things, and this question of trade is one which in itself, quite independently of all political consideration, would demand some supervision on our part. We have done much to bring the trade of Central Asia into Hindostan. Lord Dalhousie made the Hindostan and Tibet Road, a magnificent work, about 200 miles long, beginning at Kalki and Simla, and ending at Chini on the Sutlej. The object of this great labour and cost on our part was to bring trade along the line, but it has never succeeded in its purpose; the road was never used by the few that traded in that direction, it has brought in no new commercial connections to India, and the only people who now use the road are the few Sahibs who go into the Himalayas from Simla with Shikaree intentions in their mind. We have, at a cost of life and money, surveyed trade routes through Birmah and China to Yunan, and with little hope of results for a long time at least. None of these channels can ever equal the established trade route through Cabul. It is no new line, but one which has existed ever since the time of Alexander the Great. We know that in the early centuries of the Christian era it was the line between India and China. It has always been a thoroughfare of commerce, and the details here given will show that it is the great outlet between India and Central Asia. It is most important that this should be understood properly at home. No matter how the Cabul difficulty is to be settled, there should be some reform, so that security and certainty can be given to those who carry on the trade by that route. Give greater security, and a development is certain—this is the commercial aspect of it; take away those risks which every camel-load of goods runs in its transit through Cabul, and we add to the chances of its coming into India instead of going in the other direction, which is now, from her newly acquired frontiers, through Russia. Here is the political importance of this necessary reform. The possessions in the Southeast of Asia do not pay Russia; at least, so she says, and any one knowing the region will not doubt her word. It is trade she is on the look out for; it was the fertile country of the Khanates which attracted her there, and she is still looking out for more openings of a practical character. Demolish the chaos of things in Afghanistan, introduce law and order, and it will be a greater victory over the Russians than our best generals could possibly achieve; and without this reform as a result even the most glorious of victories in the battle-field would be useless.

With a reform such as this, and with the railway working across the Indus to Peshawar—which must now be the case at no very distant date—the Khyber will become the great highway from Central Asia, and the ancient city of Peshawar will become the entrepôt for all the commerce of that region.

The condition of this present system in Cabul is so important that some more information may be given to illustrate the modes of proceeding by those connected with it when the kafillas are attacked on their long, slow marches; often they find it the best tactics to hurry on and escape with their goods, as well as with their wives and families, which many bring with them; but if they have been very badly used on the road, after getting across the frontier, and are safe on our territory, they leave the camels and goods, wives, children, &c., on the lower slopes of the Sulieman range, and a number of kafillas will combine, and then march back to inflict a chastisement on those who tormented them on the way. One of the uses to which an Afghan—who has a proverb about it—applies his knife is that of putting his enemy, when it can be accomplished, in such a condition that he will not suffer afterwards from his curses. "Cut out the tongue if possible; if not, cut the throat—the one will do as well as the other." With such rules of warfare we may imagine what these savage conflicts are like. The amount of cutlery which these men carry in their belts might be pointed out as evidence of what they are constantly prepared for. As soon as they reach Dera Ismael Khan all these arms have to be delivered up to our authorities, who have arrangements for receiving each article; a certificate is given, and the sword, daggers, knives, pistols, &c., are all delivered up again when they have finished their transactions, and start on their return home. We have here a most striking contrast in the condition of things on each side of an imaginary line which we call a "frontier." These wandering mer hants can go all over India, as far south as Calcutta, without a protective weapon about them; but they cannot move a step in Afghanistan without a knife or a pistol ready at their hands with which to defend themselves.

They leave their families in camps in the Kalsa-rah range, and with them they leave the breeding camels, and whatever they do not require till they return. Some of them dispose of their goods to a dealer, or agent, and do not go beyond the frontier into Hindostan. One reason for this is that many of them are perfect strangers, and cannot speak any of the languages of India, and they would be helpless in attempting to dispose of their goods. They have also some system in their combined arrangements for the season; that is, they determine together which route each party will take, so that they will not thus overstock the markets and try to undersell each other. And they do the same in making the purchase of such goods as they take home with them. The conditions of life in Afghanistan are quite as hard to the people of the country as to those who

SECOND EDITION. 102

GLOBE OFFICE, 1 p.m.

LATEST FOREIGN NEWS.

(REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.)

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, October 7.

The Indian newspapers publish despatches announcing the capture of Ali Masjid.

A proclamation making known the intentions of the Indian Government is expected to-day.

The Ameer of Afghanistan has summoned the tribal councils. All tribes, even the Jowakis, are sending representatives.

MILITARY PREPARATIONS.

Orders are issued from the Horse Guards directing large drafts to be at once made ready to leave England on the 15 h inst., to augment those line regiments and batteries of artillery, which will be the first to proceed on service with the Afghan expedition.

Officers on leave from regiments in India may at any moment receive orders to embark to join head-quarters, in view of the present condition of affairs on the frontier, though none will be recalled unless their presence is considered absolutely necessary.

MORE RUSSIAN INTRIGUES.

We have been plainly warned by the St. Petersburg Press—which we may be sure has not spoken on the subject without authority—that Russia will watch for an opportunity of ridding herself of the engagements under the Berlin Treaty which she finds irksome while England is occupied with Afghanistan. The cynicism of the avowal does not render it incredible. It has been the way with Russia to take advantage of any turn in events to get quit of obligations under treaties which she found disagreeable, and her recent success in that line has doubtless encouraged her to greater boldness than ever in following it. There is nothing, therefore, that is very improbable in the intimation published by a semi-official Vienna paper that she is trying just now to detach Turkey from her alliance with England by offering to guarantee the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The difficulties of the other Powers are the opportunity of the autocrat of the North, and the progress of the negotiations between England and the Porte regarding the projected reforms in Asia Minor must have supplied strong encouragement to the St. Petersburg authorities. Not only they but the Russian people are stated in a telegram from the capital this morning to be rejoicing over England's supposed embarrassments on the Indian frontier; and it would be a sweet morsel of revenge to thwart the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and render it of no avail. Surely, however, the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople is indulging in surcasm when he recommends an alliance with Russia as preferable to one with "hostile" Austria and "unreliable" England, because the Northern Power is "the least aggressive of the three," and it is hard to understand how the Porte can have already forgotten the harsh terms imposed under the original Treaty of San Stefano, and from which it has been released mainly through English influence. Nevertheless it is undeniable that England is very far from being in favour just now with the Sultan and the Pashas, both because its programme of Asiatic reform is a reality, and because a deaf ear has been turned to the demand for money. In this state of relations between the two Powers Russia may be easily able to increase enormously the difficulties of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, if not to frustrate it altogether, and her diplomacy will require to be subjected to the keenest scrutiny. She has the means of exercising a tremendous pressure on the Porte through the indemnity clauses of the San Stefano Treaty, embodied anew in the latest *Projet de Traité*. Russia has not given up the hope of virtually substituting the San Stefano for the Berlin version.

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The Globe
AND TRAVELLER.
THE OLDEST EVENING PAPER.
OFFICES: 110, STRAND, W.C.

MONDAY EVENING,
OCTOBER 7.

THE ADVANCE INTO AFGHANISTAN.

In our telegraphic columns we publish a very startling piece of news from India, which, if confirmed, means that war has already commenced between British India and Afghanistan. It is announced that Ali Musjid, SHERE ALI'S foremost outpost of any consequence in the Khyber Pass, has been captured by our troops. This important intelligence is said to rest on the authority of the Indian newspapers, and it will therefore be prudent to wait for further telegrams before accepting the statement. What gives it an appearance of likelihood is that rumours at Simla and elsewhere had previously mentioned the advance of a force from Peshawur through Jumrood into the Khyber. We published a statement of the sort on Saturday, and it would therefore appear that some tidings to that effect had reached the head-quarters of the Government at Simla. Should the news prove true, it will show at all events that Lord LYTTON has no intention of allowing the insult offered to his representative to go unpunished until spring. The capture of Ali Musjid, which is some eight or ten miles from our frontier, will be regarded by the people of India as a convincing proof that England's power to exact redress is not one whit less than in olden times. It is possible that our too-prolonged experiment with a policy of "masterly inactivity," may have given rise to a different opinion among some of the feudatory princes. An Asiatic is not readily made to understand that anything but fear of the consequences can restrain a Power from aggressive measures against troublesome neighbours, and at not a few semi-independent Courts in Hindostan it has been whispered that England did not care to interfere with Afghanistan because she had no wish to provoke another encounter with the fierce warriors who annihilated her legions some forty years ago. As we have previously pointed out, the delay of operations until spring might have been wrongly construed at Gwalior, Indore, Hyderabad, and elsewhere, as a sign of weakness in the Paramount Power. Before all things, it was necessary to do something which should demonstrate beyond the possibility of native scepticism that the arm of England reaches as far and can strike as swiftly and strongly as at any time since it broke the power of the Moguls, and reduced the fierce, restless Mahrattas to a position of law-abiding dependence.

Even, however, if this news proves true, it does not by any means follow that the Peshawur column will forthwith march on Cabul. By taking possession of Ali Musjid we should compel the AMEER to keep a large proportion of his army between that fort and his capital, while at the same time he would be effectually prevented from taking the offensive through the Khyber. These are important objects, and the only drawback is the excessive unhealthiness of Ali Musjid. Be the cause what it may, the place has an evil reputation in that respect. In 1839 a detachment of our troops under Colonel Wade, with a numerical strength of 2,400 men, lost more than a tenth of the number in two months through disease. The cause is said to have been the unwholesomeness of the water of the Cabul river, which flows beneath the eminence on which the fort stands. But there must be some other available water supply in the vicinity, one would imagine, or the AMEER could not well keep troops at a place where they would be liable to decimation every two months. Be this as it may, Ali Musjid will certainly be held if it has been captured, on account of the strategical and political advantages we derive from its possession. But there are some indications that the more extended line of advance just at present will be from Kohat into the Khoorum Valley, with Thull for the immediate base of operations. This route to the capital presents certain advantages which are not found elsewhere. The climate is comparatively mild during winter, many of the tribes are very friendly to our Government, and the valley is fertile and well watered. Moreover, the inhabitants belong to the Shia sect, and are, therefore, more or less at enmity with the Suni dynasty of Cabul. The idea seems to be to occupy the port of Khoorum in the centre of the valley as a base of operations against Ghuznee and the capital. By adopting this policy, Lord LYTTON would sever Western Afghanistan from the dominions of the Ameer, a proceeding which could not but have a most salutary effect in restoring our prestige in India, while at the same time our troops would be in admirable position for marching direct on Cabul the moment the northerly passes were free from snow. There are two of these exits from the Khoorum Valley in the direction of Ghuznee. Of these, the Peiwar Kotal is represented as offering few difficulties, but the Shuturgurdan is much more formidable, and could not be attempted without great risk until the rigours of winter have passed away. As a matter of right, part of the Khoorum Valley belongs to British India. Certain of the tribes were under the sway of the Sikhs up to the very moment when the "crowning mercy" of Goojerat brought about the annexation of the Punjaub and its outlying dependencies to our Empire. These clans of Khoorum accordingly fell under our rule, and they appear to have been quite content with their fate. But some difficulties subsequently arose about their assessment, leading to a British expedition for the purpose of exacting payment of the prescribed revenue. As the amount was trifling, and there seemed some likelihood that it would always have to be collected at the point of the bayonet, the Indian Government decided to quit its hold on the valley, but without handing it over to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, SHERE ALI has forced the tribes to recognise him as their ruler, and it is owing to his arbitrary exactions of tribute that they are now inclined to give a cordial welcome to our troops.

While the Peshawur and Kohat columns are being thus employed, strong reinforcements will be hurried forward to Quetta. An advance on Cabul by that route would, however, be much more circuitous than through the Khoorum Valley, while the difficulties of the road are said to be considerably greater. But there are several strong reasons for establishing a powerful force beyond the Bolan. In the first place, our feudatory, the KHAN of Khelat, has a right to look to us for protection against the AMEER, who is believed to be already marching troops against Khelat, with a view to punish its ruler for allowing the English to occupy Quetta. Our force at the latter place only amounts to 1,500 men, and although the KHAN could raise a considerable number of troops, his soldiers are neither so well armed nor so efficiently drilled as the AMEER'S. A rapid dash of a strong Afghan column on Quetta might, therefore, cause us serious inconvenience under present circumstances, but Lord LYTTON probably hopes to prevent this mischance by reinforcing the outpost before SHERE ALI has time to act. Even more important is the necessity of holding in strength a position which gives us the command of the roads from India to Candahar and from Candahar to Ghuznee. Those who advised the Indian Government to acquire possession of Quetta were doubtless influenced by strategical considerations, for there is scarcely a point beyond the frontier which presents so many and such great advantages both for offence and defence. It now remains to be seen whether SHERE ALI will recognise the expediency of acceding to our demands. He is reported as having convened an assembly of tribal representatives; and we learn that the whole of the border tribes have at once obeyed the summons. On their decision the question of peace or war will greatly depend. If the AMEER sees reason to believe that he will receive a hearty support from the Afredees, Wurzaris, and their congeners, he may be expected to fight out the quarrel to the bitter end. Should he, however, perceive any signs of wavering or hesitation or disloyalty on the part of the more powerful clans, it is quite possible that he will disown all complicity with the insult offered to Captain CAVAGNARI by the commandant at Ali Musjid, and recommence negotiations of a more earnest sort than formerly for the restoration of amicable relations between Afghanistan and British India.

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Pall Mall Gazette – Oct 7

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OUR EASTERN TROUBLES.

THE meaning of the rather confused rumours about an advance of English troops over the Afghan frontier we believe to be this. Shere Ali had determined to coerce the Khyberees offhand, and made vigorous preparations for that purpose. On this the Khyberees wanted to know whether the English forces would help them if they resisted; the answer was favourable; an advance was made; and if the Afghans prove as active as they seem to be, we may soon hear that actual hostilities on a small initiatory scale have commenced. If this is a true account of the matter, one advantage we have already gained. The Khyberees are pledged to our side in the conflict; and this may help to decide other tribes in our favour.

After a confabulation lasting over three hours the Cabinet has again dispersed. It was anticipated that a second Council would be held to-day; but there were obvious reasons why the business before Ministers should be settled, if possible, at one meeting, and those reasons prevailed. But there must have been much to discuss, for even the important Afghan business is not the only trouble ahead. Turkish affairs are by no means in a promising condition, and there are Russian complications with both. Still, it was better, perhaps, to "knock off" in a single sitting whatever consideration these complications demanded, than to seem unprepared, or anxious, or in any way dubious or divided.

Whosoever imagined that the Cabinet was to meet to sanction immediate operations in Afghanistan must now feel that their expectations were unfounded. As we said on Saturday, the Afghans may force operations a little; but the determination is to do nothing till the spring, except to mass an imposing number of men at certain positions and await the effect of a demonstration of strength and resolution. The hope is that the effect will be to "demoralize" the Ameer, or to alarm his chiefs into deposing or murdering him. That is the hope. But there is also an intention; which intention we have already indicated. Our Government of course understand, though their newspapers are forbidden to recognize the fact, that this is a matter in which we have to deal with the Czar as much as with the Ameer, or rather more. And, having made their provisional military demonstrations, they look to the winter as affording opportunities of "squaring Russia" in those and in other regions. This is quite understood amongst Russian diplomats and by Russian inspired journalists, who are already beginning to use the language which we lately put into the mouth of an imaginary Russian Minister. "By properly calculating our means of harming England in India," says one, "we may incline her to assume a milder policy regarding the Balkan peninsula." From other quarters we hear of the obvious necessity, should an Afghan war with England take a serious shape, of guarding Russian interests by advancing a corps of observation. And so forth. Meanwhile threats of unofficial war on behalf of the Afghans are repeated every day, and with increasing frankness. Our Government may think what they please of all this, but they dare not make light of it; and we shall probably see the consequence in further "concessions" to Russia at Constantinople, in Bulgaria, in Roumelia. In fact, the Treaty of Berlin may already be regarded as a dead letter in the very particulars upon which our Plenipotentiaries most prided themselves, while some of the unrepealed provisions of the San Stefano Treaty will soon be pressed upon attention. Russian diplomacy is quite aware of the extraordinary advantages it has gained, and, having been allowed to get England's proud head "in chancery," will not release it except on handsome terms. Of this we may be sure.

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The reported advance of British troops on the Afghan frontier is confirmed. On the 4th inst. a large portion of the Peshawur garrison moved to Jumrood, and it is now announced that this force has captured Ali Musjid. The *Times* correspondent says, however, that there can be little doubt that the Government will use every endeavour to avoid a winter campaign, and, "unless driven to adopt immediate offensive operations by aggressive military movements on the part of the Ameer, they will probably rest content until the winter is over with consolidating the necessary military and commissariat preparations for the very serious undertaking of a prolonged Afghan war." A Reuter's telegram from Bombay says that the Khyberees have declared in favour of the British, and that the Momunds are marching to join the Cabulees. Another despatch states that dissensions have broken out among the great Afghan chiefs.

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This Evening's News.

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times* publishes a long telegram from Darjeeling, dated yesterday, which says :—

The latest news from Peshawur states that 200 men of each regiment in garrison, together with horse artillery and 40-pounder batteries, and sappers and miners, proceed at once to Jamrood. The guides and a regiment from Kohat will join them there. It is believed that this force, under the command of General Roberts, will attack the fort of Ali Musjid. Reports are current that a body of the Ameer's soldiers, consisting of four regiments and six guns, has advanced to the mouth of the Khyber Pass. A bazaar rumour states that the Ameer is massing troops and has no intention of submitting. The neighbouring tribes are perfectly quiet. The latest press news from Lahore states that the advance on Cabul has for the present been abandoned. The armed demonstration on the frontier is intended to coerce the Ameer to accept our terms without compelling us to go to war. The 1st Sikhs and the 1st Mountain Battery will march immediately from Kohat to Peshawur. Colonel Villiers, the Viceroy's military secretary, accompanies the Jamrood Expedition. Grave complaints are made of the commissariat arrangements with reference to carriage for the troops. It is reported from Umballa that the 26th Regiment of Native Infantry had arrived ; that the 70th and 59th Foot proceed forthwith to Mooltan ; and that a detachment of the 18th Royal Irish left Rauvind by special train for Mooltan. The Indus Valley Railway is preparing for the carriage of the Bombay column to Sukhur. The 15th Sikhs have marched from Sealkote to join the force assembling at Mooltan. The 23rd Pioneers have marched from Simla *en route* for the frontier. General Biddulph and Major Worsley left Nynee Tal for Quetta on Friday. The troops will consist of two divisions. The 2nd Division will be divided into two columns—one under General Roberts moving up the Kuram Valley ; the second column, joining at Dera-Ghazi Khan, will reinforce the Pioneers at Quetta. The 1st Division will for the present remain in support. Colonel Hilis proceeds at once to Dera Ghazi Khan to hasten the advance of the troops to Quetta. There is considerable delay consequent on defective carriage. Colonel Lane has been ordered to Mooltan to superintend and expedite the commissariat arrangements for the Quetta force, carriage being again the difficulty. It is reported that the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederic Haines, will command in person should an expedition against Cabul be determined upon.

With reference to the plans of the Indian Government the correspondent says :—

The Government are very reticent as to the ulterior destination of the troops, but as far as any conclusion can be drawn from the movements of troops and other indicia of military policy, the Viceroy's plan of operation would appear to be to endeavour to coerce the Ameer to yield an unqualified submission by a strong military demonstration on his frontier, and so prove to him that the Government have both the power and the will to occupy, and if necessary to annex, his territory in the event of his proving unsubmissive. It is hoped, in addition, that when once the Afghans have tangible proof that the Government are determined to insist upon absolute compliance with its demands, they themselves will impose great pressure upon the Ameer, and that, should this pressure not prove successful, the Ameer will probably be dethroned, as it is believed that the people would be most unwilling to draw upon themselves the inevitable alternative of an armed occupation in order to further the Ameer's individual proclivities in favour of a Russian alliance. In order effectually to carry out this policy it will be necessary to occupy in force the debouches of both the Bolan and the Khyber Passes. This is with the twofold object of preparing against active aggressive measures by the Ameer and of being prepared at the commencement of the spring for an immediate march upon Cabul and Candahar. Should the present measures prove barren of successful results, there can be little doubt that the Government will use every endeavour to avoid a winter campaign, and, unless driven to adopt immediate offensive operations by aggressive military movements on the part of the Ameer, they will in all probability rest content until the winter is over with consolidating the necessary military and commissariat preparations for the very serious undertaking of a prolonged Afghan war. Possibly if a favourable chance should happen, a seizure of Candahar by a *coup de main* might be attempted ; but this is not thought a very probable occurrence, more especially as the Ameer has been long forewarned by our occupation of Quetta and is said to have greatly strengthened the fortifications and to have adopted other precautionary measures to guard against both surprise and attack. The occupation of the Kuram Valley by British troops is all-important. The valley turns the Khyber Pass and stretches almost to Cabul, and the difficulties to be encountered in crossing the pass are trivial compared with those of the passing of the Khyber. The people of the valley are reported to be well disposed towards our Government. It is stated that the occupation of the Kuram Valley would place us, supposing our cantonment to be located in the centre of the valley and our border to be defined by the present limits of Barngash and Turi lands, just nine marches from Cabul. It would also give us possession of the Peiwar and Shutar-gurdan Passes, the ascent to which on the Kuram side is comparatively easy, though the descent into Logar in Afghanistan is long and steep. From this position we should master Cabul. . . . . My opinion that no immediate advance upon Cabul is about to be attempted is corroborated in some degree by a telegram which I have received from Simla, and which states that the winter movements of the Indian Government are still unsettled, and that it is probable the Government will go to Calcutta for the winter after all, and that the Viceroy only will visit Lahore in the winter in order that he may have an opportunity of consulting with the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjaub as to the movements of both the Kuram and Quetta forces.

A *Daily News* telegram from Simla dated last night says :—

The Viceroy's Emissary left Cabul on the 28th. He was detained by the Ameer to bring an answer to the Viceroy's letters. This is the only fresh piece of authentic information. It is rumoured that the Ameer is greatly surprised at our sudden anger at his treatment of the mission, as we had borne previous rebuffs in silence. It is also said that Yakoob Khan has been released, but this is very doubtful. It is believed that the Ameer will repudiate the act of the commandant of Ali Musjid. The Government considers it highly improbable, however, that the Ameer will humble himself, or agree to our terms, without which no apology will be accepted. The chief military authorities strongly oppose unprepared action. By the 1st of November Quetta will be reinforced and supplies and transport will be ready, when an advance on Candahar and the Kuram Valley is certain—perhaps on Jellalabad and Cabul, if necessary. It is reported that two Russian officers are still at Cabul. General Abramoff and the rest of the embassy have returned to General Kaufmann's headquarters.

The correspondent of the *Standard* at Bombay says :—"The Ameer has summoned the tribal jirgahs, or councils, to afford him assistance. All, even the recently-conquered Jowakis, are believed to have assented. The frontier tribes from the Khyber to the Bolan number 180,000 fighting men, of which 150,000 are of Afghan blood and 30,000 of Belooch. There are 23,000 Afreedees. The Belooch tribes and the Afreedees will probably remain neutral. A telegram from Simla in the same paper states that the death is reported of Adhan Khan, chief of the southern Ghiljies, a very powerful Afghan tribe. It is impossible to say yet (the telegram says) whether this may affect the position or not.

The Russian press continues to express satisfaction at the embarrassing condition in which they believe England to be now placed in regard to Afghanistan. The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *North German Gazette* says :—

In the event of an Anglo-Russian war in Europe, General von Kaufmann would have occupied Merv and Herat. Russia, regarding Afghanistan as a good buffer between England and herself, has always kept on friendly terms with the Ameer, but never committed the mistake of subsidizing an Oriental who deems it an honour to break his word to an infidel. If Shere Ali selected this moment for the beginning of the long-planned war, he was probably actuated by the belief that the Indian semi-independent Princes, exasperated by the English demand of a reduction of their troops, will mutiny in the rear of the expeditionary corps. Should Shere Ali be beaten and his territory be annexed, Russia will occupy Merv and Balkh, when the fiction of a neutral country intervening between the Russian and British sentinels will cease to exist. To support the mutiny of the Indian Princes would be contrary to the principles of Russia, who never encourages rebellion, and, moreover, has had quite enough of the one sentimental war in Turkey ; while should England be defeated, Russia would require her central Asiatic troops to prevent a Mahommedan revival in her own dominions.

The *Golos* asserts that Shere Ali may count upon the friendly neutrality of both Russia and Persia, as well as upon the sympathies and possible co-operation of the Indian semi-independent Princes. With these points in his favour, he can quietly wait an attack, which must begin by the forcing of formidable passes. The *Telegraph* says :—"Whatever may happen, Russia will never permit the incorporation of Afghanistan by the English. They may punish the Ameer : but if they attempt to do away with him, an Anglo-Russian war is sure to ensue."

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Times - Oct 8

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It is, no doubt, of the highest importance for us to know whether or not the greatest of modern experiments in the art of government—the British Empire in India—is a failure. But an Englishman, before pronouncing it to be so, is bound to pause and to weigh his words well. An indictment against British rule in India based upon insufficient knowledge of the facts and inadequate powers of generalization would be at any time unbecoming, but is peculiarly inopportune at the present crisis in Anglo-Indian policy. We print a letter to-day from Mr. HYNDMAN, who has recently written upon this subject, under the sensational title of "the Bankruptcy of India," in the *Nineteenth Century*. He defends himself with some acerbity and at considerable length against the brief and trenchant criticism of a writer of authority, signing himself "C.," whose remarks we published on Saturday. We cannot perceive that Mr. HYNDMAN has either successfully repelled the argument contained in "C.'s" letter, or established his general contention that India is being impoverished, and that oppressive taxation has brought the country to the verge of a collapse. Mr. HYNDMAN, accepting with implicit confidence the assertions of a native writer, affirms that the whole value of the agricultural produce of India amounts to no more than £277,000,000 per annum. Upon this estimate he founds his calculation that the income of the people of India is only 31s. 6d. a head, and he thence proceeds to prove in various ways that the population is overburdened with taxes and ground to the earth.

But, as "C." has pointed out, an examination of Mr. HYNDMAN'S figures (or rather of those which he borrows from his native instructor) will show a state of things by no means so formidable. Taking the Punjab as an example, it appears that the sale of one-sixth of the wheat crop would cover the Government land assessment, which constitutes two-thirds of the whole taxation, and that the remainder of the grain grown in the province gives 2lb. per head daily for food, in addition to garden vegetables and milk. The Punjab, besides, produces other crops—oil seed, cotton, hemp, sugar-cane, indigo, tobacco, spices, drugs, dyes, poppies, and tea—the aggregate value of which may be taken at £3,750,000. It is impossible to contend that 17,600,000 people with 2lb. of grain per head daily, and with saleable produce to the amount we have stated, can be so utterly overwhelmed in misery as Mr. HYNDMAN would have us believe. In his reply he says that the Punjab is an unfair example, because it is "the least impoverished province in "India,"—although, as a matter of fact, the Punjab is poor in comparison with Lower Bengal and many parts of the Deccan. He complains, too, that "C." has made no allowance for seed corn or for the support of live stock. But leaving the amount of the proper deduction for these to be settled by statisticians, we must decline to concede to Mr. HYNDMAN that the omission to estimate them "renders 'C.'s' calculation utterly worthless." It is a rough calculation, perhaps, but so is Mr. HYNDMAN'S. Only a very rash and inexperienced economist would venture to draw rigorous inferences from so loose a reckoning as the calculation of the aggregate national income must be in any country, and especially in a country like India. It is probable that the amount is really much larger than Mr. HYNDMAN'S estimate, but in any case a comparison such as he institutes between what he puts down as the average yearly income of the Indian peasant and the sum spent in supporting a convict in an Anglo-Indian gaol must be misleading. The former is a vague guess at an average, the latter is the ascertained cost of maintaining a prisoner at the public expense. But there is no parity of conditions between the peasant consuming the produce of his own holding and the Government purchasing provisions for the prisons in the markets of the large towns.

We may pass, however, from the question of the average Indian peasant's income to that of his past and present burdens. Assuming that he has to subsist upon a share of the produce of the soil incredibly small if measured by English or European standards, we have still to consider whether he is better off now than he was before he became subject to British rule. Mr. HYNDMAN'S answer would be in the negative, but he offers no proof of a charge which, if true, condemns our whole Imperial system in the East as a blunder and a crime. It can be shown, we feel assured, that the former Governments of India took from the peasant a far larger proportion of his crops than the Anglo-Indian system of taxation. In addition to this, no man under Mogul, Mahratta, or Sikh rule was secure in the enjoyment of what the tax-gatherer left him, or even of his life and his family honour. The immeasurable advantages of a just and orderly government have added more to the sum of human happiness in India than an increase of taxation twofold could take away. But Mr. HYNDMAN contends that the Indian people, in spite of the benefits of order and justice—which he does not contest, though he lays no stress on them—are becoming poorer every year. He is on this point at issue with those who know India—we must take leave to say—infinitely better than he does. Take, for instance, "the "Moral and Material Progress of India" Blue Book for 1875-76, a publication which Mr. HYNDMAN frequently cites, and look at the statements of the Financial Commissioner of the Punjab. He says,—"No one who compares the condition of "the village proprietors now with what it was 24 "years ago (at the date of the British annexation) "can doubt that a large increase of general pro-"sperity has occurred." To evidence of this kind Mr. HYNDMAN can only oppose the fact that in some parts of India an improvident peasantry are losing their live stock. His main argument, however, is that there must be impoverishment where there is increase of taxation. Undoubtedly there has been an increase of taxation since the period of the Mutiny, but the greater part of that increase points to improvement, and not decline. The augmentation of the land revenue arises either from the increase of assessments where the introduction of railways and canals has given additional value to agricultural produce, or to the reclamation of rich land from the jungle which has been going on rapidly in Lower Bengal and elsewhere. The increase of the revenue from Excise, Customs, and Salt duties, which form the principal items of receipt apart from the land, is in part due to an increase of the rates of impost, but in part also to an increase of consumption. It can hardly be contended, however, that the increased duties are crushing when they are accompanied by an increased demand for the articles taxed. The augmentation of the receipts under the aforesaid heads of revenue from £5,700,000 to £11,500,000 within twenty years would hardly warn an English Chancellor of the Exchequer that the country was sinking under its burdens.

But Mr. HYNDMAN discerns another cause of alarm. The country, he says, is being drained of its capital by the necessary result of a foreign Government—the expenditure of a large part of the produce by absentees. There is first the military demand for "home charges," a standing dispute between the Indian and the Home Governments. Then there are the pensions of retired officials of every kind, the savings of officers on service, civil and military, the interest on loans, the dividends of the railways, and a number of other payments which India makes to England. That there is a "drain" of this kind cannot be denied, and that it is to some extent economically injurious is certain, but it is inseparable from the conditions of our rule in India, and we feel convinced that India obtains full value in exchange for it. Can it be seriously argued, for instance, that the Indian railways, which are accountable for a considerable part of the drain, have not conferred benefits on Indian people infinitely greater than any that could have sprung from the capital they have drawn away if it had been left to "fructify" in India? They have given a value to agricultural produce that it never had before, and they are working social changes the effect of which will be visible in another generation. Can it be argued that it would be better for India if English merchants and planters never made fortunes in India, but left trade and agriculture to stagnate as they do in most of the native States? The cost of the Government and the army is not really open for discussion. It is the first condition of prosperity, and almost of existence, for India that the country should have a just, enlightened, progressive, and vigorous Government, guaranteeing security within and without. For this a price must be paid, and it is for the interest of India that it should be paid. We have no doubt whatever that India is well able to pay that price. To hand over the country, as is calmly proposed, to native administration would be to surrender our great experiment to be ruined by corruption, weakness, and oppression. India would have reason to curse the short-sighted philanthropy which in the vague hope of reducing taxation would throw back the country into anarchy and give a loose rein to every kind of plunder.

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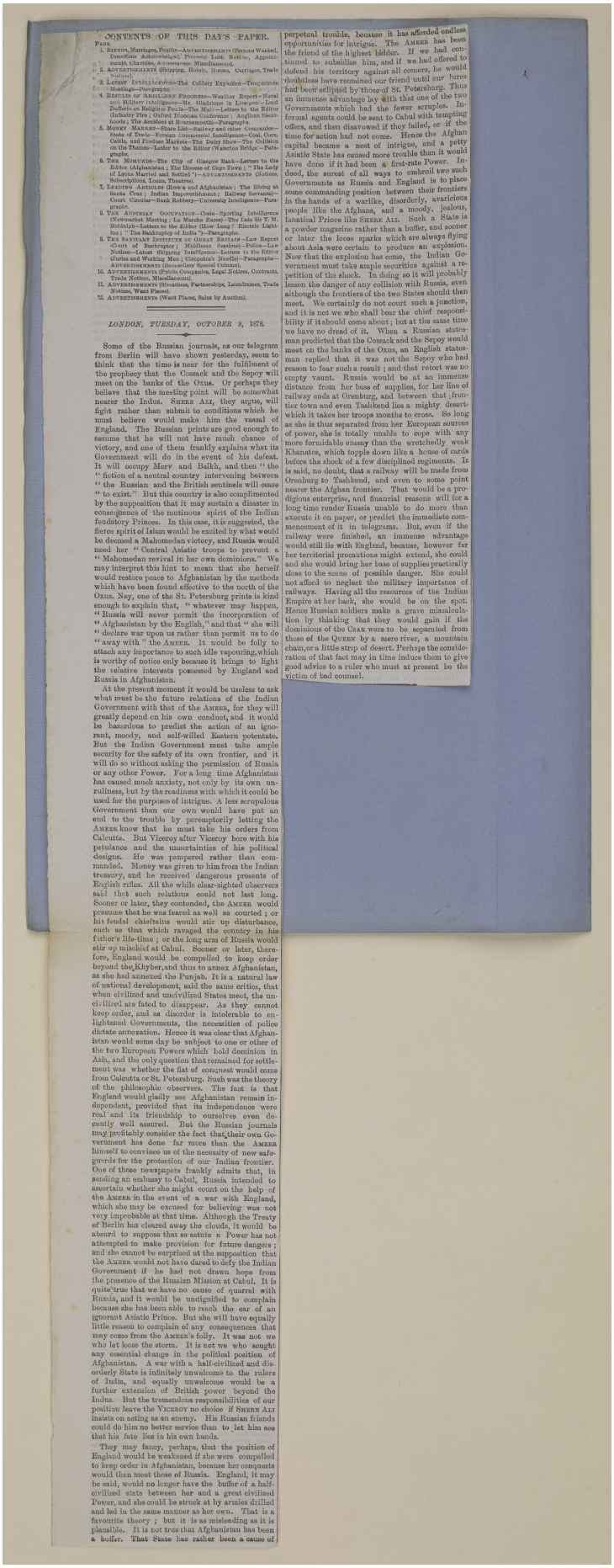

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LONDON, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1878.

Some of the Russian journals, as our telegram from Berlin will have shown yesterday, seem to think that the time is near for the fulfilment of the prophecy that the Cossack and the Sepoy will meet on the banks of the Oxus. Or perhaps they believe that the meeting point will be somewhat nearer the Indus. SHERE ALI, they argue, will fight rather than submit to conditions which he must believe would make him the vassal of England. The Russian prints are good enough to assume that he will not have much chance of victory, and one of them frankly explains what its Government will do in the event of his defeat. It will occupy Merv and Balkh, and then "the "fiction of a neutral country intervening between "the Russian and the British sentinels will cease "to exist." But this country is also complimented by the supposition that it may sustain a disaster in consequence of the mutinous spirit of the Indian feudatory Princes. In this case, it is suggested, the fierce spirit of Islam would be excited by what would be deemed a Mahomedan victory, and Russia would need her "Central Asiatic troops to prevent a "Mahomedan revival in her own dominions." We may interpret this hint to mean that she herself would restore peace to Afghanistan by the methods which have been found effective to the north of the Oxus. Nay, one of the St. Petersburg prints is kind enough to explain that, "whatever may happen, "Russia will never permit the incorporation of "Afghanistan by the English," and that "she will "declare war upon us rather than permit us to do "away with" the AMEER. It would be folly to attach any importance to such idle vapouring, which is worthy of notice only because it brings to light the relative interests possessed by England and Russia in Afghanistan.

At the present moment it would be useless to ask what must be the future relations of the Indian Government with that of the AMEER, for they will greatly depend on his own conduct, and it would be hazardous to predict the action of an ignorant, moody, and self-willed Eastern potentate. But the Indian Government must take ample security for the safety of its own frontier, and it will do so without asking the permission of Russia or any other Power. For a long time Afghanistan has caused much anxiety, not only by its own unruliness, but by the readiness with which it could be used for the purposes of intrigue. A less scrupulous Government than our own would have put an end to the trouble by peremptorily letting the AMEER know that he must take his orders from Calcutta. But Viceroy after Viceroy bore with his petulance and the uncertainties of his political designs. He was pampered rather than commanded. Money was given to him from the Indian treasury, and he received dangerous presents of English rifles. All the while clear-sighted observers said that such relations could not last long. Sooner or later, they contended, the AMEER would presume that he was feared as well as courted; or his feudal chieftains would stir up disturbance, such as that which ravaged the country in his father's life-time; or the long arm of Russia would stir up mischief at Cabul. Sooner or later, therefore, England would be compelled to keep order beyond the Khyber, and thus to annex Afghanistan, as she had annexed the Punjab. It is a natural law of national development, said the same critics, that when civilized and uncivilized States meet, the uncivilized are fated to disappear. As they cannot keep order, and as disorder is intolerable to enlightened Governments, the necessities of police dictate annexation. Hence it was clear that Afghanistan would some day be subject to one or other of the two European Powers which hold dominion in Asia, and the only question that remained for settlement was whether the fiat of conquest would come from Calcutta or St. Petersburg. Such was the theory of the philosophic observers. The fact is that England would gladly see Afghanistan remain independent, provided that its independence were real and its friendship to ourselves even decently well assured. But the Russian journals may profitably consider the fact that their own Government has done far more than the AMEER himself to convince us of the necessity of new safeguards for the protection of our Indian frontier. One of those newspapers frankly admits that, in sending an embassy to Cabul, Russia intended to ascertain whether she might count on the help of the AMEER in the event of a war with England, which she may be excused for believing was not very improbable at that time. Although the Treaty of Berlin has cleared away the clouds, it would be absurd to suppose that so astute a Power has not attempted to make provision for future dangers; and she cannot be surprised at the supposition that the AMEER would not have dared to defy the Indian Government if he had not drawn hope from the presence of the Russian Mission at Cabul. It is quite true that we have no cause of quarrel with RUSSIA, and it would be undignified to complain because she has been able to reach the ear of an ignorant Asiatic Prince. But she will have equally little reason to complain of any consequences that may come from the AMEER'S folly. It was not we who let loose the storm. It is not we who sought any essential change in the political position of Afghanistan. A war with a half-civilized and disorderly State is infinitely unwelcome to the rulers of India, and equally unwelcome would be a further extension of British power beyond the Indus. But the tremendous responsibilities of our position leave the VICEROY no choice if SHERE ALI insists on acting as an enemy. His Russian friends could do him no better service than to let him see that his fate lies in his own hands.

They may fancy, perhaps, that the position of England would be weakened if she were compelled to keep order in Afghanistan, because her conquests would then meet those of Russia. England, it may be said, would no longer have the buffer of a half-civilized state between her and a great civilized Power, and she could be struck at by armies drilled and led in the same manner as her own. That is a favourite theory; but it is as misleading as it is plausible. It is not true that Afghanistan has been a buffer. That State has rather been a cause of perpetual trouble, because it has afforded endless opportunities for intrigue. The AMEER has been the friend of the highest bidder. If we had continued to subsidize him, and if we had offered to defend his territory against all comers, he would doubtless have remained our friend until our lures had been eclipsed by those of St. Petersburg. Thus an immense advantage lay with that one of the two Governments which had the fewer scruples. Informal agents could be sent to Cabul with tempting offers, and then disavowed if they failed, or if the time for action had not come. Hence the Afghan capital became a nest of intrigue, and a petty Asiatic State has caused more trouble than it would have done if it had been a first-rate Power. Indeed, the surest of all ways to embroil two such Governments as Russia and England is to place some commanding position between their frontiers in the hands of a warlike, disorderly, avaricious people like the Afghans, and a moody, jealous, fanatical Prince like SHERE ALI. Such a State is a powder magazine rather than a buffer, and sooner or later the loose sparks which are always flying about Asia were certain to produce an explosion. Now that the explosion has come, the Indian Government must take ample securities against a repetition of the shock. In doing so it will probably lessen the danger of any collision with Russia, even although the frontiers of the two States should then meet. We certainly do not court such a junction, and it is not we who shall bear the chief responsibility if it should come about; but at the same time we have no dread of it. When a Russian statesman predicted that the Cossack and the Sepoy would meet on the banks of the Oxus, an English statesman replied that it was not the Sepoy who had reason to fear such a result; and that retort was no empty vaunt. Russia would be at an immense distance from her base of supplies, for her line of railway ends at Orenburg, and between that frontier town and even Tashkend lies a mighty desert which it takes her troops months to cross. So long as she is thus separated from her European sources of power, she is totally unable to cope with any more formidable enemy than the wretchedly weak Khanates, which topple down like a house of cards before the shock of a few disciplined regiments. It is said, no doubt, that a railway will be made from Orenburg to Tashkend, and even to some point nearer the Afghan frontier. That would be a prodigious enterprise, and financial reasons will for a long time render Russia unable to do more than execute it on paper, or predict the immediate commencement of it in telegrams. But, even if the railway were finished, an immense advantage would still lie with England, because, however far her territorial precautions might extend, she could and she would bring her base of supplies practically close to the scene of possible danger. She could not afford to neglect the military importance of railways. Having all the resources of the Indian Empire at her back, she would be on the spot. Hence Russian soldiers make a grave miscalculation by thinking that they would gain if the dominions of the CZAR were to be separated from those of the QUEEN by a mere river, a mountain chain, or a little strip of desert. Perhaps the consideration of that fact may in time induce them to give good advice to a ruler who must at present be the victim of bad counsel.

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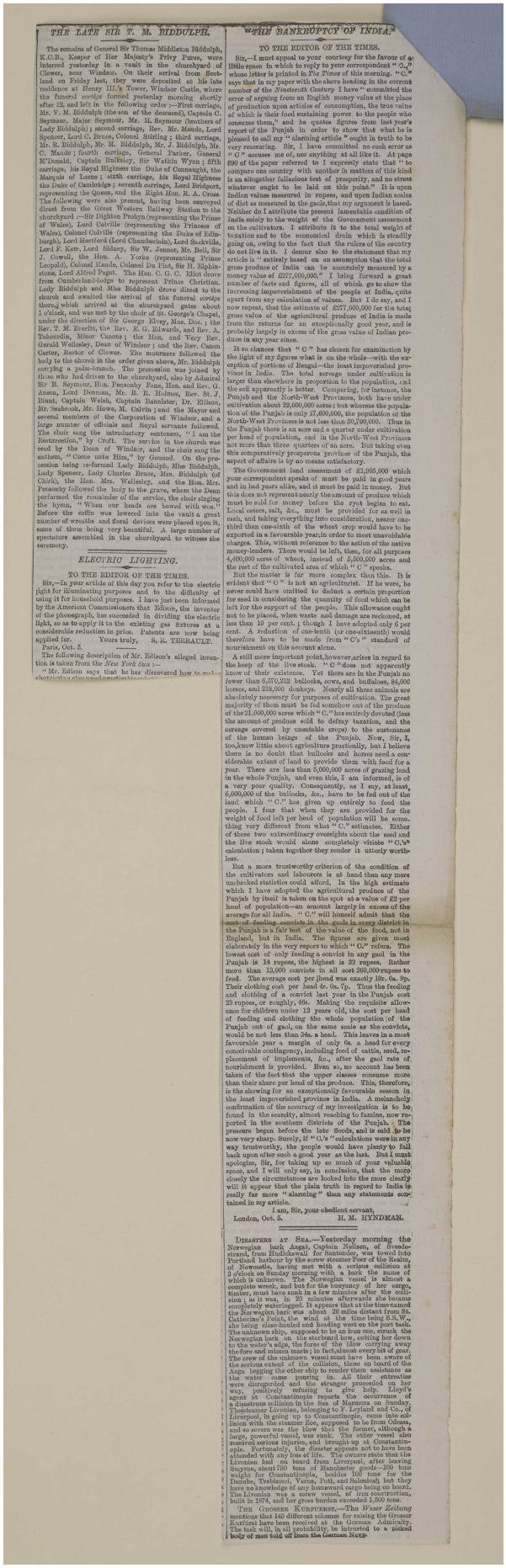

THE LATE SIR T. M. BIDDULPH.

The remains of General Sir Thomas Middleton Biddulph, K.C.B., Keeper of Her Majesty's Privy Purse, were interred yesterday in a vault in the churchyard of Clewer, near Windsor. On their arrival from Scotland on Friday last, they were deposited at his late residence at Henry III.'s Tower, Windsor Castle, where the funeral *cortège* formed yesterday morning shortly after 12, and left in the following order:—First carriage, Mr. V. M. Biddulph (the son of the deceased), Captain C. Seymour, Major Seymour, Mr. H. Seymour (brothers of Lady Biddulph); second carriage, Rev. Mr. Maude, Lord Spencer, Lord C. Bruce, Colonel Stirling; third carriage, Mr. R. Biddulph, Mr. M. Biddulph, Mr. J. Biddulph, Mr. C. Maude; fourth carriage, General Parker, General M'Donald, Captain Bulkeley, Sir Watkin Wynn; fifth carriage, his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, the Marquis of Lorne; sixth carriage, his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge; seventh carriage, Lord Bridport, representing the Queen, and the Right Hon. R. A. Cross. The following were also present, having been conveyed direct from the Great Western Railway Station to the churchyard:—Sir Dighton Probyn (representing the Prince of Wales), Lord Colville (representing the Princess of Wales), Colonel Colville (representing the Duke of Edinburgh), Lord Hertford (Lord Chamberlain), Lord Sackville, Lord *F.* Kerr, Lord Sidney, Sir W. Jenner, Mr. Bell, Sir J. Cowell, the Hon. A. Yorke (representing Prince Leopold), Colonel Maude, Colonel Du Plat, Sir H. Elphinstone, Lord Alfred Paget. The Hon. C. G. C. Eliot drove from Cumberland-lodge to represent Prince Christian. Lady Biddulph and Miss Biddulph drove direct to the church and awaited the arrival of the funeral *cortège* there, which arrived at the churchyard gates about 1 o'clock, and was met by the choir of St. George's Chapel, under the direction of Sir George Elvey, Mus. Doc.; the Rev. T. M. Everitt, the Rev. E. G. Edwards, and Rev. A. Tebourdin, Minor Canons; the Hon. and Very Rev. Gerald Wellesley, Dean of Windsor; and the Rev. Canon Carter, Rector of Clewer. The mourners followed the body to the church in the order given above, Mr. Biddulph carrying a palm-branch. The procession was joined by those who had driven to the churchyard, also by Admiral Sir R. Seymour, Hon. Pensonby Fane, Hon. and Rev. G. Anson, Lord Denman, Mr. R. R. Holmes, Rev. St. J. Blunt, Captain Welsh, Captain Bannister, Lt. Ellison, Mr. Seabrook, Mr. Howe, M. Calvin; and the Mayor and several members of the Corporation of Windsor, and a large number of officials and Royal servants followed. The choir sang the introductory sentences, "I am the Resurrection," by Croft. The service in the church was read by the Dean of Windsor, and the choir sang the anthem, "Come unto Him," by Gounod. On the procession being re-formed Lady Biddulph, Miss Biddulph, Lady Spencer, Lady Charles Bruce, Mrs. Biddulph (of Chirk), the Hon. Mrs. Wellesley, and the Hon. Mrs. Pensonby followed the body to the grave, where the Dean performed the remainder of the service, the choir singing the hymn, "When our heads are bowed with woe." Before the coffin was lowered into the vault a great number of wreaths and floral devices were placed upon it, some of them being very beautiful. A large number of spectators assembled in the churchyard to witness the ceremony.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In your article of this day you refer to the electric light for illuminating purposes and to the difficulty of using it for household purposes. I have just been informed by the American Commissioners that Edison, the inventor of the phonograph, has succeeded in dividing the electric light, so as to apply it to the existing gas fixtures at a considerable reduction in price. Patents are now being applied for. Yours truly, S. H. TERRAULT.

Paris, Oct. 5.

The following description of Mr. Edison's alleged invention is taken from the *New York Sun*:—

"Mr. Edison says that he has discovered how to [illegible]

"THE BANKRUPTCY OF INDIA."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—I must appeal to your courtesy for the favour of a little space in which to reply to your correspondent "C.," whose letter is printed in *The Times* of this morning. "C." says that in my paper with the above heading in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* I have "committed the error of arguing from an English money value at the place of production upon articles of consumption, the true value of which is their food sustaining power to the people who consume them," and he quotes figures from last year's report of the Punjab in order to show that what he is pleased to call my "alarming article" ought in truth to be very reassuring. Sir, I have committed no such error as "C." accuses me of, nor anything at all like it. At page 690 of the paper referred to I expressly state that "to compare one country with another in matters of this kind is an altogether fallacious test of prosperity, and no stress whatever ought to be laid on this point." It is upon Indian values measured in rupees, and upon Indian scales of diet as measured in the gaol, that my argument is based. Neither do I attribute the present lamentable condition of India solely to the weight of the Government assessment on the cultivators. I attribute it to the total weight of taxation and to the economical drain which is steadily going on, owing to the fact that the rulers of the country do not live in it. I demur also to the statement that my article is "entirely based on an assumption that the total gross produce of India can be accurately measured by a money value of £277,000,000." I bring forward a great number of facts and figures, all of which go to show the increasing impoverishment of the people of India, quite apart from any calculation of values. But I do say, and I now repeat, that the estimate of £277,000,000 for the total gross value of the agricultural produce of India is made from the returns for an exceptionally good year, and is probably largely in excess of the gross value of Indian produce in any year since.

It so chances that "C." has chosen for examination by the light of my figures what is on the whole—with the exception of portions of Bengal—the least impoverished province in India. The total acreage under cultivation is larger than elsewhere in proportion to the population, and the soil apparently is better. Comparing, for instance, the Punjab and the North-West Provinces, both have under cultivation about 22,000,000 acres; but whereas the population of the Punjab is only 17,600,000, the population of the North-West Provinces is not less than 30,700,000. Thus in the Punjab there is an acre and a quarter under cultivation per head of population, and in the North-West Provinces not more than three quarters of an acre. But taking even this comparatively prosperous province of the Punjab, the aspect of affairs is by no means satisfactory.

The Government land assessment of £1,905,000 which your correspondent speaks of must be paid in good years and in bad years alike, and it must be paid in money. But this does not represent nearly the amount of produce which must be sold for money before the ryot begins to eat. Local cesses, rails, &c., must be provided for as well in cash, and taking everything into consideration, nearer one-third than one-sixth of the wheat crop would have to be exported in a favourable year, in order to meet unavoidable charges. This, without reference to the action of the native money-lenders. There would be left, then, for all purposes 4,400,000 acres of wheat, instead of 5,500,000 acres and the rest of the cultivated area of which "C." speaks.

But the matter is far more complex than this. It is evident that "C." is not an agriculturist. If he were, he never could have omitted to deduct a certain proportion for seed in considering the quantity of food which can be left for the support of the people. This allowance ought not to be placed, when waste and damage are reckoned, at less than 10 per cent.; though I have adopted only 6 per cent. A reduction of one-tenth (or one-sixteenth) would therefore have to be made from "C.'s" standard of nourishment on this account alone.

A still more important point, however, arises in regard to the keep of the live stock. "C." does not apparently know of their existence. Yet there are in the Punjab no fewer than 6,070,212 bullocks, cows, and buffaloes, 84,000 horses, and 218,000 donkeys. Nearly all these animals are absolutely necessary for purposes of cultivation. The great majority of them must be fed somehow out of the produce of the 21,000,000 acres which "C." has entirely devoted (less the amount of produce sold to defray taxation, and the acreage covered by unentable crops) to the sustenance of the human beings of the Punjab. Now, Sir, I, too, know little about agriculture practically, but I believe there is no doubt that bullocks and horses need a considerable extent of land to provide them with food for a year. There are less than 5,000,000 acres of grazing land in the whole Punjab, and even this, I am informed, is of a very poor quality. Consequently, as I say, at least, 6,000,000 of the bullocks, &c., have to be fed out of the land which "C." has given up entirely to feed the people. I fear that when they are provided for the weight of food left per head of population will be something very different from what "C." estimates. Either of these two extraordinary oversights about the seed and the live stock would alone completely vitiate "C.'s" calculation; taken together they render it utterly worthless.

But a more trustworthy criterion of the condition of the cultivators and labourers is at hand than any more unchecked statistics could afford. In the high estimate which I have adopted the agricultural produce of the Punjab by itself is taken on the spot as a value of £2 per head of population—an amount largely in excess of the average for all India. "C." will himself admit that the cost of feeding convicts in the gaols in every district in the Punjab is a fair test of the value of the food, not in England, but in India. The figures are given most elaborately in the very report to which "C." refers. The lowest cost of only feeding a convict in any gaol in the Punjab is 14 rupees, the highest is 32 rupees. Rather more than 13,000 convicts in all cost 260,000 rupees to feed. The average cost per head was exactly 19r. 6a. 9p. Their clothing cost per head 4r. 0a. 7p. Thus the feeding and clothing of a convict last year in the Punjab cost 23 rupees, or roughly, 46s. Making the requisite allowance for children under 12 years old, the cost per head of feeding and clothing the whole population of the Punjab out of gaol, on the same scale as the convicts, would be not less than 34s. a head. This leaves in a most favourable year a margin of only 6s. a head for every conceivable contingency, including feed of cattle, seed, replacement of implements, &c., after the gaol rate of nourishment is provided. Even so, no account has been taken of the fact that the upper classes consume more than their share per head of the produce. This, therefore, is the showing for an exceptionally favourable season in the least impoverished province in India. A melancholy confirmation of the accuracy of my investigation is to be found in the scarcity, almost reaching to famine, now reported in the southern districts of the Punjab. The pressure began before the late floods, and is said to be now very sharp. Surely, if "C.'s" calculations were in any way trustworthy, the people would have plenty to fall back upon after such a good year as the last. But I must apologise, Sir, for taking up so much of your valuable space, and I will only say, in conclusion, that the more closely the circumstances are looked into the more clearly will it appear that the plain truth in regard to India is really far more "alarming" than any statements contained in my article.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, Oct. 5. H. M. HYNDMAN.

DISASTERS AT SEA.—Yesterday morning the Norwegian bark Asgot, Captain Nelsen, of Svendsgrand, from Hudiksvall for Santander, was towed into Portland harbour by the screw steamer Peer of the Realm, of Newcastle, having met with a serious collision at 3 o'clock on Sunday morning with a bark the name of which is unknown. The Norwegian vessel is almost a complete wreck, and but for the buoyancy of her cargo, timber, must have sunk in a few minutes after the collision; as it was, in 20 minutes afterwards she became completely waterlogged. It appears that at the time named the Norwegian bark was about 26 miles distant from St. Catherine's Point, the wind at the time being S.S.W., she being close-hauled and heading west on the port tack. The unknown ship, supposed to be an iron one, struck the Norwegian bark on the starboard bow, cutting her down to the water's edge, the force of the blow carrying away the fore and mizzen masts; in fact, almost every bit of gear. The crew of the unknown vessel must have been aware of the serious extent of the collision, those on board of the Asgo begging the other ship to render them assistance as the water came pouring in. All their entreaties were disregarded and the stranger proceeded on her way, positively refusing to give help. Lloyd's agent at Constantinople reports the occurrence of a disastrous collision in the Sea of Marmora on Sunday. The steamer Livonian, belonging to F. Leyland and Co., of Liverpool, in going up to Constantinople, came into collision with the steamer Zoe, supposed to be from Odessa, and so severe was the blow that the former, although a large, powerful vessel, was sunk. The other vessel also received serious injuries, and brought up at Constantinople. Fortunately, the disaster appears not to have been attended with any loss of life. The owners state that the Livonian had on board from Liverpool, after leaving Smyrna, about 750 tons of Manchester goods—200 tons weight for Constantinople, besides 100 tons for the Danube, Trebizond, Varna, Poti, and Salonica; but they have no knowledge of any homeward cargo being on board. The Livonian was a screw vessel, of iron construction, built in 1874, and her gross burden exceeded 1,500 tons.

THE GROSSER KURFUERST.—The *Weser Zeitung* mentions that 146 different schemes for raising the Grosser Kurfuerst have been received at the German Admiralty. The task will, in all probability, be intrusted to a picked body of men told off from the German Navy.

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THE TIMES, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1878.

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THE MOMUNDS.

The reported defection of the Momunds is a step which the Indian Government may have anticipated, yet it is one showing that the hill tribes are not so completely in our favour as was hoped; and we must be prepared to hear that other clans, whose allegiance to the Ameer has long been doubtful, will throw in their lot with him in the hope of being able to retaliate on us for damage inflicted in our numerous acts of retributive justice. The Momunds, it would seem, are the first to go, and a brief description of the tribe may not be out of place. They are a large and powerful clan, able to put from 15,000 to 20,000 fighting men into the field, men armed for the most part with fire-arms, many of these weapons being of English manufacture. A small section of the tribe occupy lands in our territory to the south of the city of Peshawur, but the main portion dwell in the hills to the north-west of that cantonment, between the Kabul and the Swat rivers; a remnant has emigrated to Candahar, and there are many settlers in Ningrahar and Logur. They are generally considered among the most savage of all Pathan tribes, which perhaps accounts for their disinclination to accept military service with us. Their principal chieftain is the head man of Lalpura, who holds his appointment direct from the Ameer Shere Ali, with whom he is connected by marriage.

From the earliest days of the annexation of the Punjab up to the present the Momunds have given us continual trouble. In 1850 and 1851 they committed no less than five attacks in force on British villages. Sir Colin Campbell moved out from Peshawur with a strong brigade in December, 1851, and inflicted a signal defeat on the tribe, and under his orders a fortified outpost was erected at Shubkudder, near the mouth of one of their principal passes. This for a time overawed them, but in 1854 they again commenced to misbehave, when Colonel Boileau was ordered to chastise them. So little effect had this, however, that we find in the six succeeding years they committed as many as 125 raids into British territory, in which about 150 of our subjects were killed or wounded and close on 1,500 head of cattle carried off. An expedition was organized for their punishment, but the Momunds obtained information of the intended move and surrendered their chiefs to Major James, the political officer at Peshawur. Comparative quiet reigned until December, 1863, when the torch of war, kindled by the Umbeyla Expedition, was lighted on the Momund hills, and a body of about 5,000 men, instigated, it was freely whispered, by the Ameer Shere Ali, moved down into British territory and threatened an attack on Shubkudder, the British fortified outpost in their immediate vicinity. In an engagement that ensued, Lieutenant Bishop, of the 6th Bengal Cavalry, lost his life; and so defiant was the attitude of the enemy that Colonel A. MacDonnell, of the Rifle Brigade, moved out with a force consisting of about 1,800 men and three guns; a slight skirmish occurred on the 1st of January, 1864, and the Momunds were considerably worsted. For about six years the tribe remained very quiet. In 1873, however, a party of influential Momunds attacked and murdered Major MacDonald, Commandant of the Michni Fort, and then decamped into their own territory. Escaping unpunished for this outrage, the clan grew bolder daily, and on more than one occasion the expediency of thoroughly coercing them has been mooted. However, they have escaped up to the present, and now, as a reward for our forbearance, they have elected to side with Shere Ali against us. If this report be well-founded, the Ameer will derive great benefit from this last addition to his numbers, while we shall find the difficulties of forcing the Khyber Pass proportionately enhanced.

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—When so many reasons are being discovered day by day to account for Shere Ali's hostility to us and leaning towards Russia, allow me to add one more straw to the camel's load, though one would suppose that his back was broken long ago.

In the good old times, before the Seistan boundary was settled and the Ameer was receiving £10,000 per mensem from the Indian Treasury, the English were the Ameer's very good friends, and a presuming Russian Envoy who wished to approach his capital was well snubbed for his pains. But Russian Envoys care little for such trifles, and the one in question bided his time and his opportunity, and, notwithstanding the Ameer's anger at the very mention of Russia, this is how the opportunity at last offered itself:—I need not remind your readers that our Government did not care to acknowledge the younger son, Abdoolla Jan, who has just died, when his elder brother, Yakoob Khan, was still alive, and that, moreover, the Ameer was remonstrated with on his treatment of that gallant soldier, who had aided him more than any other in recovering his throne. But Abdoolla Jan has a mother, a clever intriguing woman of great force of character. It is well known that Afghan women frequently play a very conspicuous *rôle* in politics, not being kept in seclusion as their sisters in the plains of Hindostan. Well, this woman had a temper, and when thwarted in her wishes made the Ameer extremely uncomfortable, going, indeed, so far sometimes as to apply her slipper to his august head. Be that as it may, her sole object was to see her son Abdoolla Jan the acknowledged heir to the throne. When the English were found rather opposed to this, the opportunity offered. Given on one side a Russian Envoy, on the other Abdoolla Jan's mother, the Russian gains a footing in Cabul, and Abdoolla Jan is the heir to the throne when the Russians come into power. Other events followed which disgusted the Ameer, and no doubt helped the game of the Russians; but the thin edge of the wedge was first inserted by Abdoolla Jan's mother. We little think how often intrigues in Eastern countries are hatched in the harem. In my regiment one of the native officers is a Prince of the Suddoozaie family and grandnephew of that Shah Soojah whom a mistaken policy induced us to place on the throne of Cabul and led to our former disasters there. A woman direct from the Ameer's harem, probably an old Cabul follower, came to this native officer's wife and told her this and many other stories of the Ameer's inner life. Who shall say what effect they may have had on the Ameer's policy?

Yours,
AN OLD IRREGULAR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The great historian of the Sepoy War writes:—

"But I think that promptitude of action is often of more importance than completeness of preparation, and that to show ourselves confident of success is in most cases to attain it. The British power in India cannot afford to be quiescent under insult and outrage. Delay is held to be a sign of weakness. It encourages enmity and confirms vacillation. It is a disaster in itself, more serious often than any that can arise from insufficient preparation and that great bugbear the inclemency of the season."

Was Sir John Kaye gifted with prophetic foresight to write words so peculiarly needed in the present emergency?

October 3. Yours truly, ACER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Having read with interest, but profound astonishment, the letter of Lord Lawrence which you published on the 2d inst., I venture, without offering any opinion of my own, through *The Times*, to put a question, the answer to which will, I think, have an important bearing on the case. Has not Lord Lawrence for many, I belive over 20, years been the principal advocate of a policy which suggested the abandonment of Peshawur and our Trans-Indus territory upon the ground that the river Indus was our best and most secure frontier?

If such has been or is Lord Lawrence's opinion, it should certainly be generally known before accepting his present views of the Afghanistan problem.

As Colonel Brackenbury points out in *The Times* of to-day, the frontiers of England and Russia must meet some day; the vital question is, where? The sooner that where is determined, the better for India and England, and the better for the inhabitants of those future frontiers, if not for Russia, will be admitted by many besides

Your obedient servant,
October 5. UBIQUE.

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Daily Telegraph - Oct 8

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS.

NATIVE VOLUNTEERS.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH, VIÂ TEHERAN.]

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, OCT. 7 (4.45 P.M.)

The Mhairwara battalion has unanimously volunteered for service on the frontier, and the offer has been accepted.

The rumour of a British advance on Ali Musjid is quite unfounded. Similar reports may be expected at a time when excitement prevails at every station.

Meanwhile, the Government is steadily pursuing its settled programme, and rapidly concentrating troops at Quetta and Kurram.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

SIMLA, OCT. 7.

The Indian newspapers publish despatches announcing the capture of Ali Musjid.

A proclamation, making known the intentions of the Indian Government, is expected to-day.

The Ameer of Afghanistan has summoned the tribal councils. All tribes, even the Jowakis, are sending representatives.

The news published by the Indian papers, that the Fort of Ali Musjid had been captured by the British troops, is contradicted.

TIME will soon show whether the policy which has been adopted by the Home and Indian Governments in response to the affront put upon her Majesty's flag will suffice to meet the exigencies of the crisis. That policy, which our Simla Correspondent tells us is being steadily pursued, aims at securing certain commanding positions which would facilitate subsequent measures of a larger and sterner kind, and, by massing considerable forces round the Ameer's dominions, seeks to intimidate him if possible into submission. To estimate its chances of success we should bear in mind what this "submission" must imply. It is no mere apology which could now be accepted from SHERE ALI Khan, even if accompanied by an invitation to the Viceroy to send his Envoy up the Pass again with promises of a respectful reception. No prudent Administration could be content with a hollow *amende* of this sort, under cover of which we might be kept dangling between peace and war, the dupes of a faithless prince, who would make capital outside and inside India of our easy-going temper. The Afghan ruler would have to give serious and substantial guarantees to the British Power, including, probably, the surrender of such positions, military and political, within his territory as might seem to him fatal to his independence, even if his new friends, for their own convenience, counselled compliance, which is a very doubtful contingency. To retreat from his attitude of defiance may, therefore, prove almost as difficult for SHERE ALI as to maintain it, but if he does not yield at once merely demonstrative measures may only harden his resolution. We cannot take time, it must be remembered, for our movements without giving him also time, which he will know how to use, while deriving a certain profit on both sides of the mountains from the spectacle of the power of Great Britain thus compelled or induced to move with so much caution. There are many ways, too, in which, if it suited him, he could at any moment put an end to the advantages supposed to lurk in a leisurely procedure. He can order the hill tribes to pour down upon the plains, or he can attack Jamrood, advance against Quettah, or descend the Khurrum Pass, choosing always the times and circumstances which would be most disadvantageous to us. All this is merely saying that a policy of tentative hostility depends upon the will of one side as much as of the other in an imminent conflict; and the fact must be taken into account when we hear of forces advancing to points only a day's march apart, as at Jamrood and Ali Musjid, or of English troops cantoned for the autumn and winter at Quettah, with Candahar and its garrison so near at hand. If we wish to see how this state of semi-declaration of war appears to outsiders, a very plain-spoken appreciation of it may be found in the *Golos*. The St. Petersburg journal says: "England evidently aims at occupying a few positions in the hills to frighten the Ameer into concessions. But as it is equally obvious that SHERE ALI has long planned this campaign, he is not likely to be coerced by mere demonstrations. The Ameer may count upon the friendly neutrality of both Russia and Persia, as well as upon the sympathies and possible co-operation of the Indian semi-independent princes. With these points in his favour he can quietly await an attack which must begin by the forcing of formidable passes. Notwithstanding the affront sustained, the caution displayed by the English people and politicians and their unwillingness to embark in the venture are characteristic signs of the times."

These and similar observations in the Russian press, more candid than flattering, illustrate further the fact that, with the vast publicity of modern days, a demonstrative policy loses half its advantage by being so readily seen through. India was far more easily governed, and Indian affairs more successfully managed, in the old times of long sea voyages and infrequent intelligence. Now the electric wire brings constant tidings, which in their speed actually outstrip the slower sun, and to satisfy the natural curiosity of the British public almost every detail of military strength and strategic movements is made known. These particulars are not only reprinted far and near upon the Continent, and especially in Russia, but go back to the Indian press, whence, no doubt, they pass, by very simple methods indeed, to the Afghan capital. We should not be at all surprised to learn that in the course of the present week SHERE ALI Khan and his Sirdars will know perfectly well that Lord LAWRENCE—an ex-Viceroy of India, and in 1857 its fearless defender against terrible odds—has openly avowed his terror at the prospect of a third Afghan war. Beyond question they will very shortly be familiar with the exact number of our forces at Jamrood, the Kurrum entrance, and Quettah; for all these particulars have been published with scrupulous accuracy, and if they pass to St. Petersburg and the Indian native Courts they probably find their way also to Afghanistan. The result of this free ventilation of every matter formerly kept secret in diplomacy and war is that even a semi-barbarous ruler does not neglect to obtain the valuable information thus offered him, and learns not only the precise details of a "demonstration," but many of the ingenuous comments which are made so confidingly upon the chances of its failure or success. Such considerations should be borne in mind before the risk is run of allowing India and Russia to think the British Power slow and timid in resenting a world-wide affront. There are, of course, great advantages in deliberate procedure; and, with regard to war especially, if we can obtain satisfaction and safety without it, no words could exaggerate the wisdom of restraint. Nevertheless, if, through understanding the motives of such prudence, a cunning enemy can defeat it; if while we gain something by delay we should lose far more by temporising; if the economy effected in money, life, stores, and State efforts may be ten or a hundred times outweighed by the silent and widespread mischief wrought among watchful Easterns through the spectacle of a Government moving so slowly and patiently under such an insult, then this tentative policy might by no means prove the wisest which we could adopt. Certainly it ought to be understood that, if nothing more be done before winter than to enter the passes and reinforce Quettah, these measures will not greatly impress the Oriental mind. We should thereby put off until May next the exaction of reparation—an interval of eight months from the date of SHERE ALI's repulse of our Mission—and the language which would be held meanwhile in the bazaars of Cabul and in the Russian camps may be judged of by present comments. The occupation of Candahar is, we still think, an eminently desirable step which should be taken before the approach of winter. That place is no colder than the posts which we shall have to occupy in the passes if we mean to control them; and its seizure ought not to be a difficult task with Quettah already in our hands. Holding the capital of South-Western Afghanistan, the British forces would attract to them the friendly elements among the population, and this would be far more likely to bring about the deposition of SHERE ALI, if still defiant, than any distant demonstration which could be fur-

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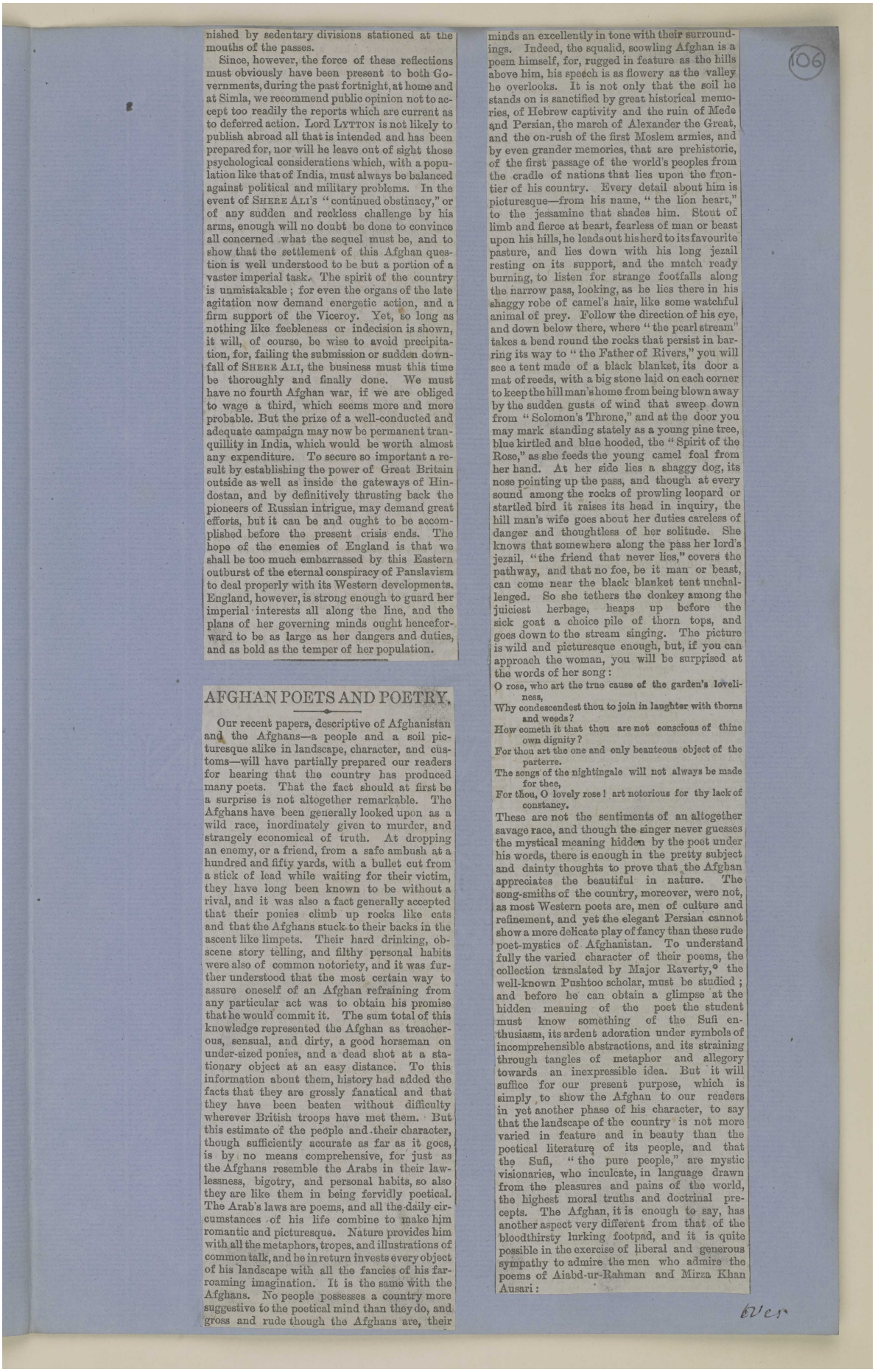

nished by sedentary divisions stationed at the mouths of the passes.

Since, however, the force of these reflections must obviously have been present to both Governments, during the past fortnight, at home and at Simla, we recommend public opinion not to accept too readily the reports which are current as to deferred action. Lord LYTTON is not likely to publish abroad all that is intended and has been prepared for, nor will he leave out of sight those psychological considerations which, with a population like that of India, must always be balanced against political and military problems. In the event of SHERE ALI'S "continued obstinacy," or of any sudden and reckless challenge by his arms, enough will no doubt be done to convince all concerned what the sequel must be, and to show that the settlement of this Afghan question is well understood to be but a portion of a vaster imperial task. The spirit of the country is unmistakable; for even the organs of the late agitation now demand energetic action, and a firm support of the Viceroy. Yet, so long as nothing like feebleness or indecision is shown, it will, of course, be wise to avoid precipitation, for, failing the submission or sudden downfall of SHERE ALI, the business must this time be thoroughly and finally done. We must have no fourth Afghan war, if we are obliged to wage a third, which seems more and more probable. But the prize of a well-conducted and adequate campaign may now be permanent tranquillity in India, which would be worth almost any expenditure. To secure so important a result by establishing the power of Great Britain outside as well as inside the gateways of Hindostan, and by definitively thrusting back the pioneers of Russian intrigue, may demand great efforts, but it can be and ought to be accomplished before the present crisis ends. The hope of the enemies of England is that we shall be too much embarrassed by this Eastern outburst of the eternal conspiracy of Panslavism to deal properly with its Western developments. England, however, is strong enough to guard her imperial interests all along the line, and the plans of her governing minds ought henceforward to be as large as her dangers and duties, and as bold as the temper of her population.

AFGHAN POETS AND POETRY.

Our recent papers, descriptive of Afghanistan and the Afghans—a people and a soil picturesque alike in landscape, character, and customs—will have partially prepared our readers for hearing that the country has produced many poets. That the fact should at first be a surprise is not altogether remarkable. The Afghans have been generally looked upon as a wild race, inordinately given to murder, and strangely economical of truth. At dropping an enemy, or a friend, from a safe ambush at a hundred and fifty yards, with a bullet cut from a stick of lead while waiting for their victim, they have long been known to be without a rival, and it was also a fact generally accepted that their ponies climb up rocks like cats and that the Afghans stuck to their backs in the ascent like limpets. Their hard drinking, obscene story telling, and filthy personal habits were also of common notoriety, and it was further understood that the most certain way to assure oneself of an Afghan refraining from any particular act was to obtain his promise that he would commit it. The sum total of this knowledge represented the Afghan as treacherous, sensual, and dirty, a good horseman on under-sized ponies, and a dead shot at a stationary object at an easy distance. To this information about them, history had added the facts that they are grossly fanatical and that they have been beaten without difficulty wherever British troops have met them. But this estimate of the people and their character, though sufficiently accurate as far as it goes, is by no means comprehensive, for just as the Afghans resemble the Arabs in their lawlessness, bigotry, and personal habits, so also they are like them in being fervidly poetical. The Arab's laws are poems, and all the daily circumstances of his life combine to make him romantic and picturesque. Nature provides him with all the metaphors, tropes, and illustrations of common talk, and he in return invests every object of his landscape with all the fancies of his far-roaming imagination. It is the same with the Afghans. No people possesses a country more suggestive to the poetical mind than they do, and gross and rude though the Afghans are, their minds an excellently in tone with their surroundings. Indeed, the squalid, scowling Afghan is a poem himself, for, rugged in feature as the hills above him, his speech is as flowery as the valley he overlooks. It is not only that the soil he stands on is sanctified by great historical memories, of Hebrew captivity and the ruin of Mede and Persian, the march of Alexander the Great, and the on-rush of the first Moslem armies, and by even grander memories, that are prehistoric, of the first passage of the world's peoples from the cradle of nations that lies upon the frontier of his country. Every detail about him is picturesque—from his name, "the lion heart," to the jessamine that shades him. Stout of limb and fierce at heart, fearless of man or beast upon his hills, he leads out his herd to its favourite pasture, and lies down with his long jezail resting on its support, and the match ready burning, to listen for strange footfalls along the narrow pass, looking, as he lies there in his shaggy robe of camel's hair, like some watchful animal of prey. Follow the direction of his eye, and down below there, where "the pearl stream" takes a bend round the rocks that persist in barring its way to "the Father of Rivers," you will see a tent made of a black blanket, its door a mat of reeds, with a big stone laid on each corner to keep the hill man's home from being blown away by the sudden gusts of wind that sweep down from "Solomon's Throne," and at the door you may mark standing stately as a young pine tree, blue kirtled and blue hooded, the "Spirit of the Rose," as she feeds the young camel foal from her hand. At her side lies a shaggy dog, its nose pointing up the pass, and though at every sound among the rocks of prowling leopard or startled bird it raises its head in inquiry, the hill man's wife goes about her duties careless of danger and thoughtless of her solitude. She knows that somewhere along the pass her lord's jezail, "the friend that never lies," covers the pathway, and that no foe, be it man or beast, can come near the black blanket tent unchallenged. So she tethers the donkey among the juiciest herbage, heaps up before the sick goat a choice pile of thorn tops, and goes down to the stream singing. The picture is wild and picturesque enough, but, if you can approach the woman, you will be surprised at the words of her song:

O rose, who art the true cause of the garden's loveliness,
Why condescendest thou to join in laughter with thorns and weeds?
How cometh it that thou are not conscious of thine own dignity?
For thou art the one and only beauteous object of the parterre.
The songs of the nightingale will not always be made for thee,
For thou, O lovely rose! art notorious for thy lack of constancy.

These are not the sentiments of an altogether savage race, and though the singer never guesses the mystical meaning hidden by the poet under his words, there is enough in the pretty subject and dainty thoughts to prove that the Afghan appreciates the beautiful in nature. The song-smiths of the country, moreover, were not, as most Western poets are, men of culture and refinement, and yet the elegant Persian cannot show a more delicate play of fancy than these rude poet-mystics of Afghanistan. To understand fully the varied character of their poems, the collection translated by Major Raverty,* the well-known Pushtoo scholar, must be studied; and before he can obtain a glimpse at the hidden meaning of the poet the student must know something of the Sufi enthusiasm, its ardent adoration under symbols of incomprehensible abstractions, and its straining through tangles of metaphor and allegory towards an inexpressible idea. But it will suffice for our present purpose, which is simply to show the Afghan to our readers in yet another phase of his character, to say that the landscape of the country is not more varied in feature and in beauty than the poetical literature of its people, and that the Sufi, "the pure people," are mystic visionaries, who inculcate, in language drawn from the pleasures and pains of the world, the highest moral truths and doctrinal precepts. The Afghan, it is enough to say, has another aspect very different from that of the bloodthirsty lurking footpad, and it is quite possible in the exercise of liberal and generous sympathy to admire the men who admire the poems of Aiabd-ur-Rahman and Mirza Khan Ausari:

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No one hath proved any of the world's faithfulness or sincerity,
And none but the faithless and perfidious have any affection for it.
Fortune is like a potter: it fashioneth and breaketh.
Many, like unto me and thee, it hath created and destroyed.
Every stone and clod of the world that may be looked upon
Are all skulls—some those of Kings and some of beggars.

It is no ordinary people that make such a strain as this popular amongst themselves, and in the following there is the expression of that morality which makes all the world of one faith:

Shouldst thou bestow but a drop of water on the thirsty,
It will become an ocean between thee and the fire of hell;
Shouldst thou give but a grain of corn to the hungry,
Verily, it will be hereafter thy provision in eternity.

And so on through all those lofty sentiments that form the groundwork of every religion, and give the different families of humanity a common platform of ethics whence to address each other. In the next poem the "song-smith" takes up the ever-favourite theme of Oriental singers, absence from the beloved one; but with the Sufi all such plaints refer to the soul. For it is his creed that the Divine Spirit is omnipresent in nature, and that every material atom and immaterial sensation are particles of an emanation from it. Since He is all beauty, sweet music, gentle breezes, fragrant flowers, beauty in any form renews the primary idea of His all-pervading presence, and at once turns the mind from the immediate object or enjoyment, which is only the phantom from the divine substance, to the one source of all:

The face of the beloved, the sun, and the moon are all three one.
Her stature, the cyprus, and the pine are all three one.
I have not any need of honey or of sugar,
For the lips of the beloved, honey, and sugar are all three one.
When I recline on my couch without her by my side,
Fire, thorns, and this couch are all three one.

And so on, each time with a different simile, the poet rings the changes on the beauties of the desired and the misery of its non-attainment. In quaint, happy turns of thought such as these:

Though the bat hideth himself from the light of the sun,
In what manner doth the sun sustain injury therefrom?
'Tis the nature of dogs to howl at the sight of the moon,
And thus, by their yelping, bring disgrace on themselves.
The five fingers once had a dispute together,
At which the little finger acknowledged its own littleness;
There is dignity in the very insignificance of form,
Hence fitness for the ring went unto the little finger—

each poem abounds, and in each lies a lesson. Flowers, birds, insects, every created thing in turn serves the poet's purpose; but to understand them they require a double translation, first into their application to humanity, and thence to the soul and its aspirations.

Her two eyes are falcons, and her waving locks the ringfeathers.
The falcons pounced and carried away the pigeon of my heart.
The curls of the pagan beauty became a cord about my neck.

The following verse introduces a poem of a very lofty turn of thought:

In loneliness and solitude seated, O monk! tell me what thou gainest thereby?
Wherefore makest thou this wide and ample world for thyself so confined?
In every sect and religion I, indeed, seek after the cause of the heart's sorrows.

But our space prevents us dwelling longer on this aspect of Major Raverty's most interesting publication, as there is another to which we would briefly refer. On the importance of the study of Oriental languages we have often insisted, and it was only a few weeks before the present rupture with Afghanistan that we indicated the immense value to our political officers of a competent knowledge of Pushtoo, the language of the Afghans proper. That we have on the frontier several officers competent to conduct a delicate negotiation in this language may suffice for the occasion, but it is not to our credit that for every Pushtoo scholar in British service there are many in the Russian. It is now more than thirty years ago that the language first began to form part of the regular studies in the University of St. Petersburg, and lectures on Afghan literature have for a long time formed a feature of the training of officers for Eastern service. It is not to reproach again those once in authority in British India, but now retired from the service of their active labours, who in their time failed to appreciate the importance of the study of Pushtoo, that we refer to the present political aspect of linguistic attainments, but rather to urge once more the systematic and more extended culture of the languages spoken, not only on the Afghan, but on the other frontiers of India.

* "Poetry of the Afghans," by Major Raverty. Williams and Norgate.

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the rails, the effect of so employing it was to render it quite useless for its original purpose as a common road, so that another embankment is now in course of construction, to which the rails are to be transferred, when the road may be allowed to revert to its original use. Meanwhile nearly ten years have elapsed since the company's line was completed to Lahore, giving through communication from Calcutta and Bombay with that place. Yet only 100 miles of the State line have been opened, and on the greater part of the remaining distance to the frontier, about 170 miles, scarcely a beginning has been made.

The various trade returns at the present time are not very cheerful reading. Iron, for instance, is "quiet" at all the centres. At Barnsley, "while the make of pig is fully maintained it moves off but slowly, though prices have reached a very low point." At Barrow-in-Furness prices are easier. At Birmingham the downward tendency in iron has been "very marked of late," and the iron wire trade is very depressed, while metal rollers report business dull. In Darlington and South Shropshire we find the same story; while at Sheffield it appears "the heavy trades are becoming worse, and every few weeks men are being discharged from the large works." In the cotton trade affairs are no better. In Manchester it is stated "the inquiry for India and China shirtings has been limited to offers at prices too low for acceptance. The heavier goods are neglected and weak." And so as to wool. At Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield, and Leicester, we are told the same tale of slow demand, falling prices, and general depression. The Leeds market seems a little better, but this is merely for a temporary cause. In short, wherever we look we see that "times are bad," and they are getting no better as winter approaches; and we are afraid that the causes of this long-continued depression are deep.

OUR TRUE POSITION WITH REGARD TO RUSSIA.

TO-DAY'S telegrams confirm our interpretation of yesterday's confused news from the frontier. Shere Ali is forcing the fighting, with the only result, so far, of throwing the Khyberees into our arms. It is not improbable that by this time the conflict has actually begun. If so, and if the first movements of our troops prove successful, we shall hear that they are only a part of a settled plan of immediate action. In the event of a check, the explanation will be otherwise.

Next we have to note that the intimate connection between Russian diplomacy in general and the Afghan war in particular, and the use that may be made of our Indian difficulties at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, are gradually coming into recognition even where the wish to deny these things is greatest. It is admitted that some of the Russian journals (all Russians, it would have been nearer the truth to say) seem to think that the time is near for the fulfilment of the prophecy that the Cossack and the sepoy will meet on the banks of the Oxus. Note is taken of the warning that if we are too successful in Afghanistan it will be necessary for the protection of the Czar's interests to send a Russian force to occupy Merv and Balk; and "then the fiction of a neutral country intervening between the Russian and British sentinel will cease to exist." Nothing is said about the Russian intimation that "by properly calculating our means of harming England in India we may incline her to assume a milder policy regarding the Balkan peninsula;" nor is any notice taken of the assurances repeated every day that at all events we may look for the same sort of unofficial warfare on the side of the Afghans which proved so extremely troublesome to the Turks in Servia. But it is admitted that the Russians do threaten, in the event of an upset in Afghanistan, to restore peace there by the methods which have been found effective to the north of the Oxus, and that, "whatever may happen, Russia will never permit the incorporation of Afghanistan by the English."

But what is the comment upon all this? It is said to be "idle vapouring." The truth is, it is idle vapouring to say so. This must be allowed: that when they who threaten have it in their power to carry their threats into execution, and when also they have good or sufficient reasons of their own for carrying out their threats, it is mere folly to disregard the warning. Now it is quite certain that the Russians can, if they please, work heavily against us in Afghanistan with arms, with money, with military advice, with diplomatic promises to any extent; the only doubt is as to how far they have already bestowed on the Ameer these succours and encouragements. And we take it to be certain that should any one of the events occur to which our Government look forward as happy ones —*i.e.* the death of the Ameer, or his deposition, or his complete defeat— the Russians *will* find that the security of their Central Asian territory demands an advance in arms. More, we anticipate that such an advance will be made as soon as the conflict becomes serious, or any considerable change in the state of affairs in Afghanistan appears imminent. Let us never forget that the Russians have everything at stake in those parts, and that they have long had a candidate of their own in hand to succeed Shere Ali, should anything happen to him or to his hold on power. It is the merest stupidity, if it is nothing worse, to teach the country that the Russian threats are idle vapour. There is much in them that is truly formidable; and it is because we feel them to be formidable, and know that the Russians are well aware of their advantages, and believe that our own Government cannot be dull to the tremendous risks which their own misconduct of affairs has brought upon them, that we expect that attempt at a "solution" which we still predict. Our Ministers will try negotiations with Prince Gortschakoff, who is quite ready to be "squared" once more. They are under extreme temptation to do so, and they have already proved that it is a sort of temptation they are not very capable of resisting. They had their chance of paralyzing all Russian attempts to worry us in India a few months ago; they had not courage enough to take it; thereby they gave our enemies the whip hand not only on the Indian frontier but in Constantinople; and now we must bear the consequences. There is no escape from them, in one ill shape or another, except by a course of action indefinitely more risky than that which our Government declined —bragging.

THE TROUBLES OF A LITTLE KINGDOM.

MONS, *Oct.* 3.

IN Belgium, as in France, the question which most preoccupies the minds of people who think on politics is the quarrel between the Clerical party and the Government of the day. The Belgians in their sleepier fashion are quite as excited on this subject as the French; and though they are not ready with such heroic schemes of legislation, yet it would not be surprising if in some practical way they brought the quarrel to an end sooner than their noisier neighbours. It must strike every one who visits Belgium at this moment that the Roman Catholics committed a great mistake when they allowed themselves to be politically embrigaded for a permanent party strife with the Liberals. The late M. Van der Weyer used to say that it was always easy to see when the Belgian Liberals were in power, for then every Government official went to mass; but nowadays the Liberals will neither go to mass nor accomplish any of the other rites of religion. They have got beyond the point of caring whether they are called infidels. They pride themselves on a strong-mindedness which rejects all the teachings and observances of the Church as superstitious, and the consequence is that social relations between neighbours are seriously affected. In this town of Mons—which is rather a favourable spot for studying Belgian politics—there are plenty of excellent Hainauters who refuse to associate with Liberals, from the belief that the wives of these latter, joined in civil wedlock only, are no wives at all, and that the unbaptized children of such unions are little reprobates whose contact would defile other boys and girls. Two local journals, conducted with much spirit, exchange views on the subject of purgatory and its probable inhabitants with surprising frankness; and every time there is an election for some municipal office the arguments used by the candidates on both sides abound in allusions to spiritual things such as would be deemed very odd elsewhere. No French Radical has yet ventured, as one of the Liberal members for Mons did at the late election, to issue in his address a ponderous statement of his "seventy-two reasons" for disbelieving in the Christian dogmas. In a neighbouring constituency a candidate had to defend himself against the charge of having sent his children to a Jesuits' school, and he challenged his detractors, as he called them, to prove that he had at any time within the last twenty years set foot within a church. If this goes on candidates will be pledging themselves to their electors to be buried according to civil rites.

Among the warm-blooded French populations such religious wrangling as this would lead to blows; but these beer-drinking Belgians are a sober-minded people, who have found out that the tongue is the handiest weapon after all. They have made each other uncomfortable, but they will not fight nor attempt persecution; and, from all we can see, the quarrel will eventually be smoothed away, for this reason—that neither party feels disposed to proceed from words to deeds. It is said that M. Malou, the ex-Premier, rather rejoiced in the defeat which the Catholics suffered at the late elections, being afraid that if his party had triumphed he should have been egged on by the Jesuits to go much further than it behoves any prudent Belgian to venture. On the other hand, M. Frère-Orban, the present Premier, is the last man to propose anti-Clerical laws; nor would M. Roland Jacquemyns, the *enfant terrible* of the Liberal party (and a fervid philo-Russian, by the way), be inclined to do so now that he has been pacified by a seat in the Cabinet. The Belgians seem to have arranged their party divisions on religious grounds, because under the judicious rule of Leopold I. religion was the only thing they could find to dispute about; but, considering how wretched the female portion of the community are made by these dissensions, and considering that some questions vitally affecting the future of the country are coming to the front, it would not be strange if Belgian politics shortly took a new departure. Prince Bismarck's plan for drawing Belgium into a military confederacy with Germany—in other words, for putting the army of the small and peaceful State at the disposal of the big and aggressive one—has by no means been shelved yet. It has a warm supporter in M. Jacquemyns, who is a Liberal of the newest-fangled type; insomuch that he wrote a pamphlet last year to prove that England was the real disturber of peace in the East, and that all would go well if her ambition could be curbed and if Russia were suffered to fulfil her civilizing mission unchecked. This ingenious gentleman has a dozen backers in the Belgian Parliament, whose importance is pretty much what that of the Irish Home Rulers would be if the two parties in the House of Commons were so evenly balanced that the Home Rule vote would turn the scale in all great divisions. These Belgian neo-Liberals, or Federalists as they style themselves, are believed, however, to have some very powerful friends at Court; and this fact, aided by the blatant encouragements they receive from too-evidently subsidized newspapers, is likely to make them more and more influential unless the patriotism of the majority of Belgians takes alarm. Here another danger presents itself; for many who see what ruin the Federalists are planning can imagine no other remedy but universal suffrage, which genuine Liberals dread, as

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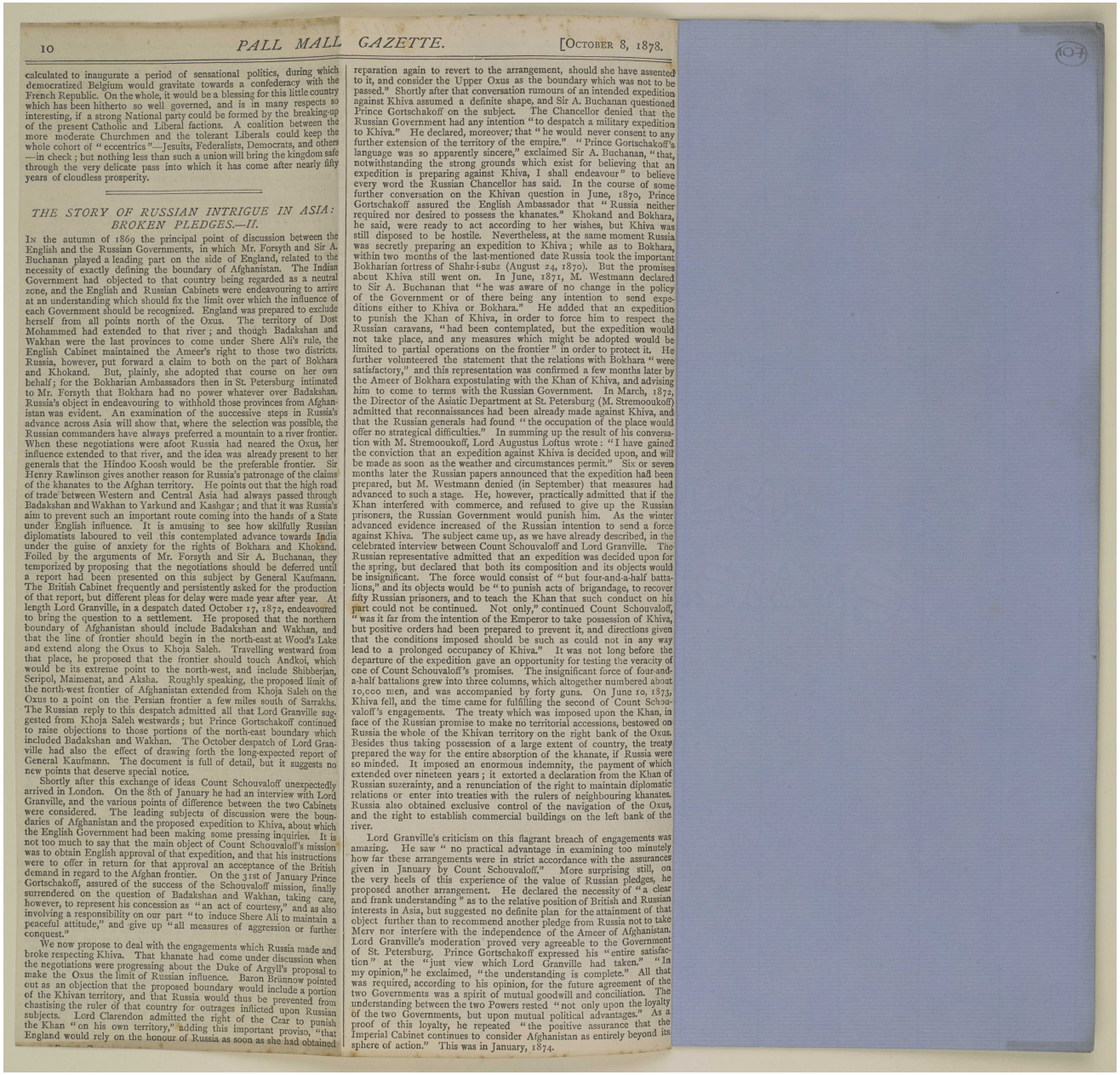

calculated to inaugurate a period of sensational politics, during which democratized Belgium would gravitate towards a confederacy with the French Republic. On the whole, it would be a blessing for this little country which has been hitherto so well governed, and is in many respects so interesting, if a strong National party could be formed by the breaking-up of the present Catholic and Liberal factions. A coalition between the more moderate Churchmen and the tolerant Liberals could keep the whole cohort of "eccentrics"—Jesuits, Federalists, Democrats, and others—in check; but nothing less than such a union will bring the kingdom safe through the very delicate pass into which it has come after nearly fifty years of cloudless prosperity.

THE STORY OF RUSSIAN INTRIGUE IN ASIA: BROKEN PLEDGES.—II.

In the autumn of 1869 the principal point of discussion between the English and the Russian Governments, in which Mr. Forsyth and Sir A. Buchanan played a leading part on the side of England, related to the necessity of exactly defining the boundary of Afghanistan. The Indian Government had objected to that country being regarded as a neutral zone, and the English and Russian Cabinets were endeavouring to arrive at an understanding which should fix the limit over which the influence of each Government should be recognized. England was prepared to exclude herself from all points north of the Oxus. The territory of Dost Mohammed had extended to that river; and though Badakshan and Wakhan were the last provinces to come under Shere Ali's rule, the English Cabinet maintained the Ameer's right to those two districts. Russia, however, put forward a claim to both on the part of Bokhara and Khokand. But, plainly, she adopted that course on her own behalf; for the Bokharian Ambassadors then in St. Petersburg intimated to Mr. Forsyth that Bokhara had no power whatever over Badakshan. Russia's object in endeavouring to withhold those provinces from Afghanistan was evident. An examination of the successive steps in Russia's advance across Asia will show that, where the selection was possible, the Russian commanders have always preferred a mountain to a river frontier. When these negotiations were afoot Russia had neared the Oxus, her influence extended to that river, and the idea was already present to her generals that the Hindoo Koosh would be the preferable frontier. Sir Henry Rawlinson gives another reason for Russia's patronage of the claims of the khanates to the Afghan territory. He points out that the high road of trade between Western and Central Asia had always passed through Badakshan and Wakhan to Yarkund and Kashgar; and that it was Russia's aim to prevent such an important route coming into the hands of a State under English influence. It is amusing to see how skilfully Russian diplomatists laboured to veil this contemplated advance towards India under the guise of anxiety for the rights of Bokhara and Khokand. Foiled by the arguments of Mr. Forsyth and Sir A. Buchanan, they temporized by proposing that the negotiations should be deferred until a report had been presented on this subject by General Kaufmann. The British Cabinet frequently and persistently asked for the production of that report, but different pleas for delay were made year after year. At length Lord Granville, in a despatch dated October 17, 1872, endeavoured to bring the question to a settlement. He proposed that the northern boundary of Afghanistan should include Badakshan and Wakhan, and that the line of frontier should begin in the north-east at Wood's Lake and extend along the Oxus to Khoja Saleh. Travelling westward from that place, he proposed that the frontier should touch Andkoi, which would be its extreme point to the north-west, and include Shibberjan, Seripol, Maimenat, and Aksha. Roughly speaking, the proposed limit of the north-west frontier of Afghanistan extended from Khoja Saleh on the Oxus to a point on the Persian frontier a few miles south of Sarrakhs. The Russian reply to this despatch admitted all that Lord Granville suggested from Khoja Saleh westwards; but Prince Gortschakoff continued to raise objections to those portions of the north-east boundary which included Badakshan and Wakhan. The October despatch of Lord Granville had also the effect of drawing forth the long-expected report of General Kaufmann. The document is full of detail, but it suggests no new points that deserve special notice.

Shortly after this exchange of ideas Count Schouvaloff unexpectedly arrived in London. On the 8th of January he had an interview with Lord Granville, and the various points of difference between the two Cabinets were considered. The leading subjects of discussion were the boundaries of Afghanistan and the proposed expedition to Khiva, about which the English Government had been making some pressing inquiries. It is not too much to say that the main object of Count Schouvaloff's mission was to obtain English approval of that expedition, and that his instructions were to offer in return for that approval an acceptance of the British demand in regard to the Afghan frontier. On the 31st of January Prince Gortschakoff, assured of the success of the Schouvaloff mission, finally surrendered on the question of Badakshan and Wakhan, taking care, however, to represent his concession as "an act of courtesy," and as also involving a responsibility on our part "to induce Shere Ali to maintain a peaceful attitude," and give up "all measures of aggression or further conquest."

We now propose to deal with the engagements which Russia made and broke respecting Khiva. That khanate had come under discussion when the negotiations were progressing about the Duke of Argyll's proposal to make the Oxus the limit of Russian influence. Baron Brunnow pointed out as an objection that the proposed boundary would include a portion of the Khivan territory, and that Russia would thus be prevented from chastising the ruler of that country for outrages inflicted upon Russian subjects. Lord Clarendon admitted the right of the Czar to punish the Khan "on his own territory," adding this important proviso, "that England would rely on the honour of Russia as soon as she had obtained reparation again to revert to the arrangement, should she have assented to it, and consider the Upper Oxus as the boundary which was not to be passed." Shortly after that conversation rumours of an intended expedition against Khiva assumed a definite shape, and Sir A. Buchanan questioned Prince Gortschakoff on the subject. The Chancellor denied that the Russian Government had any intention "to despatch a military expedition to Khiva." He declared, moreover, that "he would never consent to any further extension of the territory of the empire." "Prince Gortschakoff's language was so apparently sincere," exclaimed Sir A. Buchanan, "that, notwithstanding the strong grounds which exist for believing that an expedition is preparing against Khiva, I shall endeavour" to believe every word the Russian Chancellor has said. In the course of some further conversation on the Khivan question in June, 1870, Prince Gortschakoff assured the English Ambassador that "Russia neither required nor desired to possess the khanates." Khokand and Bokhara, he said, were ready to act according to her wishes, but Khiva was still disposed to be hostile. Nevertheless, at the same moment Russia was secretly preparing an expedition to Khiva; while as to Bokhara, within two months of the last-mentioned date Russia took the important Bokharian fortress of Shahr-i-subz (August 24, 1870). But the promises about Khiva still went on. In June, 1871, M. Westmann declared to Sir A. Buchanan that "he was aware of no change in the policy of the Government or of there being any intention to send expeditions either to Khiva or Bokhara." He added that an expedition to punish the Khan of Khiva, in order to force him to respect the Russian caravans, "had been contemplated, but the expedition would not take place, and any measures which might be adopted would be limited to partial operations on the frontier" in order to protect it. He further volunteered the statement that the relations with Bokhara "were satisfactory," and this representation was confirmed a few months later by the Ameer of Bokhara expostulating with the Khan of Khiva, and advising him to come to terms with the Russian Government. In March, 1872, the Director of the Asiatic Department at St. Petersburg (M. Stremooukoff) admitted that reconnaissances had been already made against Khiva, and that the Russian generals had found "the occupation of the place would offer no strategical difficulties." In summing up the result of his conversation with M. Stremooukoff, Lord Augustus Loftus wrote: "I have gained the conviction that an expedition against Khiva is decided upon, and will be made as soon as the weather and circumstances permit." Six or seven months later the Russian papers announced that the expedition had been prepared, but M. Westmann denied (in September) that measures had advanced to such a stage. He, however, practically admitted that if the Khan interfered with commerce, and refused to give up the Russian prisoners, the Russian Government would punish him. As the winter advanced evidence increased of the Russian intention to send a force against Khiva. The subject came up, as we have already described, in the celebrated interview between Count Schouvaloff and Lord Granville. The Russian representative admitted that an expedition was decided upon for the spring, but declared that both its composition and its objects would be insignificant. The force would consist of "but four-and-a-half battalions," and its objects would be "to punish acts of brigandage, to recover fifty Russian prisoners, and to teach the Khan that such conduct on his part could not be continued. Not only," continued Count Schouvaloff, "was it far from the intention of the Emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders had been prepared to prevent it, and directions given that the conditions imposed should be such as could not in any way lead to a prolonged occupancy of Khiva." It was not long before the departure of the expedition gave an opportunity for testing the veracity of one of Count Schouvaloff's promises. The insignificant force of four-and-a-half battalions grew into three columns, which altogether numbered about 10,000 men, and was accompanied by forty guns. On June 10, 1873, Khiva fell, and the time came for fulfilling the second of Count Schouvaloff's engagements. The treaty which was imposed upon the Khan, in face of the Russian promise to make no territorial accessions, bestowed on Russia the whole of the Khivan territory on the right bank of the Oxus. Besides thus taking possession of a large extent of country, the treaty prepared the way for the entire absorption of the khanate, if Russia were so minded. It imposed an enormous indemnity, the payment of which extended over nineteen years; it extorted a declaration from the Khan of Russian suzerainty, and a renunciation of the right to maintain diplomatic relations or enter into treaties with the rulers of neighbouring khanates. Russia also obtained exclusive control of the navigation of the Oxus, and the right to establish commercial buildings on the left bank of the river.

Lord Granville's criticism on this flagrant breach of engagements was amazing. He saw "no practical advantage in examining too minutely how far these arrangements were in strict accordance with the assurances given in January by Count Schouvaloff." More surprising still, on the very heels of this experience of the value of Russian pledges, he proposed another arrangement. He declared the necessity of "a clear and frank understanding" as to the relative position of British and Russian interests in Asia, but suggested no definite plan for the attainment of that object further than to recommend another pledge from Russia not to take Merv nor interfere with the independence of the Ameer of Afghanistan. Lord Granville's moderation proved very agreeable to the Government of St. Petersburg. Prince Gortschakoff expressed his "entire satisfaction" at the "just view which Lord Granville had taken." "In my opinion," he exclaimed, "the understanding is complete." All that was required, according to his opinion, for the future agreement of the two Governments was a spirit of mutual goodwill and conciliation. The understanding between the two Powers rested "not only upon the loyalty of the two Governments, but upon mutual political advantages." As a proof of this loyalty, he repeated "the positive assurance that the Imperial Cabinet continues to consider Afghanistan as entirely beyond its sphere of action." This was in January, 1874.

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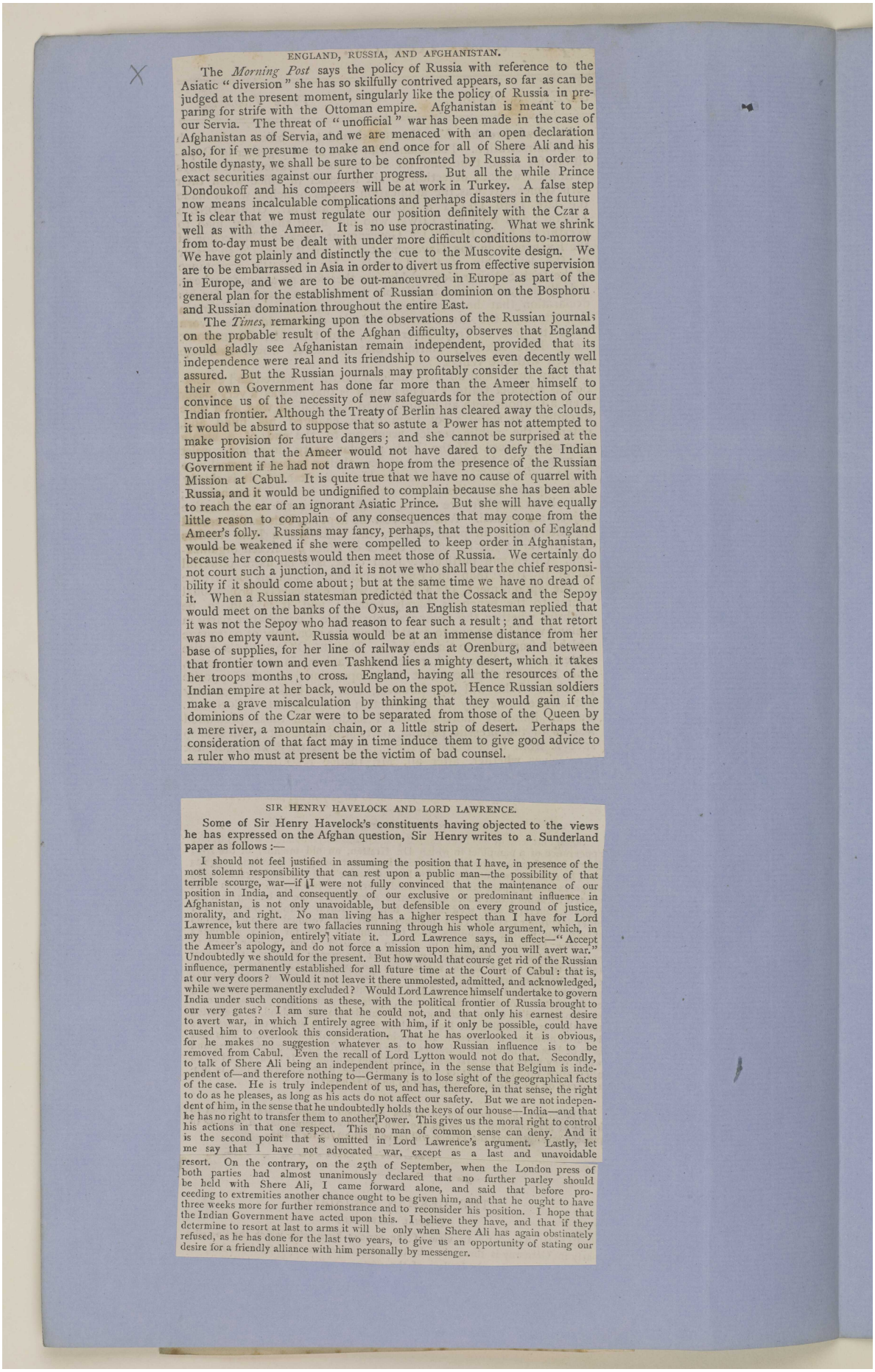

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Morning Post* says the policy of Russia with reference to the Asiatic "diversion" she has so skilfully contrived appears, so far as can be judged at the present moment, singularly like the policy of Russia in preparing for strife with the Ottoman empire. Afghanistan is meant to be our Servia. The threat of "unofficial" war has been made in the case of Afghanistan as of Servia, and we are menaced with an open declaration also, for if we presume to make an end once for all of Shere Ali and his hostile dynasty, we shall be sure to be confronted by Russia in order to exact securities against our further progress. But all the while Prince Dondoukoff and his compeers will be at work in Turkey. A false step now means incalculable complications and perhaps disasters in the future It is clear that we must regulate our position definitely with the Czar a well as with the Ameer. It is no use procrastinating. What we shrink from to-day must be dealt with under more difficult conditions to-morrow We have got plainly and distinctly the cue to the Muscovite design. We are to be embarrassed in Asia in order to divert us from effective supervision in Europe, and we are to be out-manœuvred in Europe as part of the general plan for the establishment of Russian dominion on the Bosphoru and Russian domination throughout the entire East.

The *Times*, remarking upon the observations of the Russian journals on the probable result of the Afghan difficulty, observes that England would gladly see Afghanistan remain independent, provided that its independence were real and its friendship to ourselves even decently well assured. But the Russian journals may profitably consider the fact that their own Government has done far more than the Ameer himself to convince us of the necessity of new safeguards for the protection of our Indian frontier. Although the Treaty of Berlin has cleared away the clouds, it would be absurd to suppose that so astute a Power has not attempted to make provision for future dangers; and she cannot be surprised at the supposition that the Ameer would not have dared to defy the Indian Government if he had not drawn hope from the presence of the Russian Mission at Cabul. It is quite true that we have no cause of quarrel with Russia, and it would be undignified to complain because she has been able to reach the ear of an ignorant Asiatic Prince. But she will have equally little reason to complain of any consequences that may come from the Ameer's folly. Russians may fancy, perhaps, that the position of England would be weakened if she were compelled to keep order in Afghanistan, because her conquests would then meet those of Russia. We certainly do not court such a junction, and it is not we who shall bear the chief responsibility if it should come about; but at the same time we have no dread of it. When a Russian statesman predicted that the Cossack and the Sepoy would meet on the banks of the Oxus, an English statesman replied that it was not the Sepoy who had reason to fear such a result; and that retort was no empty vaunt. Russia would be at an immense distance from her base of supplies, for her line of railway ends at Orenburg, and between that frontier town and even Tashkend lies a mighty desert, which it takes her troops months to cross. England, having all the resources of the Indian empire at her back, would be on the spot. Hence Russian soldiers make a grave miscalculation by thinking that they would gain if the dominions of the Czar were to be separated from those of the Queen by a mere river, a mountain chain, or a little strip of desert. Perhaps the consideration of that fact may in time induce them to give good advice to a ruler who must at present be the victim of bad counsel.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK AND LORD LAWRENCE.

Some of Sir Henry Havelock's constituents having objected to the views he has expressed on the Afghan question, Sir Henry writes to a Sunderland paper as follows:—

I should not feel justified in assuming the position that I have, in presence of the most solemn responsibility that can rest upon a public man—the possibility of that terrible scourge, war—if I were not fully convinced that the maintenance of our position in India, and consequently of our exclusive or predominant influence in Afghanistan, is not only unavoidable, but defensible on every ground of justice, morality, and right. No man living has a higher respect than I have for Lord Lawrence, but there are two fallacies running through his whole argument, which, in my humble opinion, entirely vitiate it. Lord Lawrence says, in effect—"Accept the Ameer's apology, and do not force a mission upon him, and you will avert war." Undoubtedly we should for the present. But how would that course get rid of the Russian influence, permanently established for all future time at the Court of Cabul: that is, at our very doors? Would it not leave it there unmolested, admitted, and acknowledged, while we were permanently excluded? Would Lord Lawrence himself undertake to govern India under such conditions as these, with the political frontier of Russia brought to our very gates? I am sure that he could not, and that only his earnest desire to avert war, in which I entirely agree with him, if it only be possible, could have caused him to overlook this consideration. That he has overlooked it is obvious, for he makes no suggestion whatever as to how Russian influence is to be removed from Cabul. Even the recall of Lord Lytton would not do that. Secondly, to talk of Shere Ali being an independent prince, in the sense that Belgium is independent of—and therefore nothing to—Germany is to lose sight of the geographical facts of the case. He is truly independent of us, and has, therefore, in that sense, the right to do as he pleases, as long as his acts do not affect our safety. But we are not independent of him, in the sense that he undoubtedly holds the keys of our house—India—and that he has no right to transfer them to another Power. This gives us the moral right to control his actions in that one respect. This no man of common sense can deny. And it is the second point that is omitted in Lord Lawrence's argument. Lastly, let me say that I have not advocated war, except as a last and unavoidable resort. On the contrary, on the 25th of September, when the London press of both parties had almost unanimously declared that no further parley should be held with Shere Ali, I came forward alone, and said that before proceeding to extremities another chance ought to be given him, and that he ought to have three weeks more for further remonstrance and to reconsider his position. I hope that the Indian Government have acted upon this. I believe they have, and that if they determine to resort at last to arms it will be only when Shere Ali has again obstinately refused, as he has done for the last two years, to give us an opportunity of stating our desire for a friendly alliance with him personally by messenger.

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SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The reported capture of Ali Musjid was contradicted by a telegram received after the publication of our first edition yesterday. A Simla despatch in the *Daily Telegraph* says that the Government is steadily pursuing its settled programme, and rapidly concentrating troops at Quetta and Kuram. The Mhairwara battalion has unanimously volunteered for service on the frontier, and the offer has been accepted. A *Standard* telegram from Umballa states that reports were current there that fighting had begun in the Khyber Pass between the Ameer's troops and the Afreedees, whom it was sought to punish for their having granted leave to the British mission to pass. A Simla despatch in the same journal says that if the successor of Adhan Khan, the late chief of the Ghilzies, be a man of warlike disposition it is considered probable that the tribe, which is hostile to the Ameer, will take advantage of the war in which he is engaged with England to throw off their allegiance to Cabul. This would give a great advantage to a British column advancing against Candahar. The Berlin correspondent of the *Morning Post* states that some of the Russian journals have invented a new theory to explain the Anglo-Afghan difficulty. The whole matter, they say, was arranged beforehand between Lord Lytton and Shere Ali as a *coup de théâtre* for some hidden purpose, and the storm will subside as suddenly as it has arisen without war.

The shilling map of the Indian and Afghan frontiers published by Stanford separates the territory occupied by the independent tribes on our North-Western frontier from Afghanistan. This should be a great assistance to those who desire to understand the complications likely to arise out of our present quarrel with Shere Ali. It would, however, have been well if the authority on which the demarcation of these independent tribes is made had been stated on the face of the map. Purchasers are informed that it has been compiled from the maps published by the Government of India. But none of these maps shows such a delimitation of the territory of the independent tribes between our frontier and Afghanistan as we find on Stanford's map; and if it really is based on private research, it would have been better to have notified the fact in the map itself. Better still would it have been to publish a facsimile reproduction, or reduction of the official maps. And why are the official maps not to be purchased, in the usual way, at the India Office?

THE TIMES, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9,

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, Oct. 8.

A letter in the *Golos*, dated from Orenburg, the city forming the base for Russian military operations in Central Asia, says :—

"The inhabitants of British India at this moment impatiently await the arrival of their Russian liberators. The hope of imminent emancipation from foreign yoke is universal in the country. The English, fearing that the Russian host, bent upon freeing the Hindoo race, will thread their way through Afghanistan, are determined to anticipate their adversary and to occupy the passes in advance. Not many years ago the despatch of British agents to the then independent Khanates of Central Asia was intended to secure the like object. But Captain Conolly, expelled by the Khan of Khiva, who had no wish to offend Russia, fled to Bokhara, where he was decapitated with Colonel Stoddart, another agent who had been despatched to the Khanates. The like fate would have befallen Captain Abbot in Khiva had he not been saved by Russian officers. After these events, in November, 1841, the Afghans rose, killed the British agents, Burnes and Macnaughten, and destroyed an English force of 20,000 men, carrying off 28,000 horses and camels. Since then the Afghans have ever been hostile to England. To-day British policy deems it all important to withdraw the Afghans from the sphere of Russian influence and to place them under the control of a so-called Resident Ambassador. The Russian outposts being only 700 miles distance from the Indian frontier, the possibility of a Russian invasion is constantly apprehended by the frightened Englishmen."

An editorial in the same paper says :—

"England is intent upon attacking Afghanistan, imitating Reynard, the fox, when charging the innocent rabbit with beginning the feud; but the world knows the rights of the case, and will not be deceived by these fraudulent tactics."

The statement that the German Government have shown a disposition to intervene in the Afghan-European complications is erroneous.

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AFGHANISTAN.

Orders have been issued by the India Office directing all officers on furlough belonging to regiments in Scinde and the Punjab, together with those whose corps are detailed for the Afghan Expeditionary Force, to rejoin their posts by the first mail. Those who are at home on medical certificate have been directed to present themselves for examination, in order that, should their health permit it, they may be pushed on to the front. Many anxious for the chance of distinguishing themselves have requested permission to proceed out to India. Lord Lytton seems to be satisfied with the Medical Staff, for no instructions have been issued for surgeons to rejoin, although all Commissariat officers in the Bengal Presidency have been directed to sail this week ; in fact, there is every indication that extraordinary exertions are being made to meet the storm which the Ameer has raised. The reinforcement of the Ali Musjid Fort does away with all hope of his coming to terms, and if rumour is correct that it has been garrisoned with six battalions and 18 guns, there is small hope of its being taken by a *coup de main* from Peshawur ; indeed, the reports as to the intended assault were altogether premature. The occupation of Jumrood by a British force was a necessary step by no means portending an immediate advance across our border. Jumrood, as is generally known, is a small village ten miles west of Peshawur and five from the eastern entrance of the Khyber Pass. It is surrounded by a low mud wall and contains about 50 houses inhabited by the Kuki-Khel section of the great Afridi clan. The Sikhs built a fort here in 1837, the ruins of which still remain. Its value as a military post is *nil*, as it is dependent for its water supply on a small stream issuing from the Khyber and which can at any moment be dammed up by the mountaineers. Jumrood was the scene of a great battle in 1837 between the Afghans, under Mahomed Afzal, and the Sikhs, under Hurree Singh. The engagement resulted in a victory for the Sikhs, whose General unfortunately was slain ; he was buried at Hurree Singh Re Boorj, which now is the most advanced British post in the Khyber direction, and is situated midway between the Pass and Peshawur ; for although Jumrood is in British territory its proximity to the mountains renders it unsafe as an outpost. Ever since our occupation of the Peshawur Valley it has been the residence of gangs of Afridi thieves. It is most probable that strong details of the Peshawur Division were pushed on to this village, not for the object of an attack on Ali Musjid, but for the purpose of watching our own frontier and thus preventing its violation by lawless bands of Afghan levies. Now that the Ameer has moved down a force to Ali Musjid, we may at any moment hear of desultory skirmishing at or near the mouth of the Khyber.

The alliance entered into between the Momunds and the Ameer will necessitate great vigilance on the part of the officer commanding the Peshawur Valley ; one or two successful raids into our territory will set an example to the other frontier tribes, which they may not be slow to follow ; there are none too many men in the valley to guard it against carefully-planned surprises on the part of the border clans, many of whom have long-standing grievances against us.

Colonel T. D. Baker, C.B., 18th Royal Irish, Assistant Adjutant-General at Head-Quarters, leaves England this evening to take up the appointment of Military Secretary to Lord Lytton, in the place of Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. G. P. Villiers, who has proceeded on field service with the column now being massed at Jumrood. Colonel Baker is an officer of much distinction and varied war service, which is likely to prove of great assistance to the Indian Viceroy at the present juncture. He served with the 18th Royal Irish in the Crimean War, was mentioned in despatches, and awarded the Sardinian medal for gallantry displayed at the attack of the cemetery and suburbs of Sebastopol on the 18th of June, 1855 ; he also served in India during the Mutiny in a field force under the command of Colonel Beatson. During the New Zealand War, 1864-66, he acted first as Deputy and afterwards as Assistant Adjutant-General. For his conduct at the action of Rangiawhia he received the brevet rank of Major ; at the attack and capture of Orakau he was again mentioned in General Carey's despatches. He accompanied Sir Garnet Wolseley to the Gold Coast, and served throughout the Ashantee War, being present at the battles of Amoaful, Ordahsoo, and Coomassie, and was promoted to a lieutenant-colonelcy and decorated with the Companionship of the Bath. In addition to the Sardinian medal and C.B., Colonel Baker possesses the Crimean, Turkish, Mutiny, New Zealand, and Ashantee medals, and is an A.D.C. to Her Majesty.

The appointment of Quartermaster-General of the main expeditionary column has, it is stated, been bestowed on Colonel C. M. Macgregor, C.S.I., C.I.E. A better selection could not have been made. No man knows the frontier more thoroughly, or is better qualified to act as head of the intelligence department in any operations towards Central Asia. He has an intimate knowledge both of Pushtoo and Persian, is gifted with a rare faculty for winning the confidence of his subordinates, and has earned the respect of all under whom he has served, not only for his painstaking work, but also for his indomitable gallantry in the field. Colonel Macgregor was employed for some years under the direction of Lord Napier of Magdala in the compilation of a Gazetteer of the North-West Frontier of India and of Central Asia—a work which contains all we know of those regions. It was with a view of making the book as complete as possible that he twice traversed the country between Herat and Candahar and between that city and our border. His personal acquaintance with the ground to be passed over by our troops will be of inestimable value to the General commanding the force. His services in the field are no less brilliant than those performed in times of peace. He served through the Indian Mutiny, including the siege and capture of Lucknow and many minor engagements ; during this campaign he was three times wounded and four times mentioned in despatches. In the China campaign he was again complimented for his gallant conduct, again twice wounded ; in the Bhootan Expedition, through which he served as Assistant Quartermaster-General, he was twice severely wounded, and three times mentioned in orders. He served in the Abyssinian War on the Quartermaster-General's Staff ; so it may safely be said that he has had stern experience of the working of that Department in the field, and is not likely to fail for want of a practical knowledge of its requirements in war.

The announcement that the Ameer has summoned the Jhirgahs, or councils, of the tribes is scarcely worthy of comment. The majority of the border clans nominally owe him allegiance, and would, as a matter of course, send representatives to him as readily as they would to the Commissioner of Peshawur if he called them into our territory. It is probable, indeed, that efforts have been made to win over even the Ameer's subjects to our standard, but it by no means follows that they will openly declare themselves prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Many of the tribes actually pay tribute to the ruler of Afghanistan; others receive annual allowances from him as a reward conditional on their good behaviour. These latter probably will side with Shere Ali. It is not known whether the subsidy paid by the fallen Dost Mahomed to the Khyber Mullicks has been continued by Shere Ali ; but it is known that in 1868, in consequence of the continued misconduct of the tribes, he refused to make the payments. It has lately been rumoured, however, that the subsidies have been resumed, in which case it is probable that the following Afridi sections will throw in their lot with Cabul :—Zaka Khel, Siphas, Kuki Khel, Khambar Khel, and Malikdin Khel, with the Shinwaris ; they may be estimated to number about 18,000 fighting men, fairly well armed. These are the clans that gave us such constant trouble during our occupation of the Khyber in the last Afghan war. Indeed, so aggressive were the Shinwaris that General Pollock detached a force in July, 1842, to punish them. Brigadier Monteath seems to have carried out his instructions to the letter, for it appears he destroyed 35 of their forts before he left their hills. Rumours of collisions between the Ameer's troops and the Afridis must be received with great caution, as must also the report of an advance on Ali Musjid. Until reinforcements have reached Peshawur from Lahore, Umballa, and Jullundur it would be most imprudent to make any forward movement ; the valley is surrounded by a series of Pathan tribes, all of whom at one time or another within the last 30 years have been at open war with us, and who would be quite ready, and only too willing, to commit raids in our territory while our troops were engaged elsewhere. It is necessary to prevent this, and to do so it will be requisite to watch the whole border from Torbela to Fort Mackeson, a distance of close on 80 miles. Moreover, an assault on Ali Musjid, unless it formed part of a plan for the seizure of the Khyber from Dhaka to Jumrood, would be absolutely valueless, and we have not a sufficient force in the neighbourhood to warrant such a comprehensive plan being undertaken.

It may be of interest to some to learn that the total strength of our forces on the immediate frontier, from the sea to Abbottabad, including Kurrachee, Hyderabad, Jacobabad, Rajanpore, Dera Ghazee Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Bunnoo, Kohat, Peshawur, Hoti Mardan, Nowshera, Attock, Abbottabad, together with the reserves at Rawul Pindee, Sealkot, Jhelum, Lahore, Umritsir, Ferozepore, Mooltan, Jullunder, and the advanced post of Quettah, amounts to 800 British and 7,000 Native Cavalry, 12,000 British and 21,000 Native Infantry, with 102 guns, many of these are at stations which it is obviously impossible to denude of British troops —namely, Umritsir, the head-quarters of the Sikh religion ; Lahore, with its fort and large fanatical population ; Ferozepore, with its arsenal ; Attock, with its bridge of boats over the Indus. Then, too, the stoppage of the rail at Jhelum will prevent any very rapid movement up country. We may be quite sure, however, that the enthusiasm of the native troops for war service is loudly echoed by their British comrades, and that all are striving their utmost to reach the frontier as soon as possible.

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"THE BANKRUPTCY OF INDIA."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—I can assure Mr. Hyndman that I read his paper with interest, and give him full credit for his research and for the skilful manner in which he marshalled his figures. But I at once saw that they must be fallacious from the obvious consideration that here was the total gross value of the agricultural produce of India, which embraced a country nearly as large as a continent, and supported a population of 200,000,000, put at no higher value than that of the British Islands, which barely supply the needs of one-half of our population of 33,000,000. It was clear to me that the basis on which his whole argument rested was unsound, and that unless this was exposed in these unquiet times mischief might ensue.

I chose the Punjab as an exemplification of his error because it presents the only complete statement of Indian statistics within my reach. It sufficed to show the entirely fallacious conclusions he had arrived at, and necessarily to discredit his hasty generalization upon the rest of India. The money value of a bushel of wheat may be 6s. in England and 1s. in India, but the 60lb. of which it consists is in either case exactly the same in food power. That is the measure of its value to the consumer, whether in the Punjab or in any other province of India. My argument is that, after converting into money all that the State requires, there is shown by the returns from the Punjab a surplus which in ordinary years much more than suffices to feed her population.

Mr. Hyndman objects that I limited myself to the land revenue. It was that on which he chiefly dwelt, and I accepted his own figures in valuing the produce. But the margin admits of all the increase he requires. Let us take the charge as he puts it at one-third of the wheat crop, and let us deduct the seed at 10 per cent., we have left 10⅔ bushels of 60lb. each of corn for the sustenance of each individual of the population. Our eminent authority, Mr. J. B. Lawes, estimates the consumption of the people of England at 5½ bushels of wheat a head, so that with nearly twice that quantity the people of the Punjab ought to have something to spare for their cattle.

But I do know so much of agriculture as not to have omitted the cattle from my consideration. Besides the 22,000,000 of "cultivated" acres, there are also returned 20,000,000 of "culturable" and 25,000,000 of "uncultivated" acres—upwards of 40,000,000 acres altogether, upon which the cattle in countless numbers may in that climate roam all the year at little cost to their owners. Those that come to the stall are fed on the broken straw and ears that have escaped the rude treading out of the corn in the simple husbandry of that country. I have reckoned nothing on the profit which may arise from live stock so cheaply fed. Whether great or small, when added to the money value of the 2,261,800 acres of marketable articles other than corn enumerated in my last letter, which are grown for export and not for consumption, the ryot of the Punjab would appear to have a solid surplus such as the Russian peasant, with his six months of snow, or the cottier farmer nearer home, might well envy.

I am not concerned to defend our management in India, which is probably far from faultless. But a plausible and sensational attack upon it, such as Mr. Hyndman's, deserves exposure.

C.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—May I venture to trespass on your space for a few words in reference to your leading article of this morning? My comparison is made not between English and native rule, but between the English rule under the Crown and that under the old East India Company. I firmly believe that there has been no such good administration in India since the days of Akbar as there was in some of the "non-regulation" districts under the Company. It is to this form of government, with necessary modifications, that I desire to see us return as far as possible. It was in confirmation of Mr. Grant Duff's estimate of £300,000,000 for the total produce of India—agricultural and manufactured—that I availed myself of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's careful and laborious calculations. This estimate was also followed by Lord Mayo, and it should be remembered that the assessments are based upon the money value of the crops.

Will you permit me also to say that I am strongly opposed to our withdrawal from the country? This, as you justly remark, could scarcely fail to be followed by anarchy. What, in my humble judgment, is absolutely essential at the present time is a large reduction in the expenditure on the army and a suspension of public works; the economical drain, which you admit should be brought down to the lowest point by a steady but gradual substitution of trained natives for Europeans in every department, including the railways. The first step I cannot but think should be the re-establishment of a European force in India on the basis of the old Indian army. This would, at any rate, tend to check the growth of the enormous home military charges. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October 8. H. M. HYNDMAN.

Daily Telegraph. Oct 9

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ENGLAND AND CABUL.

RUSSIAN VIEWS AND PLANS.

DEFENSIVE MEASURES.

MOVEMENTS IN CASHMERE.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

PERA, TUESDAY NIGHT.

Some Russian officers of rank who have just arrived at Philippopolis from Central Asia openly affirm that, notwithstanding all official denial, a complete understanding exists between Russia and Shere Ali; that several thousands of Muscovite troops are already on the frontier; and that war will ensue between Russia and Great Britain.

They also state that a feeling of deep hatred exists in the bosom of every Russian officer against England, and they openly boast that the latter Power has lost its prestige in India, and will be driven out of the country by Russian agency.

I am officially authorised to contradict the intelligence from Constantinople, published in the *Politische Correspondenz*, and telegraphed to you by your Vienna Correspondent, which appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* of Oct. 1, to the effect that a secret envoy of the Ameer was instructed to claim the Sultan's intervention to prevent England declaring war against Afghanistan; to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia was advisable; and that his Majesty had sent a secret embassy to Afghanistan to sound the Mussulman population of Central Asia as to a Pan-Islamite league against England as well as the Czar.

The whole story is a gross fabrication.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, TUESDAY NIGHT.

A correspondent writes from Teheran that, according to intelligence received in that city from Herat, the Russian mission at Cabul purposes visiting all the important localities in Afghanistan, on the pretext of studying their industrial and commercial resources, but in reality to sound the disposition of the inhabitants. The Russians take every advantage of their present opportunity to ascertain full particulars concerning the country and the people. The war flotilla on the Sea of Aral has recently been considerably increased. The Russians have also begun to fortify the Kashgar frontier. On the other hand the Emir of Beloochistan, who is the sworn friend of the Anglo-Indian Government, has entrusted the organisation of his army to English officers, although the people themselves are opposed to an alliance with a Christian Power. In case of an Anglo-Afghan war, the Emir's army would be of signal service to England.

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

CALCUTTA, OCT. 8.

Under the authority of the supreme Government, the troops of the Cashmere Maharajah have occupied the Baroghil and Karambar Passes, north-west of Cashmere.

The Baroghil Pass, the height of which is 12,000 feet, is generally supposed to be the lowest of the depressions leading over the Hindu Kush from the basin of the Oxus into that of the Indus. The ascent on either side of the pass is so gentle as to be practicable for laden carts. It is about 360 miles from the Baroghil Pass to Srinagar, the capital of Cashmere, and the route, which goes by Yassin and Gilgit, though closed by snow for about six months in the year, is commonly traversed during the summer by laden ponies, and is used by the Maharajah's troops, according to Mr. Drew. Of the more eastern Karambar Pass we know but little beyond the brief reconnaissance made by Captain Biddulph a few years since. Both these passes have an exceptional importance in the fact that they constitute the gateways of India on the side where the Russian frontier may be expected to touch our own at no distant date. At the present moment the southern Pamir divides the two empires.

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At any moment we might now hear of that first shot having been fired upon the Indian frontier which would echo all over Asia, and be the commencement of a third Afghan war. The British troops must be by this time in some force within and near Jamrood, which lies about five miles from the actual entrance of the Khyber Pass. Not very far up the valley, although inside the gorges opening thence, stands upon a lofty rock the square-shaped fortress of Ali Musjid, which is the present frontier post of SHERE ALI Khan, and has a garrison said to have been recently strengthened by four regiments of Afghan fighting-men. It is an easy day's march from Jamrood to this stronghold, and the intervening vale and pass are full of caves in the nearly perpendicular rocks, which furnish the ordinary abodes of Khyberees and Momunds, and would probably now be occupied by some of SHERE ALI's outposts. At any time a body of these may descend into the plain of which Jamrood marks the verge, and exchange warlike salutations there with our vedettes; while at Quettah, which cannot yet have been sufficiently reinforced, Afghan horsemen are said to have been seen reconnoitring on the Candahar road as if half inclined to make a dash at the British cantonment. Thus, albeit no proclamation of hostilities has appeared on either side, as far as is yet known, any pugnacious Sirdar or even a fanatic Afghan "jezailchee" might at any time kindle the flame of a war; and this is all the more possible because the superstitious mountaineers attach considerable importance to "first blood." The likelihood of a conflict being thus forced upon us by active challenge is increased by the apparent readiness of the Ameer for the quarrel. If it be true that he has been able to send large bodies of troops at once to Ali Musjid as well as up the long roads leading from Cabul and Candahar towards the Kurrum Pass and Quettah, this in itself would go to prove that at the date of the repulse of our Envoy the Afghan army was already mobilised, so far as such a highly civilised term is applicable to the Ameer's rude levies. In ordinary times the soldiers of the Cabul ruler would be billeted about the country in the villages of the peasantry, whom, by the way, they sorely maltreat and plunder. To collect these men—the "regulars" of the Afghanistan army—would be a somewhat slow process, and therefore it must either be the fact that they were to a great extent already in hand, or that the troops spoken of as crowding down to the frontier are chiefly irregular tribal bands turning out from their caves and mud huts at the earliest scent of battle. In either and in any case the most cautious policy must lie largely at the mercy of chance as regards the commencement of hostilities, for if these regular or irregular frontier-troops of SHERE ALI should shoot down even a camp-follower of our columns, or cut off a friendly village, the "fire will be set to the hills." "The rumour of a British advance on Ali Musjid," as our Simla despatch yesterday stated, "is quite unfounded," and could hardly fail to have been preceded by a formal declaration of war, which again would scarcely issue until the return of the Sirdar GHOLAB HOUSSEIN, our native emissary. If any violence had been done to him, or if his return were signalised by any sudden act of hostility at the mouth of the Khyber, then forthwith the smouldering sparks of enmity might instantly leap into flame, and whither that conflagration might spread no one can foresee.

There is, nevertheless, an object set before us in such a third Afghan war—if it must come—which well warrants a cheerful prosecution of the task. We may trust by conduct and courage to put an end to Afghan wars altogether, and simultaneously to thrust far back from our Indian frontier, for good and all, that foreign intrigue which at present costs us so much silent expenditure and hidden perturbation. Afghanistan has been "severely let alone" by previous Viceroys, on the theory that it might serve as a non-conductor between Russia in Asia and England in India. We have reason to believe that Lord LAWRENCE himself, at the time when he was the illustrious representative and director of a "masterly inactivity," always held the view that Russian influence would not and could not pass so far along the thin line of its Asiatic posts, and that before the Czar's arm could be extended to Cabul it would "break off at the shoulder-joint." Events have utterly overthrown this hypothesis, and Afghanistan, far from proving a non-conductor, is now palpably employed by the machinations of Prince GORTSCHAKOFF as an Indian Servia, none too distant for "unofficial warfare" or European "diversions." We are thus compelled to regard the mountain Principality in a new light, and to take steps to utilise it as an outwork which it is eminently capable of becoming. Those who oppose this on the ground that the inner ends of the passes, or even the Indus banks, would furnish our best strategical lines, forget the serious danger of leaving Cabul, Candahar, Herat, and the Oxus wholly and permanently to Russian manipulation. To do so would be as if the defenders of a great fortress should complacently sleep inside its gates, while outside the enemy was quietly piling up powder-barrels against the portals, and blowing the slow-match with which to ignite them. We must have a friendly Afghanistan either by agreement or by subjugation, although—or perhaps because—this will place us on both flanks of Persia and face to face with the Russian advance. Then, and then only, will that impending peril be stayed, and the sooner the better for the peace of India. With fairly good management—and with that *ikbal* or "happy fortune" of our rule in which the East still thoroughly believes—we may win the good will of the Afghans, after perhaps well beating and disarming them; for the task is really not so impossible as once seemed the taming of the Punjab or the safe occupation of Scinde. Then, too, we shall obtain strong frontier posts within reach of the Oxus, and frontier-guards, it may be, of mixed Belooch and Pathan troops, with such a regenerated Afghanistan as would protect the Oxus and never suffer Balkh, Merv, or Badakshan to be annexed by those who now hold the right bank of the Amu Daria. Thus there is here an excellent object to keep in view, and one well worthy of large sacrifices and efforts. To tell the simple truth, we can submit no longer to be harassed by Russian intrigue so close outside our boundaries. It is an evil which must be dealt with decisively, and which will cost us less so to deal with it than to meet it with ever-increasing precautions and unworthy anxieties. SHERE ALI is the first Cabul ruler who has publicly played off the Russian power against that of England in full sight of the East. He must be the last; for a repetition of such a spectacle as his conduct presents would be in the highest degree injurious to our domination.

We publish this morning an item of intelligence which shows that Lord LYTTON'S Government is on the alert all round the frontier. In Cashmere we have a friendly Prince who, in name independent, yet gladly acknowledges substantial fealty to her Majesty; and this ruler, RUNGBEER SINGH, is the guardian of some very important gateways of India. Two of them, the Baroghil and the Karambar, might possibly become of real moment in certain eventualities, and it is satisfactory to hear that these passes have been occupied in force by the troops of the Maharajah of CASHMERE. RUNGBEER SINGH'S army consists of about seventeen thousand men, we believe, fairly drilled and armed, and accustomed to the climate of these lofty passes, which lead from the basin of the Oxus into that of the Indus, and the lowest point among which mounts to twelve thousand feet above the sea level. At that elevation the ice and snow are sufficient barriers against any hostile visitor during the winter; but the passages are open at present, and will remain so for some weeks, while between them and the Russian frontier at Khodjend and Khokand there is nothing save the Southern Pamir. It is upon ourselves, however, that we must finally rely for the forces and the resolution necessary to place our Indian Empire out of reach of further alarms; and though, perhaps, less may be communicated in future about the movements and objects of our troops, it should not, therefore, be imagined that the slightest disinclination exists on the part of the Home and Indian Governments to confront the present crisis with all its perils and all its opportunities. A passage in Sir JOHN KAYE'S "Sepoy War" has been just usefully resuscitated. It runs as follows: "Promptitude of action is often of more importance than completeness of preparation, and to show ourselves confident of success is in most cases to attain it. The British power in India cannot afford to be quiescent under insult and outrage. Delay is held to be a sign of weakness. It encourages enmity and confirms vacillation. It is a disaster in itself, more serious often than any that can arise from insufficient preparation, and that great bugbear the inclemency of the season." These words are sagacious as well as high-spirited, and fitly become an English historian, nor can it be supposed that her Majesty's Ministers are blind to their profound truthfulness.

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Daily News - Oct 9

LATEST TELEGRAMS

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

MOVEMENT OF TROOPS ON THE FRONTIER.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)
SIMLA, TUESDAY EVENING.

There is a considerable movement of troops on both sides of the frontier, and an early collision is possible.

The detention of Gholam Hussein, the Viceroy's envoy, is considered a pretext to gain time.

General Ross has a force of about five thousand Europeans and natives at Jumrood, and three batteries of artillery.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
VIENNA, TUESDAY NIGHT.

According to St. Petersburg advices received here, a Russian corps of observation of 20,000 men is likely to be stationed on the northern frontier of Afghanistan.

Last evening, in the Leeds Town-hall, Sir Henry Havelock, M.P., presided over a missionary meeting, and referring to the Afghan difficulty, he declared that our dispute was not with a half-savage ruler, but to prevent our rule in India being disturbed by a power behind, which power, if it prevailed to break down our rule in India, certainly, to say the least, would not advance the cause of true religion. If we were about merely to avenge an insult, he would not countenance it, for it was no Christian duty to take up arms for revenge; but it was our duty to maintain the tranquillity of the British rule.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9.

A correspondent telegraphing from Calcutta yesterday states that, under authority of the supreme Government, the troops of the Cashmere Maharaja have occupied the Baroghil and Karambar Passes, north-west of Cashmere.

Our Pera correspondent telegraphs that it is openly affirmed by some Russian officers who have just arrived at Philippopolis from Central Asia that, notwithstanding all official denial, a complete understanding exists between Russia and Shere Ali; that several thousand Muscovite troops are already on the frontier; and that war will ensue between Russia and Great Britain.

ALREADY proof has been afforded that the Indian Government in provoking a conflict with the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN was not as well prepared as the ruler so rashly forced into enmity. Not only is the AMEER able to take the initiative by sending troops forward into the Khyber Pass and thus to determine the site of the first action, but if reports are to be trusted he has compelled us by his demonstrations to assemble a force at Jumrood. The information about the movements of the Afghan forces is at present, as far as the general public are concerned, merely based on Bazaar rumours. These, however, are not to be altogether disbelieved. It is true that the wildest and most improbable stories are always to be found floating about among the native population; but, on the other hand, the speed with which authentic intelligence is transmitted through native sources from one end to the other is absolutely marvellous. In the winter of 1841-42 rumours of our disasters at Cabul had by such means reached Calcutta before official reports had arrived at Government House, almost before the events themselves had taken place. Moreover, it must be remembered that we are entirely dependent on the natives for all information as to the progress of events in Afghanistan. It would be imprudent, therefore, to speak with contempt of the reports regarding the AMEER'S movements as mere "Bazaar gossip."

It would appear pretty certain that a British force has been hurriedly established at Jumrood to prevent any incursion into the Peshawur Valley. Jumrood is about eight miles from Peshawur and some four miles from the actual entrance to the Khyber Pass. Why it has not been always occupied by a strong detachment it is not easy to understand. At all events, it should have been so occupied the instant that there appeared a probability of hostilities with the Afghans. According to the latest telegrams from India, the contents of which must however be accepted with some reserve, there was an intention on our part of seizing the Fort of Ali Musjid, but the AMEER was too active for us. It is said that he has taken up a position near the fort in question with 6,000 infantry and 18 guns, and not only renders an attack for the present on Ali Musjid rash, but even threatens an incursion into our territory. The prudence of any intention on our part of capturing Ali Musjid save as an immediate preliminary to an advance through the Pass is doubtful. Apparently strong owing to its situation on the top of a high isolated rock, this fortlet is really weak, being commanded within very short range by a neighbouring height. It could therefore be easily captured by us if the capture were made a portion of a series of operations for forcing the Pass. On the other hand, in the teeth of 6,000 Afghans, we cannot attempt a *coup de main*. Besides, to enable us to hold the fort it would be necessary to establish an entrenched post on the commanding hill above mentioned; and to supply either the garrison of Ali Musjid or the entrenched post alluded to with provisions would be a task of some difficulty, especially as soon as the winter sets in. Our object would be to secure, by means of an advanced guard, a passage of the Khyber for the main body of the army; and we could not do that by occupying Ali Musjid, for it must be, from its distance in advance and the easily intercepted communication with Jumrood, converted into a detached post, entirely dependent on its own resources. But we cannot make it thus independent of external aid and support.

It would therefore be a grave strategical error to occupy it at all until we are prepared for a general advance. Much better would it be, with a view to securing the Pass, to push forward to the Afghan end of it, and establish ourselves there with at least a strong combined brigade—*i.e.*, a brigade composed of all three arms—making it worth the while of the Khyberees to keep our communications open. Dakha, on the south, or Lallpoora, on the north bank of the river Cabul, would be a convenient spot for (as it were) a *tête-de-pont* to the Khyber Pass. Dakha is about 27½ miles from the British end of the Khyber. The valley of Dakha is about three or four miles in diameter, and sheltered by the eminences which surround it from the fierceness of winter, and there is plenty of cultivation in the neighbourhood. Lallpoora is a large town, at least large for that part of the country. At Dakha all the roads leading from the Peshawur district to Cabul meet. The distance from Dakha to Jumrood was in November, 1840, accomplished in four marches by a troop of Horse Artillery. We might have been there before the road was barred by the 6,000 Afghans mentioned above, for General POLLOCK in 1842 forced the Pass with only 8,000 troops. It is true that 12,000 half-hearted and undisciplined Sikh troops converged on Ali Musjid by the Shadi Bhagiaree Pass, but there is little reason to doubt that POLLOCK unaided would have got through. It may be urged that 8,000 troops were not at once available. We have, however, shown in a previous article that from the Peshawur and Rawul Pindee districts that number of men could have been concentrated at Jumrood within ten days after the despatch of the order to march. Against this the argument is that the requisite transport was not available, that the Punjaub of late years has been drained of baggage animals, and that the Punjaub camels are not suited for a campaign in Afghanistan. The answer is simple. There is always kept up in large military stations a certain number of elephants and camels. These could be easily supplemented by demands on the Bazaars. There are also a considerable number of powerful Afghan camels to be hired—if the price be sufficiently tempting—from the Afghan traders passing through the north of the Punjaub. The different chiefs and landholders should likewise have been called upon to display their loyalty by contributing, on payment, camels and elephants for the service of the army, and from policy the demand would have been most satisfactory. As for hackeries, they might have been employed to bring up reserve stores, and to collect supplies

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from the Peshawur Valley. The argument that Punjaub camels are unfitted for a campaign in Afghanistan is idle, for according to all appearances the Indian Government has no idea of a prolonged campaign this autumn, but only a march of about ninety miles from Peshawur. It is very certain that what could have been accomplished by 8,000 men in the first week of October will not be effected three weeks later with a less force than 15,000 men. It is true that after all we may have misjudged the authorities. A telegram from our Special Correspondent at Simla which we publish this morning informs us that General Ross is at Jumrood with 5,000 men, and that considerable movements of troops are taking place on both sides. Those on our side may, however, be a supposition which receives some countenance from the current belief in India that no serious advance will take place till the 1st November. Even then, according to report, it is doubtful whether we shall cross the border, it being thought possible that by massing troops at the entrance to the Passes we shall induce the AMEER to submit to our demands. We talk of our plans, however, but SHERE ALI has already disconcerted them. He says in effect you shall fight not when and where you choose, but when and where I choose, and has already produced a great moral effect by assuming what is termed in strategical language, "the offensive "defensive." It is reported that the AMEER has assembled the chiefs of the mountain tribes in conference, and the mere fact of their consenting to meet him is a bad symptom. However well disposed they may be to us, they cannot but yield to the force which the AMEER can bring against them if we do not protect them. Indeed, it is said that the AMEER is already employing the cogent argument of fire and sword with the Khyberees in revenge for their agreement to open the Pass to us. It is rumoured that the Momunds have made their submission to the AMEER, and the other tribes bordering on the Khyber will probably be forced or cajoled into imitating their example. They may thirst after British silver and dread British lead; but the Afghans are at hand and active, while we give no sign of any intention to protect our allies. Thus the Indian Government, by its rash and inconsiderate action, will probably add to the physical difficulties of the Khyber the opposition of the numerous and warlike tribes who occupy the surrounding hills.

THE PESHAWUR VALLEY.

In a remote nook of our north-western frontier, surrounded by lofty and picturesque mountain heights, and almost entirely cut off from the main body of British territory by a circling ring of wild Afghan tribes, lies the beautiful and romantic valley of Peshawur. Its singular conformation and lovely scenery would by themselves entitle it to no small attention, even apart from its immense strategical importance as the vestibule of India and the highway to the heart of Afghanistan. The nature of the valley may best be understood from the history of its formation, as evidenced by the geological structure of its rocks and soil. Down to a comparatively late date in the tertiary period, a great inland lake seems to have filled up the deep basin of Peshawur, and risen to a considerable height along the sides of the neighbouring hills. The Cabul and Swat rivers must have fed this splendid sheet of water, while the snow-clad peaks of the great mountain amphitheatre above must have mirrored their pinnacles of eternal ice on its glassy surface, unseen, doubtless, by any human eye. But in the course of time, the outlet by which the lake emptied its surplus stores into the Indus appears to have worn a deep gorge through the rocky barrier that hemmed it in, and step by step the waters subsided to lower and yet lower levels, until at length the whole valley was drained of its overflowing flood, and became a mere circular glen, traversed by the united stream of the Cabul and the Swat, which had formerly filled its whole expanse. Yet even to the present day many signs of this primeval condition remain stamped indelibly upon the face of the Peshawur basin. Its bottom consists of a thick alluvial deposit, the relic of its ancient lacustrine state; and through the yielding soil the rivers cut their way in numerous divergent channels, which still recall the memory of the almost forgotten lake. Especially in the rich wedge of land known as the Doaba do these numberless minor watercourses carry off and distribute the swollen current of the great mountain streams, thus preventing the possibility of inundation, and parcelling out the fertilising waters to the green fields around. In this way the Peshawur Valley is freed from the danger of those two ever-present and alternative Indian curses, flood and famine, which usually succeed one another with such appalling rapidity during the wet or dry seasons respectively.

With such natural advantages of position and water supply the amphitheatre of Peshawur cannot fail to exhibit a perpetual scene of beauty and fertility. In the foreground of the picture stand the cultivated fields, green with an almost English greenness from the abundant irrigation and the constant percolation through the spongy soil Thriving villages, inhabited by Afghan families, who have learned the habits of industry and peaceful tillage under the firm but gentle pressure of English rule, thickly stud the central plain on either side of the chief streams. In the middle distance rises the first tier of hills, clad with forest growth, and inhabited by the wilder Afghans of the border; while the background towers up to the limit of perpetual snow, and displays its white peaks against the limiting blue of the horizon. The fertility of the valley is so famous that the rice of Bara, grown along the banks of a stream bearing the same name, has a reputation over all India as the proper food of princes; and Runjeet Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, as his Sikh veterans loved to call him, exacted a part of his royal revenue in this precious grain. Large marshes exist in many parts of the plain, one of which lies in the immediate neighbourhood of Peshawur itself; and old maps of the valley show a temporary lake, formed every eight or ten years, and lying not far from the present bed of the Indus, with which river the Cabul unites immediately after passing out of the mountain glen.

The population of the valley consists almos entirely of Afghans, who are of course Mohammedans in creed. As usual, they are subdivided into clans and minor tribes, with an extraordinary minuteness of detail. The Yusufzae of the northern or Hindoo Koosh hills form the largest element, exhibiting all the essential features of their countrymen in their love of independence and their patriarchal institutions, while at the same time they have learned under British rule to

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live a comparatively quiet and peaceable life. The Afghans of the plain, on the other hand, have lost much of their native character, and have become subordinate to their chiefs in a far greater degree than the wild dwellers in the hill region. Among the pure Yusufzae, each little tribe forms a separate community, governed by its own patriarch, and distributed into "races," each of which has its own special name, ending in the syllable *zae;* and again into "clans," or minor divisions, marked by the termination *khel* or *khail*. Before the British occupation, all these separate tribes and families were perpetually at war with one another, and the men ploughed their little fields with rifles slung across their shoulders to repel the attacks of the next petty village, or stood guard over their rice fields at harvest time with drawn swords in their hands. And even now, though the stern arm of British power has quelled for a time the feuds and bickerings of the hostile clans, their animosities are not entirely forgotten; while the tales of the elders incite the growing youths to emulate the great deeds of their fathers in the days when every Afghan was free to stab or shoot his neighbour as he willed, without the absurd intervention of a beardless youth who represents to their eyes the distant majesty of the English Crown. Yet the Yusufzae are a religious race after their own pattern; very reverential not only towards the Prophet himself, but also toward all the minor saints and holy shrines with which local piety has enriched the faith of Islam. But their religion does not prevent them from regarding the duty of revenge as one among their most sacred obligations; and the Afghan who should omit to exact signal vengeance for an affront, even if it extended to the necessary length of taking his victim's life, would be exposed to universal contempt amongst his fellows, as one regardless of the common decencies of life.

The city of Peshawur itself, whose associations stretch far back into the remote past, and even to the period of the ancient Buddhist monarchy of Upper India, stands in the midst of the valley, near the left bank of the Bara stream, and some ten and a half miles from the now famous fort of Jumrood. Its total population amounts to 60,000 souls, crowded within a low mud wall, and distributed among the tortuous alleys or *culs-de-sac*, which pass by courtesy as streets in most oriental towns. In spite of its advantageous position for trade with Central Asia, only a small amount of caravan traffic with Cabul and Bokhara has ever enlivened its somewhat sleepy bazaars; while the efforts of the Indian Government to establish a great fair upon the spot were so unsuccessful that the attempt was abandoned after a few years' trial as absolutely hopeless. The Bala Hissar Fort, built by the Sikhs to overawe the city and aid them in collecting their hated revenue from the sullen and half-subdued Afghan inhabitants, commands every part of the town. Its walls rise to an eminence of ninety feet above the ground, and it contains large magazines, besides an abundant internal supply of fresh water.

After the common fashion of Indian stations, the cantonment and European quarter stand a little apart from the stuffy streets of the native city, occupying a slight elevation to the west, and commanding a full view of the Khyber hills. The importance of this great military post, as guarding the main gateway of the Punjab, has always been fully recognised; and the ordinary garrison comprises no less than four regiments of native infantry, one regiment of native cavalry, another of British infantry, and a strong detachment of artillery. The cantonment with its belongings contains a population of some 22,000 souls. Though picturesquely situated and considered a pleasant station for society, Peshawur bears a bad reputation as a hotbed of fever, which renders it an undesirable place for British troops, especially if not yet fully acclimatised.

Numerous other cantonments occupy the principal strategic points in the circumference of the valley. Among these the chief are at Nowshehra and Hoti-Murdan, together with the cool hill sanitarium of Cherat, perched upon one of the peaks in the Khuttack range. We shall probably hear more of all these minor garrisons hereafter, if, as seems probable, the first point of attack in the Ameer's dominions should turn out to be the Khyber Pass.

Standard - Oct 9

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Without attaching too much importance to the utterances of the Russian Press upon our Afghan quarrel—utterances which are not less remarkable for the malevolent candour with which they speak of Russia's policy than for the extraordinary ignorance which they display of the character and motives of the English Government in India—it would be idle to overlook these indications of the non-official Russian mind at a time when the long-threatened collision between the two Powers in Central Asia seems about to be realised. The speculations in the Russian newspapers would be interesting if it were only for the light they throw on the nature of that understanding on which we have so long relied as our best security against a disturbance of the peace of Central Asia. It cannot be wholly profitless if on this occasion we remind the public of the unceasing warnings which have for years been uttered by those most competent to offer an opinion on the subject of the gradual and steady approach of Russia to our Indian frontier. Ever since 1837, when her agents for the first time appeared in the Afghan territory, it has been evident to those who have watched the course of events that India, or at least Afghanistan, was the objective point of the CZAR'S policy. Those who have had the courage during all this period to express this opinion have had to bear the reproach of being "Russophobists," "alarmists," and "fire-eaters." Yet they have lived to see the doctrines they preached, though only a few months ago derided by leading English statesmen as a "nightmare and a delusion," justified by the event, and the dangers they have pointed out acknowledged by almost the unanimous voice of England. He would be a bold man now who, with the assistance of the largest maps, would deny that there was any reason for England to take measures against the intrusion of Russia into India. The danger rather seems to be lest the zeal of some of our recent converts to what used to be called "Russophobia" should lead the country into an excess of alarm at the presence of a Russian agent in the Afghan capital, even though that presence has been coincident with the repulse of the British Mission. No greater mistake could be made at the present moment than for us to exaggerate the influence of Russia in Afghanistan; and there ought to be no risk of our falling into the kind of panic, because a Russian Agent has appeared at Cabul, that we yielded to forty years ago, with such evil consequences to our good name and our *prestige*. The Indian Government, at any rate, may be expected to know precisely the kind and the amount of danger which has to be feared from Russia in Afghanistan; nor is Lord LYTTON, surrounded as he is by able and experienced officers, to whom that country is no longer a *terra incognita*, likely to repeat the blunders of Lord AUCKLAND and the *coterie* of young Bengal civilians who made war upon DOST MAHOMED in 1838.

But whilst it would be unwise to attach too much importance to the apparent connection between the visit of General STOLIETEFF to Cabul and the refusal of the AMEER to receive a British Envoy, the explanations and comments of the Russian Press upon the situation are of much significance, and, if they can be taken to express the general feeling of the Russian Government as to their future policy in Afghanistan, they deserve our most serious attention. So far as the present quarrel is concerned, we may accept the explanation that the Mission to Cabul was a part of the precautionary measures adopted by Russia in view of a possible rupture with England, and that its policy belongs to the period previous to the Treaty of Berlin. As a matter of fact, General STOLIETEFF did not arrive at Cabul until fully a month after the Peace had been signed; but we may give Russia the benefit of the difficulty of telegraphic communication in Central Asia. It is known also by previous experience that the Russian political department is not always able to secure the ready obedience of its Asiatic Generals. Allowing that General STOLIETEFF'S Embassy has become *malapropos* through the change of the situation in Europe, we may also admit the inconvenience of suddenly withdrawing it at the demand of England. The position is full of embarrassment, and we can readily believe that Russia would like to get out of it if she could. Indeed, we cannot help seeing that, in her eagerness to retaliate upon England in Asia for the rebuffs suffered by Russian policy in Europe, Russia has been guilty of a blunder of a kind not very creditable to her diplo-

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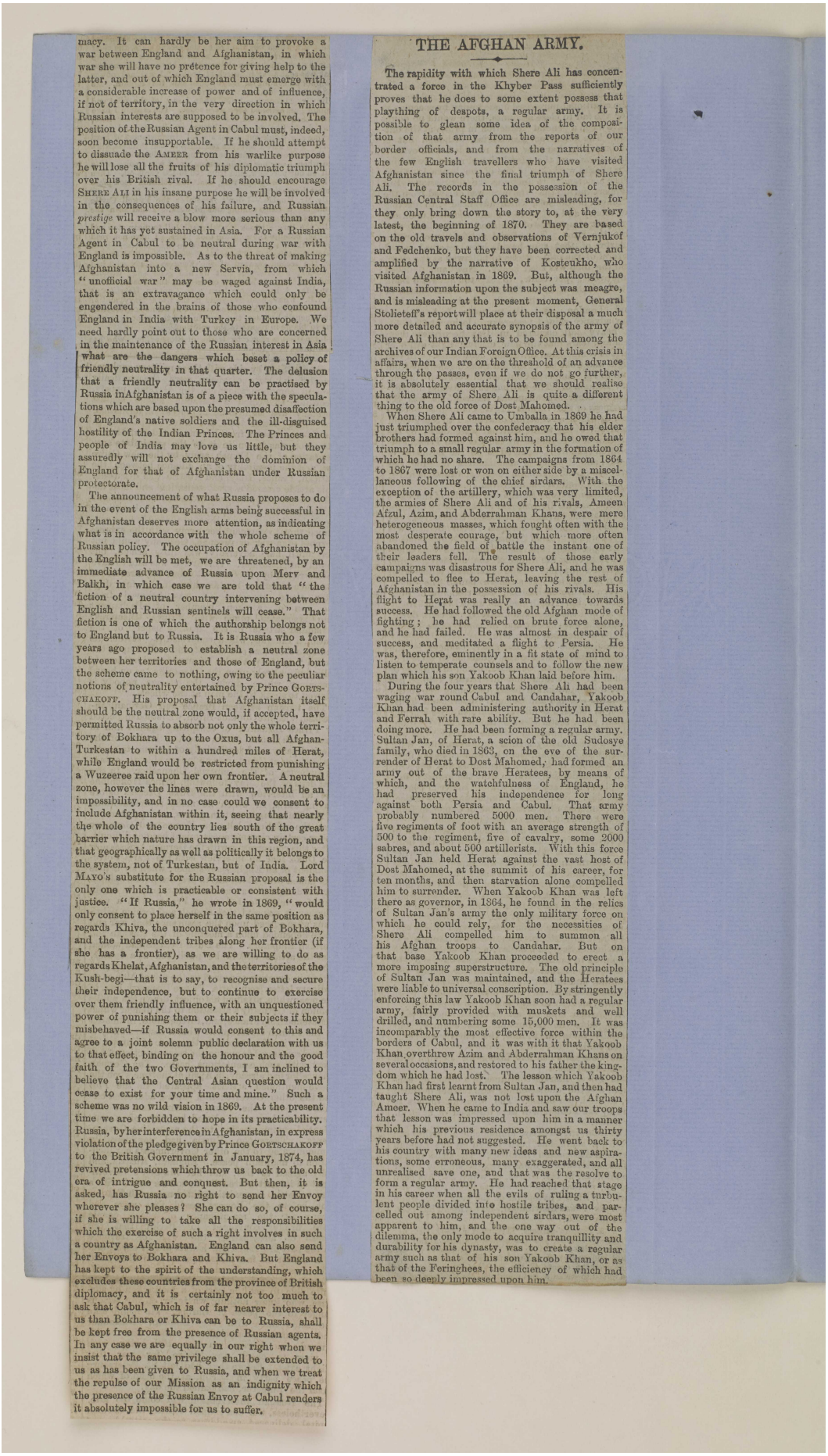

macy. It can hardly be her aim to provoke a war between England and Afghanistan, in which war she will have no prétence for giving help to the latter, and out of which England must emerge with a considerable increase of power and of influence, if not of territory, in the very direction in which Russian interests are supposed to be involved. The position of the Russian Agent in Cabul must, indeed, soon become insupportable. If he should attempt to dissuade the AMEER from his warlike purpose he will lose all the fruits of his diplomatic triumph over his British rival. If he should encourage SHERE ALI in his insane purpose he will be involved in the consequences of his failure, and Russian *prestige* will receive a blow more serious than any which it has yet sustained in Asia. For a Russian Agent in Cabul to be neutral during war with England is impossible. As to the threat of making Afghanistan into a new Servia, from which "unofficial war" may be waged against India, that is an extravagance which could only be engendered in the brains of those who confound England in India with Turkey in Europe. We need hardly point out to those who are concerned in the maintenance of the Russian interest in Asia what are the dangers which beset a policy of friendly neutrality in that quarter. The delusion that a friendly neutrality can be practised by Russia in Afghanistan is of a piece with the speculations which are based upon the presumed disaffection of England's native soldiers and the ill-disguised hostility of the Indian Princes. The Princes and people of India may love us little, but they assuredly will not exchange the dominion of England for that of Afghanistan under Russian protectorate.

The announcement of what Russia proposes to do in the event of the English arms being successful in Afghanistan deserves more attention, as indicating what is in accordance with the whole scheme of Russian policy. The occupation of Afghanistan by the English will be met, we are threatened, by an immediate advance of Russia upon Merv and Balkh, in which case we are told that "the fiction of a neutral country intervening between English and Russian sentinels will cease." That fiction is one of which the authorship belongs not to England but to Russia. It is Russia who a few years ago proposed to establish a neutral zone between her territories and those of England, but the scheme came to nothing, owing to the peculiar notions of neutrality entertained by Prince GORTSCHAKOFF. His proposal that Afghanistan itself should be the neutral zone would, if accepted, have permitted Russia to absorb not only the whole territory of Bokhara up to the Oxus, but all Afghan-Turkestan to within a hundred miles of Herat, while England would be restricted from punishing a Wuzeeree raid upon her own frontier. A neutral zone, however the lines were drawn, would be an impossibility, and in no case could we consent to include Afghanistan within it, seeing that nearly the whole of the country lies south of the great barrier which nature has drawn in this region, and that geographically as well as politically it belongs to the system, not of Turkestan, but of India. Lord MAYO's substitute for the Russian proposal is the only one which is practicable or consistent with justice. "If Russia," he wrote in 1869, "would only consent to place herself in the same position as regards Khiva, the unconquered part of Bokhara, and the independent tribes along her frontier (if she has a frontier), as we are willing to do as regards Khelat, Afghanistan, and the territories of the Kush-begi—that is to say, to recognise and secure their independence, but to continue to exercise over them friendly influence, with an unquestioned power of punishing them or their subjects if they misbehaved—if Russia would consent to this and agree to a joint solemn public declaration with us to that effect, binding on the honour and the good faith of the two Governments, I am inclined to believe that the Central Asian question would cease to exist for your time and mine." Such a scheme was no wild vision in 1869. At the present time we are forbidden to hope in its practicability. Russia, by her interference in Afghanistan, in express violation of the pledge given by Prince GORTSCHAKOFF to the British Government in January, 1874, has revived pretensions which throw us back to the old era of intrigue and conquest. But then, it is asked, has Russia no right to send her Envoy wherever she pleases? She can do so, of course, if she is willing to take all the responsibilities which the exercise of such a right involves in such a country as Afghanistan. England can also send her Envoys to Bokhara and Khiva. But England has kept to the spirit of the understanding, which excludes these countries from the province of British diplomacy, and it is certainly not too much to ask that Cabul, which is of far nearer interest to us than Bokhara or Khiva can be to Russia, shall be kept free from the presence of Russian agents. In any case we are equally in our right when we insist that the same privilege shall be extended to us as has been given to Russia, and when we treat the repulse of our Mission as an indignity which the presence of the Russian Envoy at Cabul renders it absolutely impossible for us to suffer.

THE AFGHAN ARMY.

The rapidity with which Shere Ali has concentrated a force in the Khyber Pass sufficiently proves that he does to some extent possess that plaything of despots, a regular army. It is possible to glean some idea of the composition of that army from the reports of our border officials, and from the narratives of the few English travellers who have visited Afghanistan since the final triumph of Shere Ali. The records in the possession of the Russian Central Staff Office are misleading, for they only bring down the story to, at the very latest, the beginning of 1870. They are based on the old travels and observations of Vernjukof and Fedchenko, but they have been corrected and amplified by the narrative of Kosteukho, who visited Afghanistan in 1869. But, although the Russian information upon the subject was meagre, and is misleading at the present moment, General Stolieteff's report will place at their disposal a much more detailed and accurate synopsis of the army of Shere Ali than any that is to be found among the archives of our Indian Foreign Office. At this crisis in affairs, when we are on the threshold of an advance through the passes, even if we do not go further, it is absolutely essential that we should realise that the army of Shere Ali is quite a different thing to the old force of Dost Mahomed.

When Shere Ali came to Umballa in 1869 he had just triumphed over the confederacy that his elder brothers had formed against him, and he owed that triumph to a small regular army in the formation of which he had no share. The campaigns from 1864 to 1867 were lost or won on either side by a miscellaneous following of the chief sirdars. With the exception of the artillery, which was very limited, the armies of Shere Ali and of his rivals, Ameen Afzul, Azim, and Abderrahman Khans, were mere heterogeneous masses, which fought often with the most desperate courage, but which more often abandoned the field of battle the instant one of their leaders fell. The result of those early campaigns was disastrous for Shere Ali, and he was compelled to flee to Herat, leaving the rest of Afghanistan in the possession of his rivals. His flight to Herat was really an advance towards success. He had followed the old Afghan mode of fighting; he had relied on brute force alone, and he had failed. He was almost in despair of success, and meditated a flight to Persia. He was, therefore, eminently in a fit state of mind to listen to temperate counsels and to follow the new plan which his son Yakoob Khan laid before him.

During the four years that Shere Ali had been waging war round Cabul and Candahar, Yakoob Khan had been administering authority in Herat and Ferrah with rare ability. But he had been doing more. He had been forming a regular army. Sultan Jan, of Herat, a scion of the old Sudosye family, who died in 1863, on the eve of the surrender of Herat to Dost Mahomed, had formed an army out of the brave Heratees, by means of which, and the watchfulness of England, he had preserved his independence for long against both Persia and Cabul. That army probably numbered 5000 men. There were five regiments of foot with an average strength of 500 to the regiment, five of cavalry, some 2000 sabres, and about 500 artillerists. With this force Sultan Jan held Herat against the vast host of Dost Mahomed, at the summit of his career, for ten months, and then starvation alone compelled him to surrender. When Yakoob Khan was left there as governor, in 1864, he found in the relics of Sultan Jan's army the only military force on which he could rely, for the necessities of Shere Ali compelled him to summon all his Afghan troops to Candahar. But on that base Yakoob Khan proceeded to erect a more imposing superstructure. The old principle of Sultan Jan was maintained, and the Heratees were liable to universal conscription. By stringently enforcing this law Yakoob Khan soon had a regular army, fairly provided with muskets and well drilled, and numbering some 15,000 men. It was incomparably the most effective force within the borders of Cabul, and it was with it that Yakoob Khan overthrew Azim and Abderrahman Khans on several occasions, and restored to his father the kingdom which he had lost. The lesson which Yakoob Khan had first learnt from Sultan Jan, and then had taught Shere Ali, was not lost upon the Afghan Ameer. When he came to India and saw our troops that lesson was impressed upon him in a manner which his previous residence amongst us thirty years before had not suggested. He went back to his country with many new ideas and new aspirations, some erroneous, many exaggerated, and all unrealised save one, and that was the resolve to form a regular army. He had reached that stage in his career when all the evils of ruling a turbulent people divided into hostile tribes, and parcelled out among independent sirdars, were most apparent to him, and the one way out of the dilemma, the only mode to acquire tranquillity and durability for his dynasty, was to create a regular army such as that of his son Yakoob Khan, or as that of the Feringhees, the efficiency of which had been so deeply impressed upon him.

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The Herat army formed the nucleus upon which Shere Ali commenced the task of creating a regular army for Afghanistan. Every Afghan subject became liable to the Crown for military service; but his services were, during peace time, only required locally. Thus the Herat army returned to the west, where it settled down as a garrison of that important place; but after the troubles between Shere Ali and Yakoob Khan, in 1871 and 1872, it was further modified, and the Afghan element became more pronounced in its composition. Its strength on active service is probably 10,000 men, 2000 of which garrison Ferrah. The Usbeg armies north of the Hindoo Koosh in Balkh, Kundus, and Khulm have been welded into one effective whole, the strength of which may be computed at 10,000 men. This force is under the immediate command of the Afghan governor of Balkh, and garrisons the places mentioned, as well as the fords of the Oxus. The rulers of Maimenè, Thiborgan, Badakshan, and Wakhan retain their old nondescript armies. But these forces are outside the Afghan army proper, and Shere Ali has only indirectly been interested in their formation. The Cabul army has been his special design, and upon its value he must now mainly rely. The Afghan army is an exact copy of the English and Anglo-Indian. There are 57 regiments of the line, distinguished from each other by its number alone. Of these 50 are armed with rifles. In addition they carry a bayonet, although this is not uniformly the case, for some regiments carry a sword instead of the bayonet. Their gun is the Enfield, mostly obtained from this country. The seven remaining regiments were not properly equipped three years ago; but they may be now. The regular strength of a regiment is 650 bayonets, and in estimating the total strength of the Afghan army each regiment may be fairly taken at that figure. Shere Ali has therefore 37,000 regular infantry, and these have for eight years been drilled and trained by native instructors who have in many cases served in our own army. The cavalry is composed of 16 regular regiments and 8000 irregular horsemen. Each regiment is composed of four troops of 100 men to each troop, and there are nominally 6400 regular cavalry in Cabul. The effective strength is probably a fourth less. The irregular cavalry is probably composed of levies from the Usbegs of Kundus, and from the people of Zemindewar. The artillery is estimated to number 100 guns in use, and another 100 in reserve. This does not include those mounted in the various fortresses. His field artillery may be stated at 30 pieces, or five batteries. He has therefore a regular army of 42,000 men and 30 guns. This army is divided between Jellalabad, Cabul, Ghazni, and Candahar, and it is now in all probability mainly concentrated at the first and last of these places. In addition to these regular troops, who will fight so long as they are paid, Shere Ali has the old militia force; but its value has decreased with the creation of a regular army. There are also the Jezailchees—3500 strong—an irregular body of riflemen armed with the old jezail, who are subject to some discipline and fairly under control. From the Herat and Usbeg armies he might also draw a contingent of disciplined troops of at least 10,000 men. He has constructed gun, rifle, and percussion cap factories, and even warehouses for the storing of clothes. The Afghan soldier no longer wears the cast-off garments of the Anglo-Indian, but appears on parade in the national costume of the Afghan State. Shere Ali's cavalry is probably more formidable than his foot, which has yet to make an acquaintance with rockets and shells, but it would be rash to despise the Afghan soldier. Those who saw our Pathan soldiers in the Umbeyla and other frontier wars best know what an Afghan can do in the way of daring, and those who have read of the cavalry fight at Purwandurrah will remember the quality of Afghan horse soldiers. Shere Ali has a regular army; of that we may be certain. It will bear the brunt of a war with us, and on its capacity will depend exclusively the fortune of the earlier portion of the war. The composition of that army has been shown in the preceding lines; but its real efficiency can only be gauged in actual warfare. It may be a more efficient weapon, in military parlance, than the old force of Dost Mahomed, but it may, in its creation, have so alienated Afghan sympathy from Shere Ali, that he is relatively weaker than his father was in 1839, or than his brother, Akbar, in 1841.

THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE FORCES GATHERING.

THE OPERATIONS AT FORT ALI MUSJID.

(By Eastern Telegraph.)
(from our own correspondent.)
ALLAHABAD, Tuesday.

Reinforcements from Peshawur were at once sent forward to Jumrood on the receipt of the news of the appearance of a strong Afghan force in a threatening attitude near that post. General Ross has now seven infantry regiments and three batteries collected there. This force he considered to be sufficient to clear the lower pass and to assault the fort of Ali Musjid, and he was preparing for an advance when he received orders to wait until further reinforcements should reach him, as it was thought unadvisable to run even the slightest risk of a check at Ali Musjid, the position being an extremely strong one.

It is the general opinion of military men that the delay is a wise one, as, although the Afghan forces will no doubt receive large accessions of strength from the Momunds and other sources, the difference of numbers will not sensibly affect the result of the fighting, as they cannot stand before the attack of our troops, except at the position of Ali Musjid, and here they will be dislodged by artillery, rockets, and flanking fire from surrounding heights. The fact that the Khyberees are friendly to us will greatly assist us in our operations against the fort.

There is no news of the advance of the column from Dera Ghazi Khan, but orders were sent two days since for it to move forward at once. It is a question, however, whether sufficient transport has yet been collected to enable this order to be carried into effect.

There is a considerable movement of troops towards the frontiers from Lahore, Umballa, and, indeed, most of the stations on the way down.

There is no news as yet of our Envoy, Nawab Golam Hassain, and fears are entertained for his safety.

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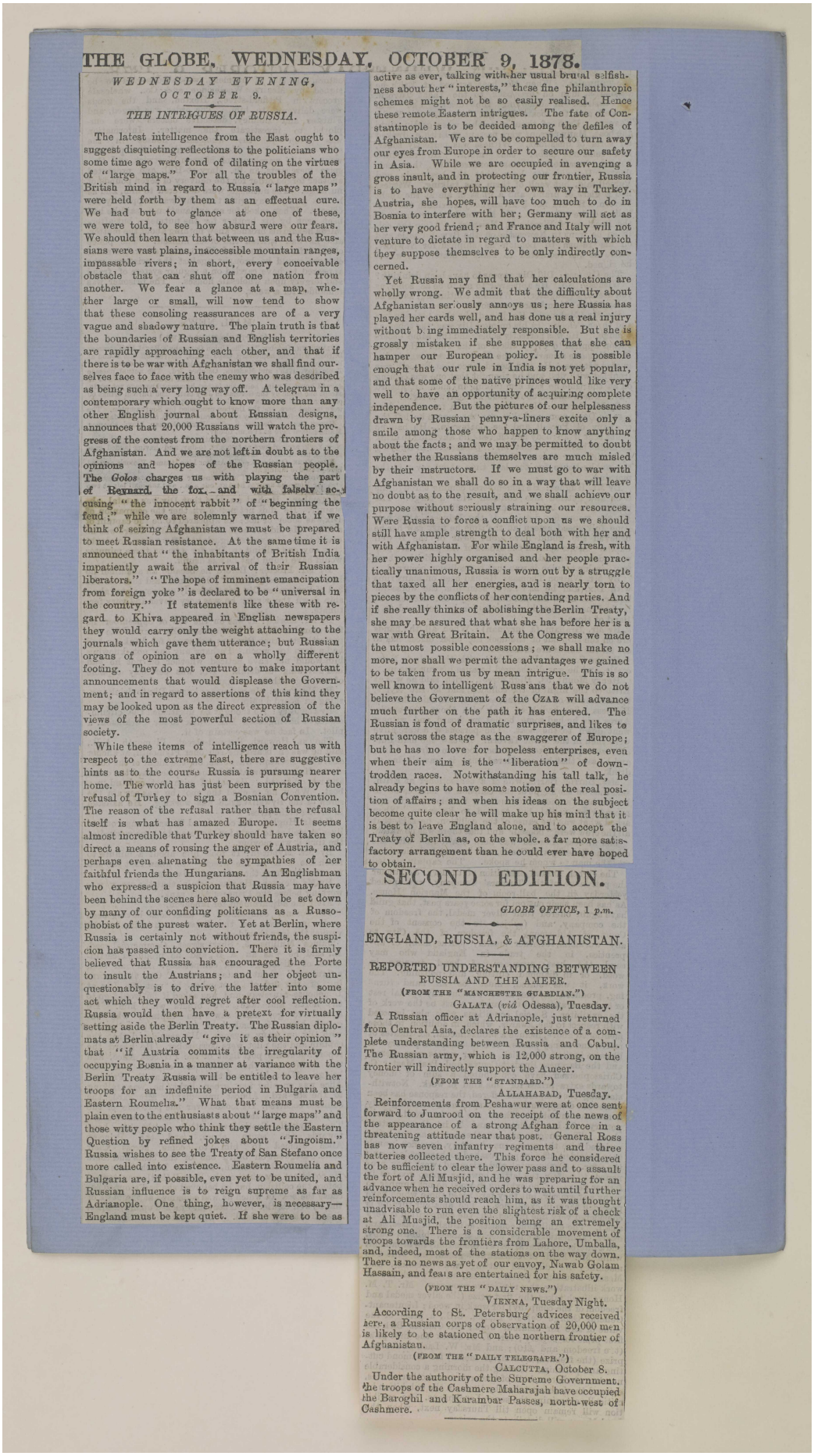

THE GLOBE, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1878.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 9.

THE INTRIGUES OF RUSSIA.

The latest intelligence from the East ought to suggest disquieting reflections to the politicians who some time ago were fond of dilating on the virtues of "large maps." For all the troubles of the British mind in regard to Russia "large maps" were held forth by them as an effectual cure. We had but to glance at one of these, we were told, to see how absurd were our fears. We should then learn that between us and the Russians were vast plains, inaccessible mountain ranges, impassable rivers; in short, every conceivable obstacle that can shut off one nation from another. We fear a glance at a map, whether large or small, will now tend to show that these consoling reassurances are of a very vague and shadowy nature. The plain truth is that the boundaries of Russian and English territories are rapidly approaching each other, and that if there is to be war with Afghanistan we shall find ourselves face to face with the enemy who was described as being such a very long way off. A telegram in a contemporary which ought to know more than any other English journal about Russian designs, announces that 20,000 Russians will watch the progress of the contest from the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. And we are not left in doubt as to the opinions and hopes of the Russian people. The *Golos* charges us with playing the part of Reynard the fox, and with falsely accusing "the innocent rabbit" of "beginning the feud;" while we are solemnly warned that if we think of seizing Afghanistan we must be prepared to meet Russian resistance. At the same time it is announced that "the inhabitants of British India impatiently await the arrival of their Russian liberators." "The hope of imminent emancipation from foreign yoke" is declared to be "universal in the country." If statements like these with regard to Khiva appeared in English newspapers they would carry only the weight attaching to the journals which gave them utterance; but Russian organs of opinion are on a wholly different footing. They do not venture to make important announcements that would displease the Government; and in regard to assertions of this kind they may be looked upon as the direct expression of the views of the most powerful section of Russian society.

While these items of intelligence reach us with respect to the extreme East, there are suggestive hints as to the course Russia is pursuing nearer home. The world has just been surprised by the refusal of Turkey to sign a Bosnian Convention. The reason of the refusal rather than the refusal itself is what has amazed Europe. It seems almost incredible that Turkey should have taken so direct a means of rousing the anger of Austria, and perhaps even alienating the sympathies of her faithful friends the Hungarians. An Englishman who expressed a suspicion that Russia may have been behind the scenes here also would be set down by many of our confiding politicians as a Russophobist of the purest water. Yet at Berlin, where Russia is certainly not without friends, the suspicion has passed into conviction. There it is firmly believed that Russia has encouraged the Porte to insult the Austrians; and her object unquestionably is to drive the latter into some act which they would regret after cool reflection. Russia would then have a pretext for virtually setting aside the Berlin Treaty. The Russian diplomats at Berlin already "give it as their opinion" that "if Austria commits the irregularity of occupying Bosnia in a manner at variance with the Berlin Treaty Russia will be entitled to leave her troops for an indefinite period in Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia." What that means must be plain even to the enthusiasts about "large maps" and those witty people who think they settle the Eastern Question by refined jokes about "Jingoism." Russia wishes to see the Treaty of San Stefano once more called into existence. Eastern Roumelia and Bulgaria are, if possible, even yet to be united, and Russian influence is to reign supreme as far as Adrianople. One thing, however, is necessary—England must be kept quiet. If she were to be as active as ever, talking with her usual brutal selfishness about her "interests," these fine philanthropic schemes might not be so easily realised. Hence these remote Eastern intrigues. The fate of Constantinople is to be decided among the defiles of Afghanistan. We are to be compelled to turn away our eyes from Europe in order to secure our safety in Asia. While we are occupied in avenging a gross insult, and in protecting our frontier, Russia is to have everything her own way in Turkey. Austria, she hopes, will have too much to do in Bosnia to interfere with her; Germany will act as her very good friend; and France and Italy will not venture to dictate in regard to matters with which they suppose themselves to be only indirectly concerned.

Yet Russia may find that her calculations are wholly wrong. We admit that the difficulty about Afghanistan seriously annoys us; here Russia has played her cards well, and has done us a real injury without being immediately responsible. But she is grossly mistaken if she supposes that she can hamper our European policy. It is possible enough that our rule in India is not yet popular, and that some of the native princes would like very well to have an opportunity of acquiring complete independence. But the pictures of our helplessness drawn by Russian penny-a-liners excite only a smile among those who happen to know anything about the facts; and we may be permitted to doubt whether the Russians themselves are much misled by their instructors. If we must go to war with Afghanistan we shall do so in a way that will leave no doubt as to the result, and we shall achieve our purpose without seriously straining our resources. Were Russia to force a conflict upon us we should still have ample strength to deal both with her and with Afghanistan. For while England is fresh, with her power highly organised and her people practically unanimous, Russia is worn out by a struggle that taxed all her energies, and is nearly torn to pieces by the conflicts of her contending parties. And if she really thinks of abolishing the Berlin Treaty, she may be assured that what she has before her is a war with Great Britain. At the Congress we made the utmost possible concessions; we shall make no more, nor shall we permit the advantages we gained to be taken from us by mean intrigue. This is so well known to intelligent Russians that we do not believe the Government of the CZAR will advance much further on the path it has entered. The Russian is fond of dramatic surprises, and likes to strut across the stage as the swaggerer of Europe; but he has no love for hopeless enterprises, even when their aim is the "liberation" of downtrodden races. Notwithstanding his tall talk, he already begins to have some notion of the real position of affairs; and when his ideas on the subject become quite clear he will make up his mind that it is best to leave England alone, and to accept the Treaty of Berlin as, on the whole, a far more satisfactory arrangement than he could ever have hoped to obtain.

SECOND EDITION.

GLOBE OFFICE, 1 p.m.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, & AFGHANISTAN.

REPORTED UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE AMEER.

(FROM THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.")

GALATA (*vid* Odessa), Tuesday.

A Russian officer at Adrianople, just returned from Central Asia, declares the existence of a complete understanding between Russia and Cabul. The Russian army, which is 12,000 strong, on the frontier will indirectly support the Ameer.

(FROM THE "STANDARD.")

ALLAHABAD, Tuesday.

Reinforcements from Peshawur were at once sent forward to Jumrood on the receipt of the news of the appearance of a strong Afghan force in a threatening attitude near that post. General Ross has now seven infantry regiments and three batteries collected there. This force he considered to be sufficient to clear the lower pass and to assault the fort of Ali Musjid, and he was preparing for an advance when he received orders to wait until further reinforcements should reach him, as it was thought unadvisable to run even the slightest risk of a check at Ali Musjid, the position being an extremely strong one. There is a considerable movement of troops towards the frontiers from Lahore, Umballa, and, indeed, most of the stations on the way down. There is no news as yet of our envoy, Nawab Golam Hassain, and fears are entertained for his safety.

(FROM THE "DAILY NEWS.")

VIENNA, Tuesday Night.

According to St. Petersburg advices received here, a Russian corps of observation of 20,000 men is likely to be stationed on the northern frontier of Afghanistan.

(FROM THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH.")

CALCUTTA, October 8.

Under the authority of the Supreme Government, the troops of the Cashmere Maharajah have occupied the Baroghil and Karambar Passes, north-west of Cashmere.

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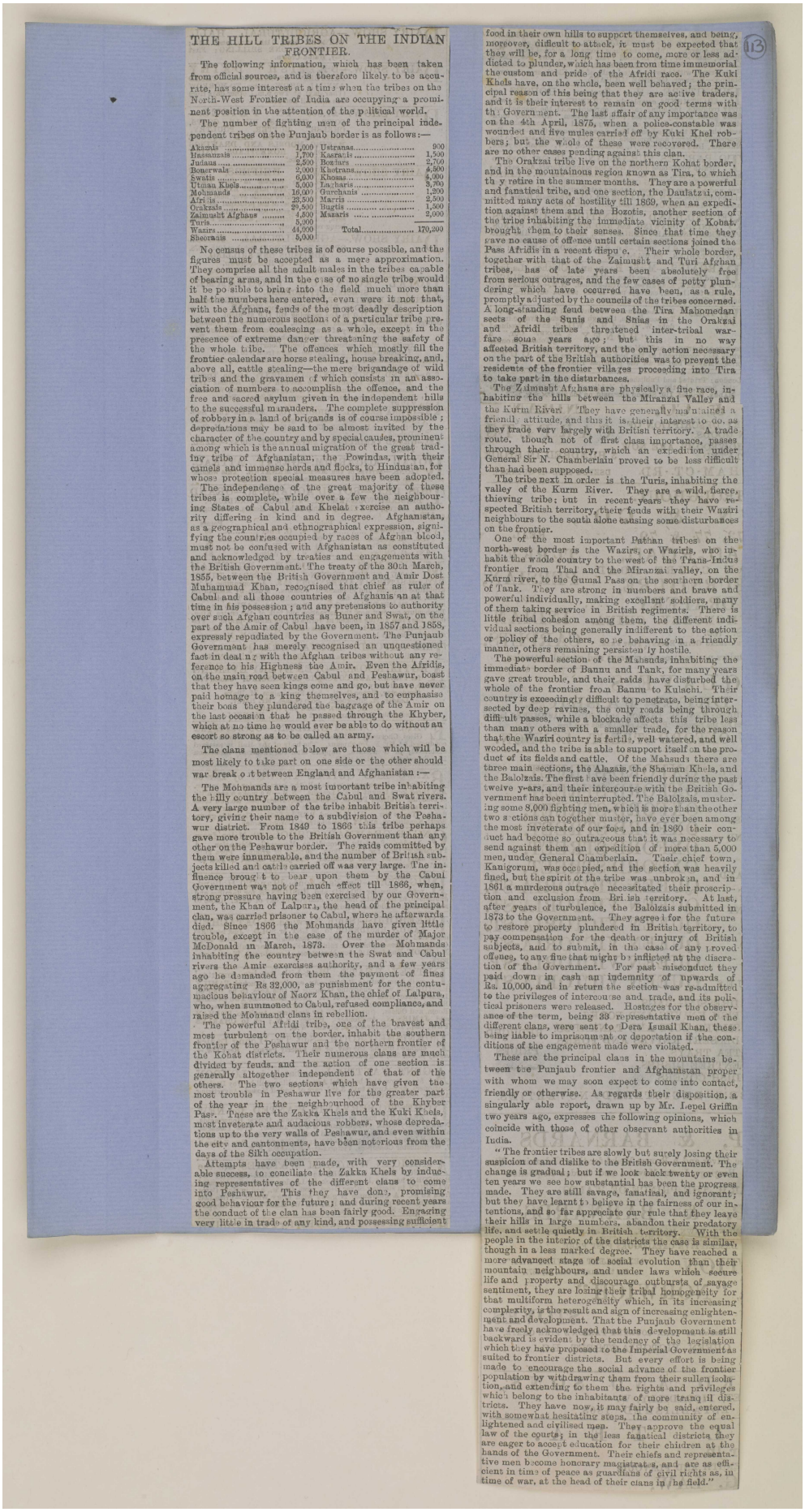

THE HILL TRIBES ON THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

The following information, which has been taken from official sources, and is therefore likely to be accurate, has some interest at a time when the tribes on the North-West Frontier of India are occupying a prominent position in the attention of the political world.

The number of fighting men of the principal independent tribes on the Punjaub border is as follows:—

Akazais	1,000	Ustranas	900
Hassanzais	1,700	Kazrais	1,500
Judans	2,500	Bozdars	2,700
Bonerwals	2,000	Khetrans	4,500
Swatis	6,000	Khosas	4,000
Utman Khels	5,000	Lachanis	3,700
Mohmands	16,000	Gurchanis	1,200
Afridis	25,500	Marris	2,500
Orakzais	9,500	Bugtis	1,500
Zaimusht Afghans	4,800	Mazaris	2,000
Turis	5,000		
Wazirs	44,000	Total	170,200
Sheoranis	5,000		

No census of these tribes is of course possible, and the figures must be accepted as a mere approximation. They comprise all the adult males in the tribes capable of bearing arms, and in the case of no single tribe would it be possible to bring into the field much more than half the numbers here entered, even were it not that, with the Afghans, feuds of the most deadly description between the numerous sections of a particular tribe prevent them from coalescing as a whole, except in the presence of extreme danger threatening the safety of the whole tribe. The offences which mostly fill the frontier calendar are horse stealing, house breaking, and, above all, cattle stealing—the mere brigandage of wild tribes and the gravamen of which consists in an association of numbers to accomplish the offence, and the free and sacred asylum given in the independent hills to the successful marauders. The complete suppression of robbery in a land of brigands is of course impossible; depredations may be said to be almost invited by the character of the country and by special causes, prominent among which is the annual migration of the great trading tribe of Afghanistan, the Powindas, with their camels and immense herds and flocks, to Hindustan, for whose protection special measures have been adopted.

The independence of the great majority of these tribes is complete, while over a few the neighbouring States of Cabul and Kheiat exercise an authority differing in kind and in degree. Afghanistan, as a geographical and ethnographical expression, signifying the countries occupied by races of Afghan blood, must not be confused with Afghanistan as constituted and acknowledged by treaties and engagements with the British Government. The treaty of the 30th March, 1855, between the British Government and Amir Dost Muhammad Khan, recognised that chief as ruler of Cabul and all those countries of Afghanistan at that time in his possession; and any pretensions to authority over such Afghan countries as Buner and Swat, on the part of the Amir of Cabul have been, in 1857 and 1858, expressly repudiated by the Government. The Punjaub Government has merely recognised an unquestioned fact in dealing with the Afghan tribes without any reference to his Highness the Amir. Even the Afridis, on the main road between Cabul and Peshawur, boast that they have seen kings come and go, but have never paid homage to a king themselves, and to emphasise their boast they plundered the baggage of the Amir on the last occasion that he passed through the Khyber, which at no time he would ever be able to do without an escort so strong as to be called an army.

The clans mentioned below are those which will be most likely to take part on one side or the other should war break out between England and Afghanistan:—

The Mohmands are a most important tribe inhabiting the hilly country between the Cabul and Swat rivers. A very large number of the tribe inhabit British territory, giving their name to a subdivision of the Peshawur district. From 1849 to 1866 this tribe perhaps gave more trouble to the British Government than any other on the Peshawur border. The raids committed by them were innumerable, and the number of British subjects killed and cattle carried off was very large. The influence brought to bear upon them by the Cabul Government was not of much effect till 1866, when, strong pressure having been exercised by our Government, the Khan of Lalpura, the head of the principal clan, was carried prisoner to Cabul, where he afterwards died. Since 1866 the Mohmands have given little trouble, except in the case of the murder of Major McDonald in March, 1873. Over the Mohmands inhabiting the country between the Swat and Cabul rivers the Amir exercises authority, and a few years ago he demanded from them the payment of fines aggregating Rs 32,000, as punishment for the contumacious behaviour of Naora Khan, the chief of Lalpura, who, when summoned to Cabul, refused compliance, and raised the Mohmand clans in rebellion.

The powerful Afridi tribe, one of the bravest and most turbulent on the border, inhabit the southern frontier of the Peshawur and the northern frontier of the Kohat districts. Their numerous clans are much divided by feuds, and the action of one section is generally altogether independent of that of the others. The two sections which have given the most trouble in Peshawur live for the greater part of the year in the neighbourhood of the Khyber Pass. These are the Zakka Khels and the Kuki Khels, most inveterate and audacious robbers, whose depredations up to the very walls of Peshawur, and even within the city and cantonments, have been notorious from the days of the Sikh occupation.

Attempts have been made, with very considerable success, to conciliate the Zakka Khels by inducing representatives of the different clans to come into Peshawur. This they have done, promising good behaviour for the future; and during recent years the conduct of the clan has been fairly good. Engaging very little in trade of any kind, and possessing sufficient food in their own hills to support themselves, and being, moreover, difficult to attack, it must be expected that they will be, for a long time to come, more or less addicted to plunder, which has been from time immemorial the custom and pride of the Afridi race. The Kuki Khels have, on the whole, been well behaved; the principal reason of this being that they are active traders, and it is their interest to remain on good terms with the Government. The last affair of any importance was on the 4th April, 1875, when a police-constable was wounded and five mules carried off by Kuki Khel robbers; but the whole of these were recovered. There are no other cases pending against this clan.

The Orakzai tribe live on the northern Kohat border, and in the mountainous region known as Tira, to which they retire in the summer months. They are a powerful and fanatical tribe, and one section, the Daulatzai, committed many acts of hostility till 1869, when an expedition against them and the Bozotis, another section of the tribe inhabiting the immediate vicinity of Kohat, brought them to their senses. Since that time they gave no cause of offence until certain sections joined the Pass Afridis in a recent dispute. Their whole border, together with that of the Zaimusht and Turi Afghan tribes, has of late years been absolutely free from serious outrages, and the few cases of petty plundering which have occurred have been, as a rule, promptly adjusted by the councils of the tribes concerned. A long-standing feud between the Tira Mahomedan sects of the Sunis and Shias in the Orakzai and Afridi tribes threatened inter-tribal warfare some years ago; but this in no way affected British territory, and the only action necessary on the part of the British authorities was to prevent the residents of the frontier villages proceeding into Tira to take part in the disturbances.

The Zaimusht Afghans are physically a fine race, inhabiting the hills between the Miranzai Valley and the Kurm River. They have generally maintained a friendly attitude, and this it is their interest to do, as they trade very largely with British territory. A trade route, though not of first class importance, passes through their country, which an expedition under General Sir N. Chamberlain proved to be less difficult than had been supposed.

The tribe next in order is the Turis, inhabiting the valley of the Kurm River. They are a wild, fierce, thieving tribe; but in recent years they have respected British territory, their feuds with their Waziri neighbours to the south alone causing some disturbances on the frontier.

One of the most important Pathan tribes on the north-west border is the Wazirs, or Waziris, who inhabit the whole country to the west of the Trans-Indus frontier from Thal and the Miranzai valley, on the Kurm river, to the Gumal Pass on the southern border of Tank. They are strong in numbers and brave and powerful individually, making excellent soldiers, many of them taking service in British regiments. There is little tribal cohesion among them, the different individual sections being generally indifferent to the action or policy of the others, some behaving in a friendly manner, others remaining persistently hostile.

The powerful section of the Mahsuds, inhabiting the immediate border of Bannu and Tank, for many years gave great trouble, and their raids have disturbed the whole of the frontier from Bannu to Kulachi. Their country is exceedingly difficult to penetrate, being intersected by deep ravines, the only roads being through difficult passes, while a blockade affects this tribe less than many others with a smaller trade, for the reason that the Waziri country is fertile, well watered, and well wooded, and the tribe is able to support itself on the product of its fields and cattle. Of the Mahsuds there are three main sections, the Alazais, the Shaman Khels, and the Baloizais. The first have been friendly during the past twelve years, and their intercourse with the British Government has been uninterrupted. The Baloizais, mustering some 8,000 fighting men, which is more than the other two sections can together muster, have ever been among the most inveterate of our foes, and in 1860 their conduct had become so outrageous that it was necessary to send against them an expedition of more than 5,000 men, under General Chamberlain. Their chief town, Kanigoram, was occupied, and the section was heavily fined, but the spirit of the tribe was unbroken, and in 1861 a murderous outrage necessitated their proscription and exclusion from British territory. At last, after years of turbulence, the Baloizais submitted in 1873 to the Government. They agreed for the future to restore property plundered in British territory, to pay compensation for the death or injury of British subjects, and to submit, in the case of any proved offence, to any fine that might be inflicted at the discretion of the Government. For past misconduct they paid down in cash an indemnity of upwards of Rs. 10,000, and in return the section was re-admitted to the privileges of intercourse and trade, and its political prisoners were released. Hostages for the observance of the term, being 30 representative men of the different clans, were sent to Dera Ismail Khan, these being liable to imprisonment or deportation if the conditions of the engagement made were violated.

These are the principal clans in the mountains between the Punjaub frontier and Afghanistan proper with whom we may soon expect to come into contact, friendly or otherwise. As regards their disposition, a singularly able report, drawn up by Mr. Lepel Griffin two years ago, expresses the following opinions, which coincide with those of other observant authorities in India.

"The frontier tribes are slowly but surely losing their suspicion of and dislike to the British Government. The change is gradual; but if we look back twenty or even ten years we see how substantial has been the progress made. They are still savage, fanatical, and ignorant; but they have learnt to believe in the fairness of our intentions, and so far appreciate our rule that they leave their hills in large numbers, abandon their predatory life, and settle quietly in British territory. With the people in the interior of the districts the case is similar, though in a less marked degree. They have reached a more advanced stage of social evolution than their mountain neighbours, and under laws which secure life and property and discourage outbursts of savage sentiment, they are losing their tribal homogeneity for that multiform heterogeneity which, in its increasing complexity, is the result and sign of increasing enlightenment and development. That the Punjaub Government have freely acknowledged that this development is still backward is evident by the tendency of the legislation which they have proposed to the Imperial Government as suited to frontier districts. But every effort is being made to encourage the social advance of the frontier population by withdrawing them from their sullen isolation, and extending to them the rights and privileges which belong to the inhabitants of more tranquil districts. They have now, it may fairly be said, entered, with somewhat hesitating steps, the community of enlightened and civilised men. They approve the equal law of the courts; in the less fanatical districts they are eager to accept education for their children at the hands of the Government. Their chiefs and representative men become honorary magistrates, and are as efficient in time of peace as guardians of civil rights as, in time of war, at the head of their clans in the field."

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SPEECHES OUT OF PARLIAMENT.

Colonel Loyd Lindsay, M.P., speaking last night at the dinner of the Royal East Berks Agricultural Association at Maidenhead, said:—Her Majesty's Ministers when they went to Berlin were not quite so silly as their political opponents appeared to have wished them to be. They did something to support their eloquent words; they put the army on a war footing, and they strengthened the navy with guns and with men, and having done so they made no secret of their firm resolution to use both the one and the other in case their moderate and well-considered demands were not accepted by the belligerents. In that way peace was preserved, and "peace with honour." He continued—The interest which we find in examining these events, which are now of the past, is greatly increased by the effect which they may have with reference to the future. We can to some extent judge of the future by studying the past, and the study of the past gives us confidence that the same firm hands which guided the nation in the critical times which we have just passed through will continue to direct it in any difficulties which may be before us. There are two causes which have contributed to startle the country in connection with the news which reaches us from India—the recollection of the calamities which overtook our soldiers nearly forty years ago in those regions, and the supposition, not altogether unreasonable, that Russia is raising a spirit of disaffection against us among those warlike tribes that inhabit Afghanistan. But the same straightforward policy, accompanied by the steady military preparation which succeeded so well with Russia the other day, will probably have the same influence with her now, and convince her that she had better be circumspect and moderate. Russia aside, it only remains for us to deal with a turbulent chief of a half-civilised tribe, inhabiting regions which can only be reached by dangerous and difficult mountain passes. These must be cautiously and skilfully traversed, but the superiority of our rifles and the military skill of our commanders can leave no doubt as to a speedy settlement of any difficulty on the north-west frontier of our Empire. Our position with regard to these tribes has been quiescent, and we have wished it to continue to be so; but if compelled to action we shall go on our way conscious that if danger approaches from any quarter we are ready to meet it.

Mr. Walter, M.P., in responding to the toast of the county members at the same dinner, said it would be premature to attempt at present to write, or even to sketch, the history of the Eastern Question, or to speculate as to what the results were likely to be. Probably when the historian came to tell the story he would say that Russia thought the time had come for her to settle the Eastern Question in her own fashion, and that England would quietly stand by and allow her to do so. He would also be bound to admit that Turkey had given too much reason for such an anticipation on the part of Russia by her scandalous misgovernment, and by adopting a line of policy which rendered it impossible for England to take a course similar to that which she adopted at the time of the Crimean war. His own view of the Eastern Question, without going into party politics, was that the decline and fall of the Turkish Empire was only a question of time. Nothing could arrest it, and this country was determined not to allow Russia to take the place of the Turkish Empire. He could not help thinking that the compromise arrived at in the Conference at Berlin was on the whole about the best that could have been effected in the circumstances. He was disposed to give to Lord Beaconsfield full credit for the decided stand he made in reference to the Balkan frontier line, and also for his course of policy in bringing the Indian troops to Europe—a course which showed all Europe that England was thoroughly in earnest. With regard to the frontier difficulty in India, it certainly seemed to him that England was likely to be drawn into war with the Ameer of Afghanistan. The difficulty, however, was to get to the truth of matters in this respect. All the information they had on the subject differed widely. On one hand they were told that Russian intrigue was at the bottom of the whole business. On the other it was gravely asserted that the difficulty arose from difference of opinion between the Ameer of Afghanistan and his mother-in-law, who was in the habit of boxing the ears of her august relative with a slipper (a laugh). Whatever the truth might be, he would simply wish to advise a policy of caution.

Last evening at Leeds, Sir Henry Havelock, M.P., presided over a missionary meeting, and referring to the Afghan difficulty, he declared that our dispute was not with a half-savage ruler, but to prevent our rule in India being disturbed by a Power behind, which Power, if it prevailed to break down our rule in India, certainly, to say the least, would not advance the cause of true religion. If we were about merely to avenge an insult, he would not countenance it, for it was no Christian duty to take up arms for revenge; but it was our duty to maintain the tranquillity of the British rule.

THE EX-EMIR OF KASHGARIA.

We hear from St. Petersburg that Bek-Kooli Beg, the ex-Emir of Kashgaria, has entered the Russian service, and has been temporarily appointed in command of some troops cantoned in the Chemkent district. Pensions have also been granted to the leading Kashgarian officials who accompanied him in his flight.

THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

The latest intelligence from India of an apparently trustworthy sort shows an important concentration of British troops at the mouth of the Khyber, while Shere Ali has despatched several regiments to reinforce Ali Musjid. The *Daily News* speaks of this Afghan movement as threatening "an incursion into our territory." Nothing could suit us better, but we hesitate to credit the Ameer with such downright insanity as that would come to. No one knows better than he that his soldiers would not stand the slightest chance against our better disciplined and better armed troops if the former once quitted their own ground for the plains. If Shere Ali has reinforced Ali Musjid his motive unquestionably is to block the road to Cabul, while it may be that the principal object of our concentration at Jumrood is to detain a considerable portion of the Afghan army on the Khyber route to the capital while we develop solid attacks in other directions. Our contemporary also fails to understand why the fort at Jumrood "has not always been occupied by a strong detachment." There are two very good and sufficient reasons for the omission. In the first place, Peshawur, with its garrison of from 8,000 to 10,000 men, is within three hours' march of the fort, and therefore absolutely commands the exit from the pass. Secondly, Jumrood is a positive Inferno, being situated as it is under great rocky bluffs, which keep off every breath of air, while radiating a tremendous heat all round, even during comparatively cool weather. No earthly purpose could have been served by occupying the place in strength so long as the force at Peshawur was in a condition to throw forward a detachment at any moment. As regards the question of transport, into which some of our contemporaries are entering, this forms undoubtedly one of the chief difficulties of the situation. Elephants would be very suitable, but unfortunately there are very few of these animals in the Peshawur Valley and its neighbourhood. Native carts, of course, would be useless in the hills, even if they could be obtained in sufficient numbers, which they cannot. The expeditions will, therefore, have chiefly to depend upon camels, and any number of these could be procured from the Punjaub. But the Indian camel makes poor work of it on rough, hilly ground, and it would be rash, therefore, to trust too much to this form of transport. The camels which come down with goods from Afghanistan and the Khanates are, however, eminently suitable for our purposes, and as a good many of these must now be passing through the Punjaub on their return journey, we may expect to find them largely employed with the expeditions.

THE INDIAN FRONTIER.

The *Daily Telegraph* observes:—"At any moment we might now hear of that first shot having been fired upon the Indian frontier which would echo all over Asia, and be the commencement of a third Afghan war. The British troops must be by this time in some force within and near Jamrood, which lies about five miles from the actual entrance of the Khyber Pass. Not very far up the valley, although inside the gorges opening thence, stands upon a lofty rock the square-shaped fortress of Ali Musjid, which is the present frontier post of Shere Ali Khan, and has a garrison said to have been recently strengthened by four regiments of Afghan fighting men. It is an easy day's march from Jamrood to this stronghold, and the intervening vale and pass are full of caves in the nearly-perpendicular rocks, which furnish the ordinary abodes of Khyberees and Momunds, and would probably now be occupied by some of Shere Ali's outposts. At any time a body of these may descend into the plain of which Jamrood marks the verge, and exchange warlike salutations there with our vedettes; while at Quetta, which cannot yet have been sufficiently reinforced, Afghan horsemen are said to have been seen reconnoitring on the Candahar road, as if half inclined to make a dash at the British cantonment. Lord Lytton's Government is on the alert all round the frontier. In Cashmere we have a friendly prince who, in name independent, yet gladly acknowledges substantial fealty to her Majesty; and this ruler, Rungbeer Singh, is the guardian of some very important gateways of India. Two of them, the Baroghil and the Karambar, might possibly become of real moment in certain eventualities, and it is satisfactory to hear that these passes have been occupied in force by the troops of the Maharajah of Cashmere. Rungbeer Singh's army consists of about 17,000 men, we believe, fairly drilled and armed, and accustomed to the climate of these lofty passes, which lead from the basin of the Oxus into that of the Indus, and the lowest point among which amounts to 12,000 feet above the sea level. At that elevation the ice and snow are sufficient barriers against any hostile visitor during the winter; but the passages are open at present, and will remain so for some weeks, while between them and the Russian frontier at Khodjend and Khokand there is nothing save the Southern Pamir. It is upon ourselves, however, that we must finally rely for the forces and the resolution necessary to place our Indian Empire out of reach of further alarms; and though, perhaps, less may be communicated in future about the movements and objects of our troops, it should not, therefore, be imagined that the slightest disinclination exists on the part of the Home and Indian Governments to confront the present crisis, with all its perils and all its opportunities."

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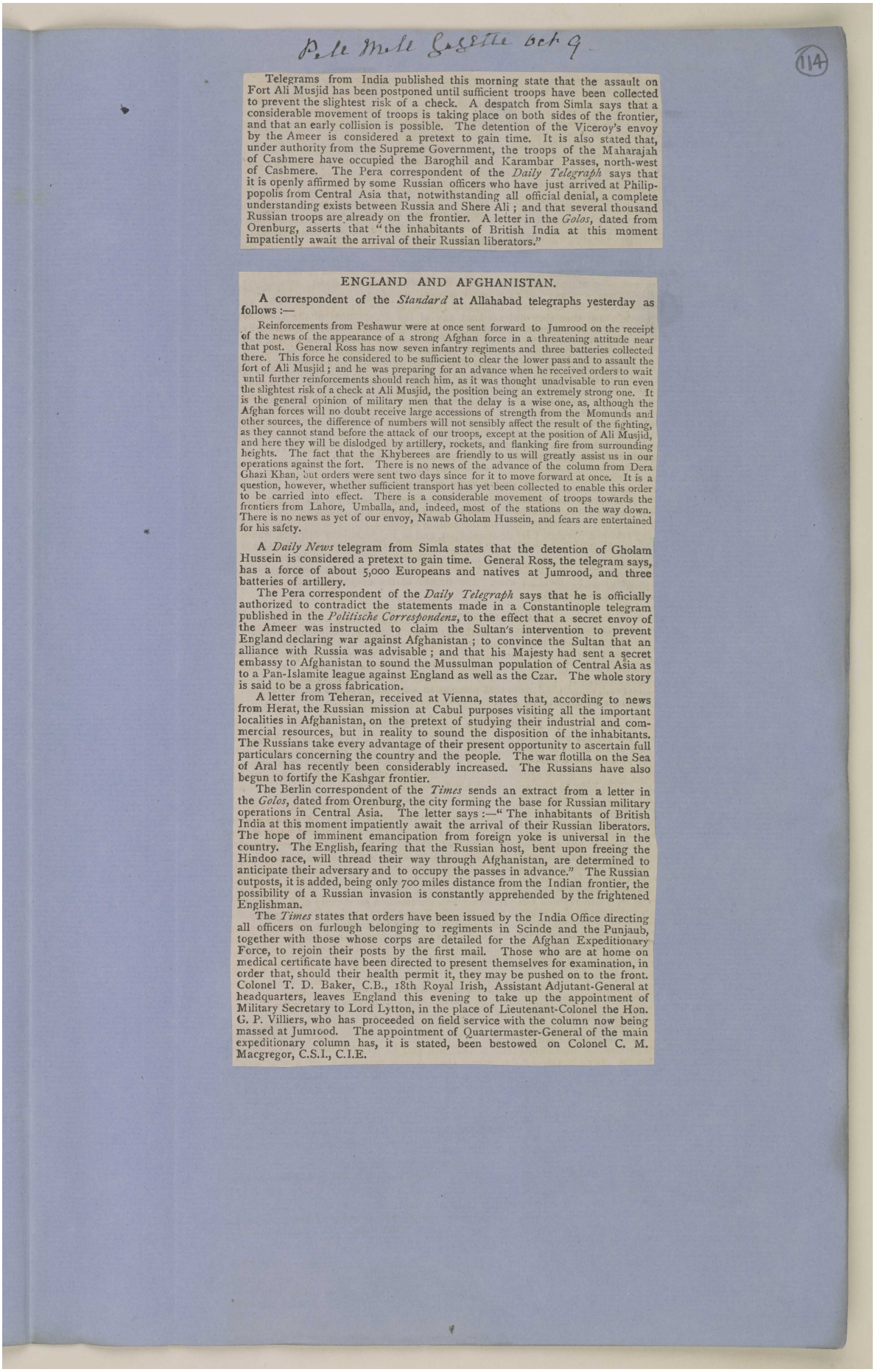

Pall Mall Gazette Oct 9

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Telegrams from India published this morning state that the assault on Fort Ali Musjid has been postponed until sufficient troops have been collected to prevent the slightest risk of a check. A despatch from Simla says that a considerable movement of troops is taking place on both sides of the frontier, and that an early collision is possible. The detention of the Viceroy's envoy by the Ameer is considered a pretext to gain time. It is also stated that, under authority from the Supreme Government, the troops of the Maharajah of Cashmere have occupied the Baroghil and Karambar Passes, north-west of Cashmere. The Pera correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* says that it is openly affirmed by some Russian officers who have just arrived at Philippopolis from Central Asia that, notwithstanding all official denial, a complete understanding exists between Russia and Shere Ali; and that several thousand Russian troops are already on the frontier. A letter in the *Golos*, dated from Orenburg, asserts that "the inhabitants of British India at this moment impatiently await the arrival of their Russian liberators."

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

A correspondent of the *Standard* at Allahabad telegraphs yesterday as follows:—

Reinforcements from Peshawur were at once sent forward to Jumrood on the receipt of the news of the appearance of a strong Afghan force in a threatening attitude near that post. General Ross has now seven infantry regiments and three batteries collected there. This force he considered to be sufficient to clear the lower pass and to assault the fort of Ali Musjid; and he was preparing for an advance when he received orders to wait until further reinforcements should reach him, as it was thought unadvisable to run even the slightest risk of a check at Ali Musjid, the position being an extremely strong one. It is the general opinion of military men that the delay is a wise one, as, although the Afghan forces will no doubt receive large accessions of strength from the Momunds and other sources, the difference of numbers will not sensibly affect the result of the fighting, as they cannot stand before the attack of our troops, except at the position of Ali Musjid, and here they will be dislodged by artillery, rockets, and flanking fire from surrounding heights. The fact that the Khyberees are friendly to us will greatly assist us in our operations against the fort. There is no news of the advance of the column from Dera Ghazi Khan, but orders were sent two days since for it to move forward at once. It is a question, however, whether sufficient transport has yet been collected to enable this order to be carried into effect. There is a considerable movement of troops towards the frontiers from Lahore, Umballa, and, indeed, most of the stations on the way down. There is no news as yet of our envoy, Nawab Gholam Hussein, and fears are entertained for his safety.

A *Daily News* telegram from Simla states that the detention of Gholam Hussein is considered a pretext to gain time. General Ross, the telegram says, has a force of about 5,000 Europeans and natives at Jumrood, and three batteries of artillery.

The Pera correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* says that he is officially authorized to contradict the statements made in a Constantinople telegram published in the *Politische Correspondenz*, to the effect that a secret envoy of the Ameer was instructed to claim the Sultan's intervention to prevent England declaring war against Afghanistan; to convince the Sultan that an alliance with Russia was advisable; and that his Majesty had sent a secret embassy to Afghanistan to sound the Mussulman population of Central Asia as to a Pan-Islamite league against England as well as the Czar. The whole story is said to be a gross fabrication.

A letter from Teheran, received at Vienna, states that, according to news from Herat, the Russian mission at Cabul purposes visiting all the important localities in Afghanistan, on the pretext of studying their industrial and commercial resources, but in reality to sound the disposition of the inhabitants. The Russians take every advantage of their present opportunity to ascertain full particulars concerning the country and the people. The war flotilla on the Sea of Aral has recently been considerably increased. The Russians have also begun to fortify the Kashgar frontier.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* sends an extract from a letter in the *Golos*, dated from Orenburg, the city forming the base for Russian military operations in Central Asia. The letter says:—"The inhabitants of British India at this moment impatiently await the arrival of their Russian liberators. The hope of imminent emancipation from foreign yoke is universal in the country. The English, fearing that the Russian host, bent upon freeing the Hindoo race, will thread their way through Afghanistan, are determined to anticipate their adversary and to occupy the passes in advance." The Russian outposts, it is added, being only 700 miles distance from the Indian frontier, the possibility of a Russian invasion is constantly apprehended by the frightened Englishman.

The *Times* states that orders have been issued by the India Office directing all officers on furlough belonging to regiments in Scinde and the Punjaub, together with those whose corps are detailed for the Afghan Expeditionary Force, to rejoin their posts by the first mail. Those who are at home on medical certificate have been directed to present themselves for examination, in order that, should their health permit it, they may be pushed on to the front. Colonel T. D. Baker, C.B., 18th Royal Irish, Assistant Adjutant-General at headquarters, leaves England this evening to take up the appointment of Military Secretary to Lord Lytton, in the place of Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. G. P. Villiers, who has proceeded on field service with the column now being massed at Jumrood. The appointment of Quartermaster-General of the main expeditionary column has, it is stated, been bestowed on Colonel C. M. Macgregor, C.S.I., C.I.E.

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TIMES, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10,

LONDON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1878.

We seem to be on the brink of a war with Afghanistan, but it is still open to us either to take or to decline to take the last decisive plunge. What choice are we to make in the matter, and by what reasons are we to be determined in making it? On these important questions we publish letters this morning taking very opposite views. Earl GREY and Sir CHARLES TREVELYAN are for maintaining peace with Afghanistan. War, they argue, would be alike unjust and impolitic. "POLITICAL," on the other hand, assumes that war has become inevitable, and he is well pleased at the chance thus offered us of settling the Afghan question, once and for ever, on terms favourable to ourselves. It is worth while to examine the arguments by which these very different conclusions are reached. We will deal first with Earl GREY'S letter, as the longest and the most exhaustive. The questions it raises go pretty well over the whole ground. SHERE ALI, Earl GREY declares, has given us no such cause of offence as can justify us in declaring war upon him. His rejection of our Mission was within his right as an independent Prince, and so, too, was his acceptance of a Mission from Russia. If there was any discourtesy shown in the manner in which our Mission was turned back, it was provoked by previous discourtesy on our part. As long, therefore, as SHERE ALI abstains from aggression or from menace of aggression, we can force no quarrel upon him for anything that has as yet passed. The conclusion to which Earl GREY is thus led is further supported by a comparison of the gain and loss that might be expected from an Afghan war. If our arms were as triumphant as we could wish, if we were to overrun and subjugate Afghanistan without encountering any reverse of fortune, and almost, indeed, without resistance, we could, Earl GREY thinks, make no use of our conquest. To hold Afghanistan, if it were not a task beyond our power, would at all events cost far more than it was worth. To depose SHERE ALI and set up some other native ruler in his place is similarly an attempt against which we are warned in advance by our previous failure. We placed SHAH SHOOJAH on the throne, but we could not keep him there, and we could expect no better result now from a repetition of our old mistake. In whatever way the end came, and whatever might be the incidents and immediate consequences of an Afghan war, the end sooner or later would be that we should find ourselves compelled to retire from Afghanistan. We should thus lose the *prestige* about which we are at present so anxious, and should have succeeded only in making the Afghans and their rulers more than ever hostile to us, and better than ever suited to be made tools for the aggressive designs of Russia, supposing such designs to exist. These are the reasons of justice and of policy which lead Earl GREY to pronounce against war with Afghanistan. Our position, he admits, is a difficult one. We have said and done so much that we can hardly draw back with credit, but even so we shall lose less by drawing back at once than by going on in a wrong course, and making our ill-success more conspicuous in the end. Sir CHARLES TREVELYAN adds the advice to spend the money which a war would cost on improving our communications with Afghanistan, and developing the Afghan carrying trade between India and Central Asia. A tenth part of the money would, he thinks, be sufficient, and the result he promises for it is that we should have the Afghans as attached and useful allies, instead of what a war would leave them—jealous and suspicious neighbours.

The policy of an Afghan war may fairly be treated as an open question. But we were not, we must confess, prepared to hear that such a war at the present moment would be unjust as well as impolitic. Earl GREY'S assumption of the independence of Afghanistan is neither in agreement with the facts of the case, nor would it be sufficient for his purpose even if it were granted more fully than the facts warrant. In our past relations with Afghanistan we have always been accustomed to claim a right of interference so far as was necessary for our own safety. This claim has not only been made, but has been so far submitted to that we must deal with it as an accomplished fact. As far as we have waived it in any degree it has been from motives of mere convenience, and not from any sense that we had not the full right to insist upon it. Our agreement with Russia that she was not to consider Afghanistan as an open field for her diplomacy or her arms was, by itself, an infringement upon the full sovereignty of the country from which Russia was thus excluded, and which we thus, in a certain sense, preserved for ourselves. Nor, whatever we may think thus far about Afghanistan, can we regard SHERE ALI as in any real sense its sovereign. His power is limited by the kind of subjects over whom it professes to be exercised. We have to do, in Afghanistan, not with a settled nation, but with a loose, shifting congeries of independent or semi-independent tribes, some owning a mere nominal allegiance to SHERE ALI, and some, as we have already seen, ready to take arms against him, if we will promise them our protection. If it was in an attack by SHERE ALI on the Khyberees that the first blood was shed, would Earl GREY still assume that we had no right to take up the quarrel and move to the defence of our allies? Yet, as we point out in another column, it is by no means improbable that it will be in this way, or in some such way as this, that the war will begin. Even if it does not, we should by no means feel bound to admit that our case was much weakened. An uncivilized State has never been held to have a right to what we may term the full comity of nations. It may, from its geographical position, be drawn into the vortex of civilization whether it wishes it or not, and it is liable sometimes to rough treatment while the inevitable process is going on. Earl GREY is a bold champion of the independence of Afghanistan. But has he, we would venture to inquire, the courage of his opinions? What is true now of Afghanistan would have been equally true of other countries in the East over which our sovereignty has been established. Is Earl GREY prepared to argue that we should redress the wrongs we have thus done? Would he stake the maintenance of our Indian Empire on the result of a general *plébiscite* of the Indian people? Would he, three quarters of a century ago, have allowed Ireland to be an independent State in alliance with America or with France? He must either go as far as this, or he must consent to modify his views as to the independent rights of our troublesome and lately subsidized neighbour, Afghanistan.

But if a war with Afghanistan is impolitic, the mere fact that it would be just is no good reason why we should enter upon it. It may, indeed, as we have shown more fully in another column, be forced upon us, whether we wish it or not. A passage by SHERE ALI over our frontier, or an attack upon any of our allies beyond our frontier, would leave us no alternative. But, apart from this, the position in which we find ourselves already placed is one from which it is not easy to retreat. We have received an open insult, whether, as Earl GREY thinks, we have drawn it upon ourselves or not. We have called the attention of the whole world to it. We have expressed our resentment at it. We have announced our intention of punishing it. We have, in consequence, marched our troops right up to the gates of Afghanistan. We are told now that there is nothing for it but to march back again, to lay down our arms, and to confess practically that we have been in the wrong all through. This may be sound advice, but it is very questionable on the face of it. If we were to act as Earl GREY thinks we ought, what effect should we produce on both sides of our frontier line? It would, we fear, not be for any long time that a war could be thus avoided. We should be left more ready to take offence than ever, and SHERE ALI, we may be sure, would be not less ready to give us offence. In such circumstances war must come, and it could hardly fail to come at some time less favourable to ourselves than the present time. We have our hands free, and we are in readiness, or very nearly in readiness, to inflict a decisive blow. We may put aside the doubts and difficulties which Earl GREY suggests towards the close of his letter. There can be no question of our power to do what we please with Afghanistan. For the course we may deem it wise to follow we must wait for the guidance of events. It is premature to determine the exact conditions on which we may by and by insist. The duration of the war, the behaviour of the AMEER'S subjects, the behaviour of the AMEER himself, the point we had reached when the first proffer of submission was made, and the terms in which it was made—all these would enter as factors into the calculation, and we cannot as yet foresee any of them with certainty. What we need not doubt is that if the war with which we are threatened does come, we shall do our utmost to insure that it shall be the last. The settlement of our relations with Afghanistan must be made partly on military, partly on political grounds. They will be so made as to secure that Afghanistan shall no longer be a menace to India. We have been led by degrees to the point at which we are now standing, and the only result of drawing back from it would be that we should have to retrace our steps. Most glad should we be to avoid a war with Afghanistan, but we can accept peace only on conditions of our own choosing. As long as these are refused us, we cannot admit either that war would be impolitic or that it would be unjust. The burden is so great in any case that we have no wish to add to it by vain and perplexing doubts about the rectitude of our cause, or about the wisdom of supporting it by arms, if arms, unhappily, are needed.

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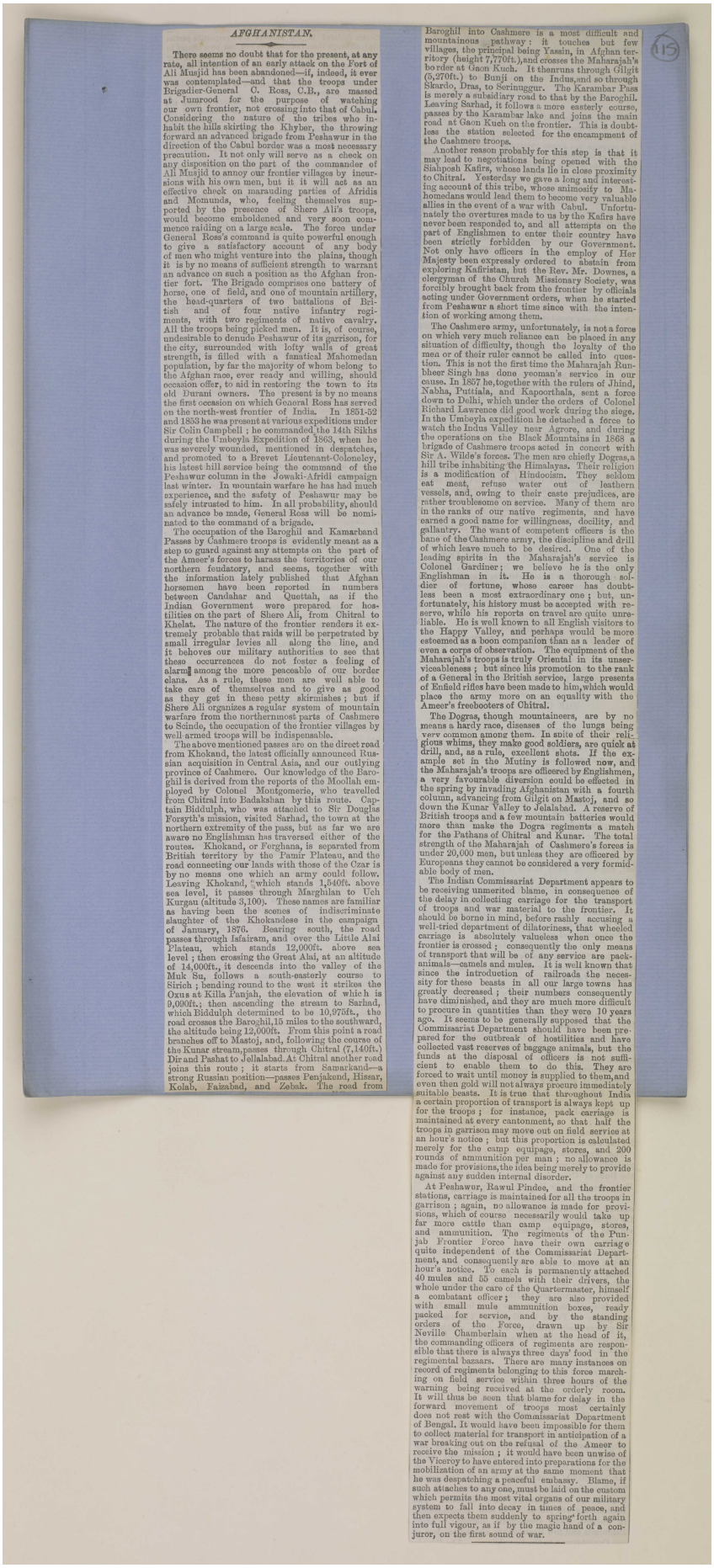

AFGHANISTAN.

There seems no doubt that for the present, at any rate, all intention of an early attack on the Fort of Ali Musjid has been abandoned—if, indeed, it ever was contemplated—and that the troops under Brigadier-General C. Ross, C.B., are massed at Jumrood for the purpose of watching our own frontier, not crossing into that of Cabul. Considering the nature of the tribes who inhabit the hills skirting the Khyber, the throwing forward an advanced brigade from Peshawur in the direction of the Cabul border was a most necessary precaution. It not only will serve as a check on any disposition on the part of the commander of Ali Musjid to annoy our frontier villages by incursions with his own men, but it it will act as an effective check on marauding parties of Afridis and Momunds, who, feeling themselves supported by the presence of Shere Ali's troops, would become emboldened and very soon commence raiding on a large scale. The force under General Ross's command is quite powerful enough to give a satisfactory account of any body of men who might venture into the plains, though it is by no means of sufficient strength to warrant an advance on such a position as the Afghan frontier fort. The Brigade comprises one battery of horse, one of field, and one of mountain artillery, the head-quarters of two battalions of British and of four native infantry regiments, with two regiments of native cavalry. All the troops being picked men. It is, of course, undesirable to denude Peshawur of its garrison, for the city, surrounded with lofty walls of great strength, is filled with a fanatical Mahomedan population, by far the majority of whom belong to the Afghan race, ever ready and willing, should occasion offer, to aid in restoring the town to its old Durani owners. The present is by no means the first occasion on which General Ross has served on the north-west frontier of India. In 1851-52 and 1853 he was present at various expeditions under Sir Colin Campbell; he commanded the 14th Sikhs during the Umbeyla Expedition of 1863, when he was severely wounded, mentioned in despatches, and promoted to a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonelcy, his latest hill service being the command of the Peshawur column in the Jowaki-Afridi campaign last winter. In mountain warfare he has had much experience, and the safety of Peshawur may be safely intrusted to him. In all probability, should an advance be made, General Ross will be nominated to the command of a brigade.

The occupation of the Baroghil and Kamarband Passes by Cashmere troops is evidently meant as a step to guard against any attempts on the part of the Ameer's forces to harass the territories of our northern feudatory, and seems, together with the information lately published that Afghan horsemen have been reported in numbers between Candahar and Quettah, as if the Indian Government were prepared for hostilities on the part of Shere Ali, from Chitral to Khelat. The nature of the frontier renders it extremely probable that raids will be perpetrated by small irregular levies all along the line, and it behoves our military authorities to see that these occurrences do not foster a feeling of alarm among the more peaceable of our border clans. As a rule, these men are well able to take care of themselves and to give as good as they get in these petty skirmishes; but if Shere Ali organizes a regular system of mountain warfare from the northernmost parts of Cashmere to Scinde, the occupation of the frontier villages by well-armed troops will be indispensable.

The above mentioned passes are on the direct road from Khokand, the latest officially announced Russian acquisition in Central Asia, and our outlying province of Cashmere. Our knowledge of the Baroghil is derived from the reports of the Moollah employed by Colonel Montgomerie, who travelled from Chitral into Badakshan by this route. Captain Biddulph, who was attached to Sir Douglas Forsyth's mission, visited Sarhad, the town at the northern extremity of the pass, but as far we are aware no Englishman has traversed either of the routes. Khokand, or Ferghana, is separated from British territory by the Pamir Plateau, and the road connecting our lands with those of the Czar is by no means one which an army could follow. Leaving Khokand, which stands 1,540ft. above sea level, it passes through Marghilan to Uch Kurgat (altitude 3,100). These names are familiar as having been the scenes of indiscriminate slaughter of the Khokandese in the campaign of January, 1876. Bearing south, the road passes through Isfairam, and over the Little Alai Plateau, which stands 12,000ft. above sea level; then crossing the Great Alai, at an altitude of 14,000ft., it descends into the valley of the Muk Su, follows a south-easterly course to Sirich; bending round to the west it strikes the Oxus at Killa Panjah, the elevation of which is 9,000ft.; then ascending the stream to Sarhad, which Biddulph determined to be 10,975ft., the road crosses the Baroghil, 15 miles to the southward, the altitude being 12,000ft. From this point a road branches off to Mastoj, and, following the course of the Kunar stream, passes through Chitral (7,140ft.) Dir and Pashat to Jellalabad. At Chitral another road joins this route; it starts from Samarkand—a strong Russian position—passes Penjakend, Hisar, Kolab, Faizabad, and Zebak. The road from Baroghil into Cashmere is a most difficult and mountainous pathway: it touches but few villages, the principal being Yassin, in Afghan territory (height 7,770ft.), and crosses the Maharajah's border at Gaon Kuch. It then runs through Gilgit (5,270ft.) to Bunji on the Indus, and so through Skardo, Dras, to Serinuggur. The Karambar Pass is merely a subsidiary road to that by the Baroghil. Leaving Sarhad, it follows a more easterly course, passes by the Karambar lake and joins the main road at Gaon Kuch on the frontier. This is doubtless the station selected for the encampment of the Cashmere troops.

Another reason probably for this step is that it may lead to negotiations being opened with the Siahposh Kafirs, whose lands lie in close proximity to Chitral. Yesterday we gave a long and interesting account of this tribe, whose animosity to Mahomedans would lead them to become very valuable allies in the event of a war with Cabul. Unfortunately the overtures made to us by the Kafirs have never been responded to, and all attempts on the part of Englishmen to enter their country have been strictly forbidden by our Government. Not only have officers in the employ of Her Majesty been expressly ordered to abstain from exploring Kafiristan, but the Rev. Mr. Downes, a clergyman of the Church Missionary Society, was forcibly brought back from the frontier by officials acting under Government orders, when he started from Peshawur a short time since with the intention of working among them.

The Cashmere army, unfortunately, is not a force on which very much reliance can be placed in any situation of difficulty, though the loyalty of the men or of their ruler cannot be called into question. This is not the first time the Maharajah Runbheer Singh has done yeoman's service in our cause. In 1857 he, together with the rulers of Jhind, Nabha, Puttiala, and Kapoorthala, sent a force down to Delhi, which under the orders of Colonel Richard Lawrence did good work during the siege. In the Umbeyla expedition he detached a force to watch the Indus Valley near Agrore, and during the operations on the Black Mountains in 1868 a brigade of Cashmere troops acted in concert with Sir A. Wilde's forces. The men are chiefly Dogras, a hill tribe inhabiting the Himalayas. Their religion is a modification of Hindooism. They seldom eat meat, refuse water out of leathern vessels, and, owing to their caste prejudices, are rather troublesome on service. Many of them are in the ranks of our native regiments, and have earned a good name for willingness, docility, and gallantry. The want of competent officers is the bane of the Cashmere army, the discipline and drill of which leave much to be desired. One of the leading spirits in the Maharajah's service is Colonel Gardiner; we believe he is the only Englishman in it. He is a thorough soldier of fortune, whose career has doubtless been a most extraordinary one; but, unfortunately, his history must be accepted with reserve, while his reports on travel are quite unreliable. He is well known to all English visitors to the Happy Valley, and perhaps would be more esteemed as a boon companion than as a leader of even a corps of observation. The equipment of the Maharajah's troops is truly Oriental in its unserviceableness; but since his promotion to the rank of a General in the British service, large presents of Enfield rifles have been made to him, which would place the army more on an equality with the Ameer's freebooters of Chitral.

The Dogras, though mountaineers, are by no means a hardy race, diseases of the lungs being very common among them. In spite of their religious whims, they make good soldiers, are quick at drill, and, as a rule, excellent shots. If the example set in the Mutiny is followed now, and the Maharajah's troops are officered by Englishmen, a very favourable diversion could be effected in the spring by invading Afghanistan with a fourth column, advancing from Gilgit on Mastoj, and so down the Kunar Valley to Jelalabad. A reserve of British troops and a few mountain batteries would more than make the Dogra regiments a match for the Pathans of Chitral and Kunar. The total strength of the Maharajah of Cashmere's forces is under 20,000 men, but unless they are officered by Europeans they cannot be considered a very formidable body of men.

The Indian Commissariat Department appears to be receiving unmerited blame, in consequence of the delay in collecting carriage for the transport of troops and war material to the frontier. It should be borne in mind, before rashly accusing a well-tried department of dilatoriness, that wheeled carriage is absolutely valueless when once the frontier is crossed; consequently the only means of transport that will be of any service are pack-animals—camels and mules. It is well known that since the introduction of railroads the necessity for these beasts in all our large towns has greatly decreased; their numbers consequently have diminished, and they are much more difficult to procure in quantities than they were 10 years ago. It seems to be generally supposed that the Commissariat Department should have been prepared for the outbreak of hostilities and have collected vast reserves of baggage animals, but the funds at the disposal of officers is not sufficient to enable them to do this. They are forced to wait until money is supplied to them, and even then gold will not always procure immediately suitable beasts. It is true that throughout India a certain proportion of transport is always kept up for the troops; for instance, pack carriage is maintained at every cantonment, so that half the troops in garrison may move out on field service at an hour's notice; but this proportion is calculated merely for the camp equipage, stores, and 200 rounds of ammunition per man; no allowance is made for provisions, the idea being merely to provide against any sudden internal disorder.

At Peshawur, Rawul Pindee, and the frontier stations, carriage is maintained for all the troops in garrison; again, no allowance is made for provisions, which of course necessarily would take up far more cattle than camp equipage, stores, and ammunition. The regiments of the Punjab Frontier Force have their own carriage quite independent of the Commissariat Department, and consequently are able to move at an hour's notice. To each is permanently attached 40 mules and 55 camels with their drivers, the whole under the care of the Quartermaster, himself a combatant officer; they are also provided with small mule ammunition boxes, ready packed for service, and by the standing orders of the Force, drawn up by Sir Neville Chamberlain when at the head of it, the commanding officers of regiments are responsible that there is always three days' food in the regimental bazaars. There are many instances on record of regiments belonging to this force marching on field service within three hours of the warning being received at the orderly room. It will thus be seen that blame for delay in the forward movement of troops most certainly does not rest with the Comaissariat Department of Bengal. It would have been impossible for them to collect material for transport in anticipation of a war breaking out on the refusal of the Ameer to receive the mission; it would have been unwise of the Viceroy to have entered into preparations for the mobilization of an army at the same moment that he was despatching a peaceful embassy. Blame, if such attaches to any one, must be laid on the custom which permits the most vital organs of our military system to fall into decay in times of peace, and then expects them suddenly to spring forth again into full vigour, as if by the magic hand of a conjuror, on the first sound of war.

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TIMES, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10,

AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In the excellent letter addressed to you by Lord Lawrence and in your own articles on the present relations of the Indian Government with the Ameer of Cabul, two important questions are raised—first, has Shere Ali, by forcibly stopping the Mission sent to him by the Viceroy, given just grounds for war with him? and, secondly, supposing the right to be established, is there any such advantage to be gained by war as to make it expedient to undertake it? On these questions you have come to conclusions directly opposed to those arrived at by Lord Lawrence, which appear to me to be so erroneous and to be calculated to lead to such calamitous results if they should be adopted by the Government and the nation, that I venture to ask you to allow me to explain in your columns my reasons for dissenting from them.

With regard to the first question, I am not aware that in all that has been said and written on the subject any attempt has been made to explain upon what grounds it can be maintained (as those who take the warlike side in the discussion seem to assume) that Shere Ali, though the ruler of an independent State, had not a right to decline to receive the Mission which the Governor-General of India proposed to send to him. I believe the right of every independent nation to refuse to receive an Envoy from another has never been questioned; and Lord Lawrence has shown that in the case of Afghanistan so long ago as 1857 this right was exercised by its then ruler with our assent, and has again been exercised, with the same assent on our part, by the present Ameer from 1869 to the present time. How, then, can the refusal to admit our Envoy be regarded as giving us any right of making war upon the Afghans? Nor is the case altered by what is called the insulting manner in which the Mission was stopped, or by the fact that the Ameer has thought fit to receive an Envoy from Russia while he rejected ours. For the insult the Viceroy has only himself to thank. He thought fit to send forward his Envoy with a formidable escort, without waiting for the Ameer's answer to the letter (which, to say the least of it, was not a courteous one) which announced the Mission. Sir N. Chamberlain, on reaching the frontier, made known his arrival to the Ameer's officer in a letter still more wanting in courtesy, and distinctly intimating his intention of advancing with or without permission. This left to the Afghan officer only the choice of allowing the Mission to proceed contrary to the orders of the Ameer, or of telling the Envoy, as he did, that his advance would be opposed by force. Nor does the fact that a Russian Envoy had been received at Cabul give any just ground of quarrel to the Indian Government against the Ameer. It is asserted that the Russian Mission was not sent to Cabul in any spirit of hostility to us, and we cannot disprove the assertion, though I am not more disposed to give credit to it than yourself. But even if the object of the Mission were not a mere matter of suspicion, and if it had been avowedly sent as a measure of precaution against the extension of British power in Asia, it would have been quite within the clear right of both Russia and Afghanistan to enter into communication with each other for this purpose. Who can contest the right of these States to enter into a defensive alliance for this object if they think fit to do so; or who can deny that the conduct of the Indian Government for some time past has been well calculated to create in the mind of the Ameer a strong impression that if he desires to preserve a real independence, and not to be reduced to the position of a vassal of the Anglo-Indian Government, like the Indian Princes, it is necessary for him to repel every advance on the part of that Government towards establishing its authority over him, and also to look out for the best support he can find in his resistance to it? I am by no means surprised that in the position in which he is placed, and looking to the language notoriously held in India, the Ameer should have been led to think that his wisest policy is to cultivate the friendship of Russia. This is the lesson we have been doing our best to teach him, and we have no right to complain that he has learnt it, or that he should now, in consequence, be pursuing the policy he thinks best for his own interest. So long as he abstains from aggression or menace of aggression against us, we are not entitled to interfere with him or to insist that he shall be friendly to us rather than to Russia merely because he rules over a territory which in former times has been made the road for attacks upon India. Unless, therefore, it can be shown that an offensive alliance or hostile measures against the Anglo-Indian Government were contemplated by the Ameer and by Russia, we have no right whatever to make war upon either on account of what has lately occurred. I need hardly observe that there is not the slightest reason for supposing that the conclusion of an offensive alliance against us has ever been suggested, or that any attack upon the British dominions was thought of by the Ameer; so that if the Indian Government should declare war against him, it would be a war of aggression, justified by no principle of national law, and this country would be responsible for all the blood that must be shed in it.

I trust that this view of the subject may on calm reflection be adopted by the British Government and nation, and that the project of invading Afghanistan (if it is really entertained by the Indian Government) will consequently be overruled; but it is desirable also to consider the second question raised by Lord Lawrence—Has this country anything to gain by going to war with the Ameer if it can be made out that we have just grounds of quarrel with him? The main object of going to war (if I rightly understand what has been urged in favour of that course) would be to increase the security of our Indian Empire by preventing Russian influence from being so established in Afghanistan that at some future time an attack might be made upon India by the Russians combined with the Afghans. I will not stop to inquire if there is any danger of such an attack being ever made (which, for my own part, I altogether disbelieve); but, assuming the danger to be a real one, would invading Afghanistan be calculated to avert it? Lord Lawrence thinks not; and I am at a loss to guess how what he says in support of that opinion can be answered. A sufficient force under British officers would, no doubt, be able to force its way through the passes and to capture Cabul and the other Afghan cities and fortresses, killing in these operations many of the Afghans, and of necessity laying waste much of their territory and destroying a great deal of their property. But certainly this would not tend to make the Ameer and his followers more friendly to us than they now are; on the contrary, it could only make their hostility far more bitter than it is. It is, indeed, not impossible that in this manner a treaty might be extorted from Shere Ali binding him to dismiss the Russian Envoy and to enter into no further communication with Russia, but to become our ally and give us his assistance if there should be war between Russia and ourselves. Such a treaty might perhaps be extorted; but nobody can be simple enough to suppose that it would be observed a moment longer than it could be enforced, or to doubt that, in spite of any promises to the contrary, the Ameer would find means of communicating with the Russian authorities, and that his great object would be to concert with them measures for revenging himself for the injuries he had sustained. Our position, therefore, so far as regards our prospect of having the Afghans on our side, instead of on that of Russia, in any contest which may take place between us, would be injured instead of being improved by the most successful war if Shere Ali were allowed to continue to be ruler of Afghanistan. Perhaps it may be suggested that this difficulty might be obviated by effecting a change of rulers in Afghanistan, and placing power in the hands of one more friendly to us than Shere Ali; but such a scheme will find no favour from those who know anything of Indian history and of the utter failure of the same scheme when Dost Mohamed was deposed and our puppet Shah Shujah set up in his place. To resort again to such a device would be even worse than to resolve avowedly to annex Afghanistan—that is to say, to take upon ourselves the task of governing a poor and mountainous territory, having a long and difficult line of communication with the seat of our power, and inhabited by a warlike and turbulent population, which we could only rule by force, and which never could be made to pay a tithe of the cost of keeping it in subjection. The impolicy of such an annexation appears to me so obvious that I will not waste time in trying to prove it.

Even, therefore, if an invasion of Afghanistan should meet with the greatest possible success by compelling Shere Ali to submit to whatever terms the Governor-General of India might think fit to dictate, no real advantage that I can see would be gained. But things might more probably take a different course. It may be expected that a British army would, without much difficulty, overcome any force the Afghans could oppose to it, and would capture Cabul and whatever fortresses they possess; but Shere Ali might neither be taken nor frightened into submission. He might retreat before us beyond the boundaries of his dominions with as many armed followers as he might be able to keep together, leaving the rest to profess submission until another opportunity of taking arms against us should arise. If this should happen, it is clear that our troops could follow him but a little way, if at all, beyond the Afghan frontier, and must before long retire. But as soon as our pursuit ceased, the Afghans would follow upon our heels and carry on a guerrilla warfare against us, harassing us without ceasing and striving to cut off our supplies. They would have the whole population helping them—every peasant when ploughing his fields would have his gun concealed hard by, ready to be used whenever an opportunity offered. They would have, too, the aid of many wild and warlike tribes even from a long distance, as well as the underhand, if not the open, assistance of the Russians, who would furnish them with arms and ammunition and officers to direct their efforts. The Anglo-Indian army would find that, though it had to meet no enemy able to stand against it in the field, it could command only so much of the territory as it could actually cover, while it would be able to draw from it little of revenue or supplies, and every convoy would have to be defended by a strong escort and to fight its way through the long

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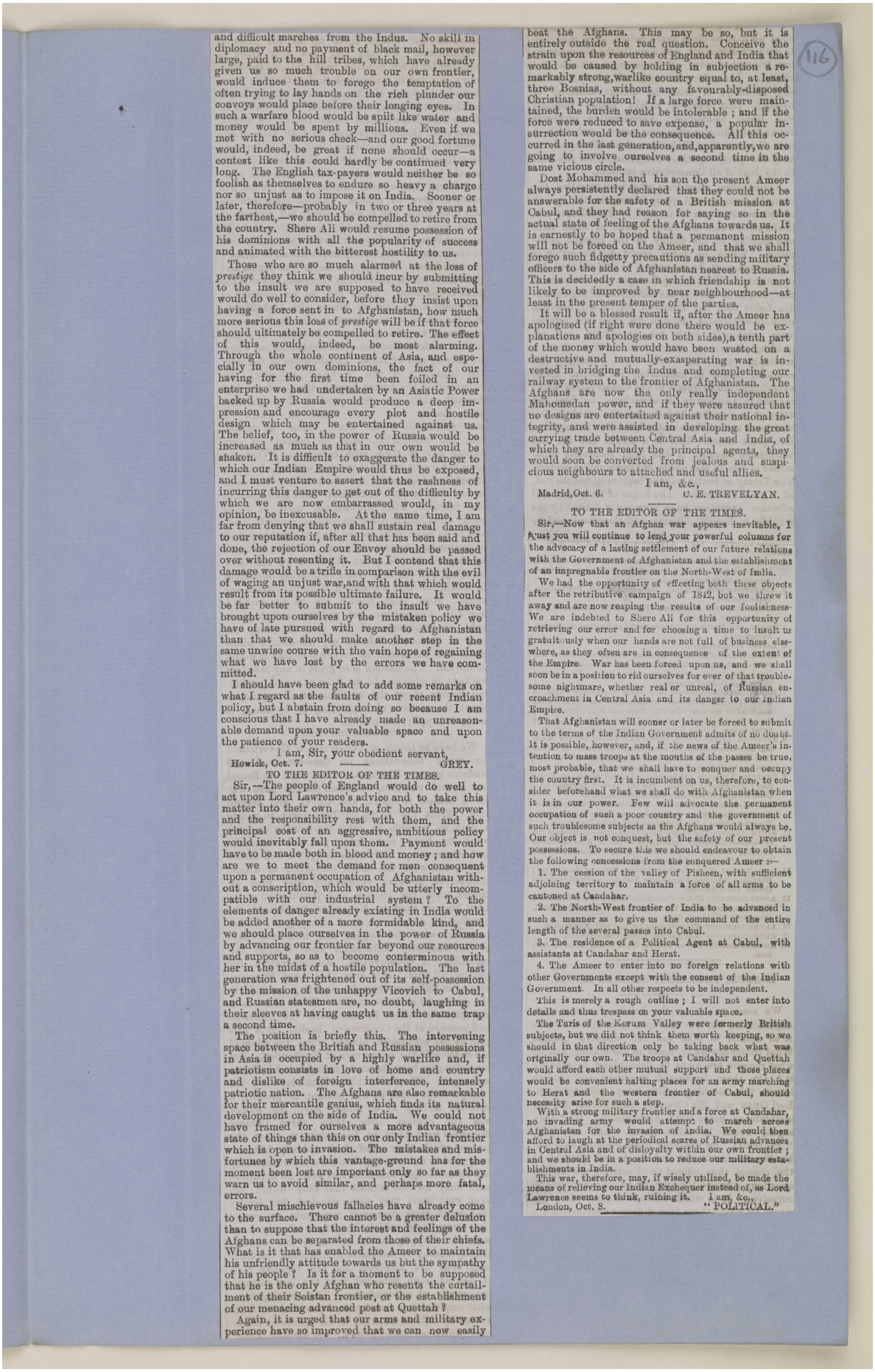

and difficult marches from the Indus. No skill in diplomacy and no payment of black mail, however large, paid to the hill tribes, which have already given us so much trouble on our own frontier, would induce them to forego the temptation of often trying to lay hands on the rich plunder our convoys would place before their longing eyes. In such a warfare blood would be spilt like water and money would be spent by millions. Even if we met with no serious check—and our good fortune would, indeed, be great if none should occur—a contest like this could hardly be continued very long. The English tax-payers would neither be so foolish as themselves to endure so heavy a charge nor so unjust as to impose it on India. Sooner or later, therefore—probably in two or three years at the farthest,—we should be compelled to retire from the country. Shere Ali would resume possession of his dominions with all the popularity of success and animated with the bitterest hostility to us.

Those who are so much alarmed at the loss of *prestige* they think we should incur by submitting to the insult we are supposed to have received would do well to consider, before they insist upon having a force sent in to Afghanistan, how much more serious this loss of *prestige* will be if that force should ultimately be compelled to retire. The effect of this would, indeed, be most alarming. Through the whole continent of Asia, and especially in our own dominions, the fact of our having for the first time been foiled in an enterprise we had undertaken by an Asiatic Power backed up by Russia would produce a deep impression and encourage every plot and hostile design which may be entertained against us. The belief, too, in the power of Russia would be increased as much as that in our own would be shaken. It is difficult to exaggerate the danger to which our Indian Empire would thus be exposed, and I must venture to assert that the rashness of incurring this danger to get out of the difficulty by which we are now embarrassed would, in my opinion, be inexcusable. At the same time, I am far from denying that we shall sustain real damage to our reputation if, after all that has been said and done, the rejection of our Envoy should be passed over without resenting it. But I contend that this damage would be a trifle in comparison with the evil of waging an unjust war, and with that which would result from its possible ultimate failure. It would be far better to submit to the insult we have brought upon ourselves by the mistaken policy we have of late pursued with regard to Afghanistan than that we should make another step in the same unwise course with the vain hope of regaining what we have lost by the errors we have committed.

I should have been glad to add some remarks on what I regard as the faults of our recent Indian policy, but I abstain from doing so because I am conscious that I have already made an unreasonable demand upon your valuable space and upon the patience of your readers.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Howick, Oct. 7. GREY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The people of England would do well to act upon Lord Lawrence's advice and to take this matter into their own hands, for both the power and the responsibility rest with them, and the principal cost of an aggressive, ambitious policy would inevitably fall upon them. Payment would have to be made both in blood and money; and how are we to meet the demand for men consequent upon a permanent occupation of Afghanistan without a conscription, which would be utterly incompatible with our industrial system? To the elements of danger already existing in India would be added another of a more formidable kind, and we should place ourselves in the power of Russia by advancing our frontier far beyond our resources and supports, so as to become conterminous with her in the midst of a hostile population. The last generation was frightened out of its self-possession by the mission of the unhappy Vicovich to Cabul, and Russian statesmen are, no doubt, laughing in their sleeves at having caught us in the same trap a second time.

The position is briefly this. The intervening space between the British and Russian possessions in Asia is occupied by a highly warlike and, if patriotism consists in love of home and country and dislike of foreign interference, intensely patriotic nation. The Afghans are also remarkable for their mercantile genius, which finds its natural development on the side of India. We could not have framed for ourselves a more advantageous state of things than this on our only Indian frontier which is open to invasion. The mistakes and misfortunes by which this vantage-ground has for the moment been lost are important only so far as they warn us to avoid similar, and perhaps more fatal, errors.

Several mischievous fallacies have already come to the surface. There cannot be a greater delusion than to suppose that the interest and feelings of the Afghans can be separated from those of their chiefs. What is it that has enabled the Ameer to maintain his unfriendly attitude towards us but the sympathy of his people? Is it for a moment to be supposed that he is the only Afghan who resents the curtailment of their Seistan frontier, or the establishment of our menacing advanced post at Quettah?

Again, it is urged that our arms and military experience have so improved that we can now easily beat the Afghans. This may be so, but it is entirely outside the real question. Conceive the strain upon the resources of England and India that would be caused by holding in subjection a remarkably strong, warlike country equal to, at least, three Bosnias, without any favourably-disposed Christian population! If a large force were maintained, the burden would be intolerable; and if the force were reduced to save expense, a popular insurrection would be the consequence. All this occurred in the last generation, and, apparently, we are going to involve ourselves a second time in the same vicious circle.

Dost Mohammed and his son the present Ameer always persistently declared that they could not be answerable for the safety of a British mission at Cabul, and they had reason for saying so in the actual state of feeling of the Afghans towards us. It is earnestly to be hoped that a permanent mission will not be forced on the Ameer, and that we shall forego such fidgetty precautions as sending military officers to the side of Afghanistan nearest to Russia. This is decidedly a case in which friendship is not likely to be improved by near neighbourhood—at least in the present temper of the parties.

It will be a blessed result if, after the Ameer has apologized (if right were done there would be explanations and apologies on both sides), a tenth part of the money which would have been wasted on a destructive and mutually-exasperating war is invested in bridging the Indus and completing our railway system to the frontier of Afghanistan. The Afghans are now the only really independent Mahomedan power, and if they were assured that no designs are entertained against their national integrity, and were assisted in developing the great carrying trade between Central Asia and India, of which they are already the principal agents, they would soon be converted from jealous and suspicious neighbours to attached and useful allies.

I am, &c.,
Madrid, Oct. 6. C. E. TREVELYAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Now that an Afghan war appears inevitable, I trust you will continue to lend your powerful columns for the advocacy of a lasting settlement of our future relations with the Government of Afghanistan and the establishment of an impregnable frontier on the North-West of India.

We had the opportunity of effecting both these objects after the retributive campaign of 1842, but we threw it away and are now reaping the results of our foolishness. We are indebted to Shere Ali for this opportunity of retrieving our error and for choosing a time to insult us gratuitously when our hands are not full of business elsewhere, as they often are in consequence of the extent of the Empire. War has been forced upon us, and we shall soon be in a position to rid ourselves for ever of that troublesome nightmare, whether real or unreal, of Russian encroachment in Central Asia and its danger to our Indian Empire.

That Afghanistan will sooner or later be forced to submit to the terms of the Indian Government admits of no doubt. It is possible, however, and, if the news of the Ameer's intention to mass troops at the mouths of the passes be true, most probable, that we shall have to conquer and occupy the country first. It is incumbent on us, therefore, to consider beforehand what we shall do with Afghanistan when it is in our power. Few will advocate the permanent occupation of such a poor country and the government of such troublesome subjects as the Afghans would always be. Our object is not conquest, but the safety of our present possessions. To secure this we should endeavour to obtain the following concessions from the conquered Ameer:—

1. The cession of the valley of Pisheen, with sufficient adjoining territory to maintain a force of all arms to be cantoned at Candahar.

2. The North-West frontier of India to be advanced in such a manner as to give us the command of the entire length of the several passes into Cabul.

3. The residence of a Political Agent at Cabul, with assistants at Candahar and Herat.

4. The Ameer to enter into no foreign relations with other Governments except with the consent of the Indian Government. In all other respects to be independent.

This is merely a rough outline; I will not enter into details and thus trespass on your valuable space.

The Turis of the Korum Valley were formerly British subjects, but we did not think them worth keeping, so we should in that direction only be taking back what was originally our own. The troops at Candahar and Quettah would afford each other mutual support and those places would be convenient halting places for an army marching to Herat and the western frontier of Cabul, should necessity arise for such a step.

With a strong military frontier and a force at Candahar, no invading army would attempt to march across Afghanistan for the invasion of India. We could then afford to laugh at the periodical scares of Russian advances in Central Asia and of disloyalty within our own frontier; and we should be in a position to reduce our military establishments in India.

This war, therefore, may, if wisely utilized, be made the means of relieving our Indian Exchequer instead of, as Lord Lawrence seems to think, ruining it. I am, &c.,
London, Oct. 8. "POLITICAL."

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RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

BERLIN, Oct. 9.

The Afghan excitement being on the increase, even the most pacific portion of the Russian Press is enchanted with the delightful prospect of settling England definitively. The St. Petersburg *Bourse Gazette*, a paper which was steadily opposed to the Turkish war, now insists upon measures to establish Russian control over the passes of the Hindoo Koosh. We are told :—

"If the passes forming the only road from Russia to India are under Russian control, Russian and English power is equally balanced in the East. Afghanistan is the one point where the entire might and influence of England may be effectually resisted and paralyzed by Russia. Suppose these passes—the strategical pivot of the Oriental question—become English property, there will be no end to English pretensions. Afghanistan is to be conquered by one of those *coups* which have made India an English dependency. Headed by *The Times* newspaper, the English Press is hounding public opinion against the defenceless Ameer. Russia should make the Ameer's cause her own, and by the despatch of a sufficient force render Afghanistan invincible. A small Russian corps would suffice to force England to stake her Asiatic position on the issue of the struggle. For Russia to defend the Ameer is to vindicate her own Imperial interest, an office altogether different from the Quixotic defence of the Slav."

OUR INDIAN TROOPS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—As it is by no means unlikely that the campaign in Afghanistan may entail very severe work, it is well the Horse Guards and India Office authorities should bear in mind that there is positively no Reserve of British officers for the Native Army whatever, and that vacancies as they occur could not, as at present, be filled up with benefit or safety by being drawn solely from the officers of British regiments in India only.

There is, however, a simple, economical, and judicious way of at once obtaining a Reserve, which is by throwing open the Staff Corps to captains and subalterns of two years' service of British regiments in England and the Colonies. Many are only too anxious to go—indeed, it is strange this plan did not long ago obtain ; and if a reduction of officers in corps at home is, as it is said to be, contemplated, it would be an advantage to home regiments and a ready way of forming a Reserve of young officers ready to take up their duties at once. An officer on service would learn as much of the language and habits of his men in a week as he would in cantonments in a twelvemonth.

Yours faithfully,

STAFF CORPS.

Daily News. Oct 10

COLONEL STANLEY, M.P., ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

(BY TELEGRAPH.)

BLACKPOOL, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

Colonel Stanley, the Secretary of State for War, was present this afternoon at a series of gatherings held in celebration of the opening of a Conservative Club in this town. In the afternoon a banquet was held in the club itself, the President, Mr. W. H. Cocker, mayor of the borough, occupying the chair.

Colonel STANLEY, M.P., in responding to the toast of "Our Legislators and Defenders" (which was proposed by Mr. Edmund Birley), said this country and the whole world had ratified the policy which the present Government had upheld, and which two members of the Government did so much to forward in the Berlin Congress. That policy was looked upon at home and abroad as one which was strongly favoured with every element of success. He did not wish to put the matter too strongly, because there were plenty of people around them who would take an early opportunity of pointing out that all the points of the Berlin Treaty had not been at once crowned with entire success ; but in this as in all other matters of business they must bear in mind the virtues of patience and common sense. They could not expect as with the magic wand of an enchanter to sweep away all difficulties of race and creed, that all animosity and even worse passions should at once disappear, and that the millennium of universal peace should immediately arise. What they would confidently expect was the basis of a peace durable and sound and beneficial to the whole world. Mr. Birley had reminded them that it was only a few years ago that one branch of the Legislature was spoken of if not with absolute scorn, at least not with proper respect ; but he thought that when they looked back upon the past year and saw what the power of that House was in debate, and what power individual members of that House had exercised, not only at home but abroad, in sustaining the honour and welfare of the country, they would hesitate even more than the prophetic three times before they took any steps for the abolition of the House of Lords. (Cheers.) With regard to the House of Commons, as to which their friends told them that it adjusted itself from time to time, and even now there were many who were anxious to make some further alteration, the present system made that House fairly representative of the country. It was said in 1868, when their party was in its darkest period of depression, and the prospect of seeing their principles prevail appeared to be remote, what Lancashire thought to-day England would think to-morrow. (Cheers.) That to-morrow came in 1874 ; it had lasted until now, he hoped it was full of promise for the future ; and judging from the fact that when he accepted office he was not forced to a contest, he thought he might say that that constituency had not changed its political views. (Cheers.) They heard a good deal about the defences of the country—a good deal that was true, and, on certain occasions, a good deal that was untrue. As to the army, it was placed in a special position of difficulty. It had climatic as well as bodily foes, and whether it be in the presence of disease or under the discomforts of traversing the pathless wilds of Africa or the snows of Canada, the army had always redeemed its pledges. (Cheers.) As to the navy, he looked upon it as the strongest link in the chain which bound the Empire together, and with regard to the home defences, he hoped they might long be preserved in their present state of efficiency. It was the strength of our defences this year which enabled us to speak with power in matters of legislation. In this as in other matters the country was respected, which respected itself, and its voice would be listened to when it was felt that it was not a voice alone. (Cheers.) Colonel Stanley concluded by proposing the toast of "Success of the Club," to which the chairman responded. Colonel Stanley, in some subsequent observations, said it was a great consolation to any Minister, whoever he might be, in the troubles and difficulties through which any Government must pass, to find when he went amongst his friends that there were those who were willing to put a charitable construction upon his acts and to look with a friendly eye upon what his Government had done. If everything flourished as well as that institution, we should have a happy world, because he understood that there had not only been no falling off in the number of members, but that there had been a very considerable increase in the finances. It was this which had emboldened them to take the action of that day. He felt sure that the energetic gentlemen who had been connected with the institution from the first would carry it on in the future, and he trusted that they had inaugurated a fresh period of prosperity for the club. He ventured to say that after all the hard words which had been used towards the Government, after all the unfriendly statements that had been made, after all the various suspicions which had been evinced at different times respecting the action of the Government this year, they had given him no reason to believe that they were ashamed of either the Government or of its representatives. (Cheers.) He had no wish to take a retrospect which must necessarily be a rather long one ; but, be the causes as they might, the fact remained that during the years the present Government had been in office they had to steer their way through very troubled waters. There was, he thought, only one mark which, when they navigated those seas, could really keep them straight ; it was a determination to do as far as in them lay that which they believed to be their duty as individuals and to their country. (Cheers.) He felt sure they all recognised in their hearts the fact that any line of action founded upon principles other than those, successful as it might be for the moment, would bring with it its own retribution in the end. Their lines had fallen in rather troublous times ; those times had necessitated the increase and the utilisation in some cases of the defences of this country, and necessarily those defences were not put in motion without expense. They had been kept up, it was true, at a cost—a cost which some people would have them believe was to be considered above all things—but it was a cost which he felt sure those who were most able to balance the affairs of this world would consider to be fully justified in the present position of the country. (Cheers.) With regard to the action which the English Government had taken in the past year, he would repeat what he had said before. It was his firm belief that unless they had proved by action that they were sincere and anxious to carry to its end the part which they had undertaken in the Conference, their mere sending of the representatives, even if a congress could have been called, would have been without effect, and would not have led to the conclusion which they were happy to think it had. (Cheers.) A part of the treaty, and the part which was the most attacked perhaps in Parliament and in the Press by those who opposed them, was the agreement whereby they entered into a convention with Turkey by which this country, for the time being, was to administer one of her provinces, that had the means of affording us such help as in certain contingencies we might require. He was not claiming infallibility for any member of the Government, but he felt sure that unless the country at times prepared to run some risk, even with its eyes open, they would not carry people with them or convince them of their sincerity. They must be prepared at some time to encounter those difficulties and to make up their minds among those disturbing causes which fell to the lot of any man who had to steer the ship through the troublesome waters of this world. (Cheers.) So far as his personal belief went, he saw no reason, despite the desponding views which were taken of it, to be otherwise than satisfied with that part of the convention under which we administered the island of Cyprus. There were very valid reasons, both of a civil and a military character, which rendered that step advisable. (Cheers.) A great deal had been said about illness and suffering on the island, and almost every day they had seen in the columns of the press various alarming statements, and not a few reflecting upon the judgment and even upon the conscience of those who had provided such an unhealthy station. No one holding the position which he had the honour to fill would regard with anything but the deepest care and apprehension anything which concerned the troops at our disposal. But, on the other hand, those troops existed for a purpose, and if they had to be sent to a foreign part, which it was necessary for us to occupy for military reasons, then it was distinctly the duty of those in office not to hazard the particular risks which might fall upon them. (Cheers.) He could conscientiously say that, although there had been illness which they must all deplore, authorities who were best qualified to judge continued to assure him that there was nothing in the permanent occupation of the island to render it more deadly to the forces than those islands of Greece which we formerly occupied. A great many people had questioned the wisdom of the convention with Turkey altogether, and if it had been a convention for the maintenance of Turkey with all those defects which we recognised and deplored, there would have been a good deal of force in their argument. But the convention was not with Turkey as she was, but with a Turkey which had promised reforms, and they had no reason to doubt the sincerity of those who promised those reforms. With regard to matters still further East he spoke individually and with the greatest caution, not with a wish to conceal or extenuate anything, but because we had only very meagre information to found an opinion upon. What we did know was that our relations with Afghanistan had always been of a somewhat mixed and sometimes of a troublous nature, but we were, perhaps, hardly prepared for such distinct evidence, or apparent evidence, of unfriendliness on the part of the ruler of that empire as that of which the telegraph had brought us news. As far as he could see we had no right at this moment to complain of the action of the Government. We had satisfaction in feeling that the best possible sentiments had been evidenced by the native army in India—(hear, hear)—and if this country was to put forth her strength he trusted that we might look confidently for the same result as had attended her efforts upon former occasions. We had no wish for aggression or conquest. We wanted to go our way peacefully amongst nations and untrammelled, and with the power of carrying out our own business in our own way—(cheers) ; and though we could not object to our neighbour keeping the key of his own door, it did seem to some persons that we had a right to see how we stood if it appeared likely that that neighbour would hand over the key to another person. (Cheers.)

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Colonel Stanley, Secretary for War, was present yesterday at a banquet and public meeting in celebration of the opening of a Conservative club at Blackpool. Speaking at the public meeting, he said he saw no reason, in spite of the desponding views which were taken, to be otherwise than satisfied with that part of the convention with Turkey under which we administered the island of Cyprus. There were valid reasons of a civil and military character which rendered that step as advisable as it was prudent. He was not indifferent to the health of the troops, but if it were necessary to occupy a foreign place, then it was the duty of those in office not to hazard the particular risks which might fall upon them. As to Afghanistan, he had no wish for aggression or conquest. We desired to go our way peacefully and untrammelled, but with the power of carrying out our own business in our own way. We could not object to our neighbour keeping the key of his own door, but we must see how we stood if it seemed likely that he would hand the key to another person.

Sir Lawrence Palk and Sir John Kennaway, the members for East Devon, spoke at Axminster last night. They defended the policy of the Ministry on the Eastern Question, and in referring to the Afghan difficulty Sir John Kennaway remarked that although we did not want to go to war with a light heart, yet the voice of England was unanimous in asserting that it was impossible for us to maintain our prestige unless we exacted due and proper reparation from the Ameer for the insult he had offered us.

Addressing his constituents at Helston last night, Mr. Young, M.P., severely criticised the foreign policy of the Government. Ministers claimed to have brought back "peace with honour" from Berlin; but, unfortunately, there was no peace. He did not quarrel with the partition of Turkey, but he condemned Lord Beaconsfield's inconsistency, for he had promised to preserve its integrity. Cyprus was of no advantage to us; it was like a white elephant. He thought it would have been better to leave the Ameer of Afghanistan alone than to go to war with him, and argued that we had courted the rebuff we had received at the hands of that potentate.

COLONEL STANLEY last night delivered an address to a gathering in honour of the institution of a Conservative Club at Blackpool, and it is natural to look to him, on such an occasion, for some hint as to the position of the Government in view of present events. A very considerable share of the burden and heat of the Recess has fallen upon the SECRETARY for WAR. He took a prominent part in the oratorical campaign instituted by the Cabinet in Lancashire immediately after the rising of Parliament. He is the first Minister to address a public meeting since the outbreak of the Afghanistan difficulty. The contrast between the two occasions is certainly remarkable. Seven weeks ago Colonel STANLEY's task was to celebrate a so-called diplomatic triumph, and to foreshadow the benefits which it would confer upon a community that had passed through two years of harassing uncertainty, and suffered in every branch of its commerce from prolonged apprehensions of war. He was then able to hint at the possibility of a reduction of the army, and to promise the merchants and manufacturers of the North a long period of undisturbed calm for the prosperous pursuit of their industries. He claimed the national gratitude for the zeal with which the Reserve forces had answered the call upon their services, speaking of the emergency under the pressure of which the call had been made as a state of things that was past and gone, not to return for many years. That some disquiet existed within the area affected by the Treaty of Berlin, Colonel STANLEY was bound to admit, but it was only temporary, only the swell of the subsiding storm, and its influence would never reach the shores of our sea-girt island. It is impossible to think of the situation as it was conceived by the Ministerial speakers then, and the situation as it forces itself upon the public consciousness now, without wondering whether Colonel STANLEY had any presentiment of the disturbance that would follow the great "Settlement" of affairs in the East" upon the North-West frontier of our Indian possessions. If he was ignorant of the new source of disquiet, it is not to be supposed that all his colleagues were equally ill-informed. The CHAMBERLAIN mission had by that time been resolved upon, and the policy in pursuance of which it was sent had long before been agreed upon between Lord LYTTON and Lord BEACONSFIELD. The result of the mission, as Lord LAWRENCE has said, was no surprise; we cannot imagine that those who were aware of it were so foolishly sanguine as not to foresee what would happen. Is it possible that only an inner circle in the Cabinet knew of the existence of this threatening war-cloud, and that their colleagues were as much in the dark as the multitude whom they invited to believe that the Treaty of Berlin had established peace on a durable basis? If so, it was not altogether fair to Colonel STANLEY, Lord SANDON, and Mr. CROSS to send them forth to lead the acclamations over the peace which had been secured by the courage and address of our Berlin Plenipotentiaries, without any warning of the new disturbance that it had been determined to initiate.

It was natural that Colonel STANLEY should leave his hearers to reflect upon the change which had come over the prospects of peace since he last spoke in Lancashire. His tone is still hopeful. There are difficulties in the way of the execution of the Berlin Treaty, but we cannot expect the accumulated troubles of centuries to be swept away at once, as by the magic wand of an enchanter. Colonel STANLEY cannot be blamed for still thinking that the policy of the Government is "strongly flavoured with every element of "success," and it is not for him to compare the results of that policy unfavourably with what might have been expected from a different policy. But if he expected to carry with him, not merely the convictions of his partisan hearers, who cheered every commonplace utterance loyally as if they had heard it for the first time, but also the convictions of the thousands who will go to his speech in expectation of some new light on the policy of the Government, he ought to have gone into greater detail as to the means which the Ministers propose to take to ensure the discharge of the liabilities with which they have burdened themselves. With regard to the responsibility they have incurred in the convention with Turkey, it is too late in the day to say that there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the Turkish Government's undertaking to introduce reforms in the government of their Asiatic provinces. Seeing that recent events have thrown grave doubts upon the existence of anything which can properly be called a Government at Constantinople, Colonel STANLEY should have been more specific in saying in what quarter this sincerity is supposed to lie, and what guarantee sincerity supplies for the execution of the reforms. Is it the SULTAN who is sincerely bent upon reform, or is it his Pachas? And have they the same interests in the establishment of order in Asia Minor? It requires no ordinary courage to speak of the SULTAN as if he were master in his own house, in the face of the reports which come in every day of instances in which his authority has been defied. Events have not as yet justified Mr. CROSS's confident hope that the administration of Asia Minor would be reformed by the force of "example and precept"; and Colonel STANLEY's belief in the "sincerity" of the central authorities will not be generally received as a reassuring circumstance. Colonel STANLEY was equally light-hearted in his reference to that part of the convention under which we have undertaken the administration of Cyprus. If it was necessary to occupy Cyprus for military reasons, we must not mind a little ill-health among our troops. They must take the risks of the climate to which the Government judge it expedient to send them. What, however, we should have liked to know was, whether the Government were aware, when they decided upon the occupation of Cyprus, of the full extent of its unhealthiness, and whether they took this into account in estimating its importance as a military station? Would the military reasons have been equally valid if it had been known from the first that twenty-five per cent. of the occupying forces would be normally unfit for service?

We should have been content to accept without complaint Colonel STANLEY's generalities about Cyprus and the Anglo-Turkish Convention if what he said about our relations with Afghanistan had been more definite and satisfactory. Concerning this matter he premised that he spoke "individually and with the "greatest caution." We have had too much of this individual speaking on the part of members of the Cabinet about the affairs of our Indian frontier. Possibly when a Minister introduces his remarks with such a qualifying preface, we are to understand that he is at variance with the majority of his colleagues on the particular question

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in hand. Last year Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE expressed his individual opinion against the propriety of extending our frontier in the direction of Afghanistan at a time when steps had already been taken which could only be regarded as preparatory to such an extension. Colonel STANLEY'S words seem to imply the same opinion when an extension policy has been more openly developed. It is so far satisfactory to know that there are members of the Cabinet who object to what has been declared to be the common policy of Lord LYTTON and Lord BEACONSFIELD in relation to Afghanistan, but it is a drawback to this satisfaction that a Minister cannot express his individual opinion without its being very generally accepted as the united opinion of the Cabinet. An individual utterance may thus serve as a screen for the action of those who have the practical direction of affairs till such time as it suits their purpose to exhibit their policy without disguise, by which time they may have already committed the nation to it beyond possibility of retreat. Within the last two years we have again and again seen the moderate members of the Cabinet used as stalking horses for a policy with which their own individual declarations were far from being in accord. Such a state of things is consistent neither with their own self-respect nor with the loyal working of representative institutions. Colonel STANLEY ignores facts which were semi-officially communicated to the public before the repulse of Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S mission, when he speaks as if the policy in pursuance of which that mission was despatched had been adopted in consequence of an attempt on the part of Russia to obtain possession of the key of the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN'S house. Whatever may be the nature of Russian intrigues with the AMEER, it does not follow that they are to be met by an English occupation of his territories. But, apart from this, it is misleading to speak as if the proposals carried by Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN had been conceived after it became known that SHERE ALI had given a friendly reception to a Russian envoy. The same proposals were made two years ago, and the author or authors of them must have but a very indifferent confidence in their value if they try to back them up, not by cool reason, but by clap-trap attempts to enlist prejudice and passion in their favour. Colonel STANLEY expressed no opinion, individual or otherwise, as to the exchequer from which the costs of the Afghan expedition ought to be paid. His audience might not have cheered so loudly at the moment if they had been told that, as this expedition had grown out of the Imperialist policy of the Government, it was England and not India that ought to defray the charges of it. But he would have earned a better title to their gratitude in the future when these unwelcome facts are brought home.

THE AFGHAN WAR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—As I have lately seen something of the countries bordering upon Afghanistan, I hope I may be acquitted of presumption in expressing my concurrence in the advice you have given to the Government. The clearness and vigour of your policy in this important matter have been remarkable and convincing. Your repeated and unwavering counsel has been that whatever action is taken with regard to Afghanistan it must be direct and continuous. Elsewhere it has been urged, and the design has apparently entered into the counsels of the Government, that dependence may be had on demonstrations; that we should wait on accidents; that there should be an advance succeeded by a halt for a season, with the underlying expectation that, if these things be done, the Ameer will give way, and that the difficulty may thus be ended.

In support of your arguments, I should like to put the question, Why did Shere Ali insult our envoy? Was it not because he had been led by a variety of circumstances to believe that our Government meditate the occupation of his territory and the extinction of his independence? Will this suspicion be extinguished by the capture of Ali Musjid or of Candahar? Certainly not; it will rather be confirmed. The Ameer would probably be strengthened by an advance followed by a halt of the British at any point remote from his capital. He and his chiefs would become desperate in their defence. Time would be given them to proclaim a desperate warfare, and above all to make desperate bidding for alliance. If our forces enter Afghanistan and do not proceed, as you say, "in a genuine movement forward," we shall in all likelihood be giving, indirectly, aid and strength to our enemy. The Ameer Shere Ali Khan is not a Sultan of the Bosphorus. It will not be safe to count upon his cowering before a demonstration. Near the mountains which overshadow his country I have heard the proverb, "If you meet a cobra and an Afghan, kill the Afghan"—one of many significant hints of the ferocious bravery of those whom he can lead to battle.

You touch, also, to-day upon the very serious question—Why have we an Afghan war? There can, I think, be no doubt as to the answer which every intelligent mind must give—It is one of the first fruits of the Eastern policy of Lord Beaconsfield. "The fiasco of Cyprus," followed by a tragedy of Afghanistan, may cause the less fanciful members of the Government to arrest the Asiatic career of the Prime Minister. But if their prudence and the gravity of events produce no check, then, perhaps, we shall have all Asia, from Beyrout to Burmah, upon our hands.

I do not feel certain that this has not been throughout the design of Lord Beaconsfield. It may well be that Shere Ali has read aright the movements of a mind which has undeniably more natural affinity with his own race than with the Anglo-Saxon. And if it be so; if the policy which Lord Lytton has pushed forward at the order of Lord Beaconsfield be a policy as dark and dangerous as that which your correspondent, Mr. Forbes, has so ably denounced under the title of "The Fiasco of Cyprus," then we cannot wonder at the repulse of our armed mission of 1,000 men. I would advise doubting followers of the Government to read with attention the letter which Lord Lawrence addressed to one of your contemporaries on the 8th of January, in which he records the opinion of Sir Neville Chamberlain himself against taking possession of Afghanistan; in which he points to the occupation of Quetta as the first step in the minds of the Afghans "towards the subjugation of their country;" in which he says, "I believe the great majority of the Afghans to be vehemently opposed to this movement, and that the apprehensions which have been raised have done much to destroy all the good that has flowed from the conciliatory and kindly disposition of the British Government towards them during the last twenty years." As for the presence of a Russian envoy at Cabul, he would not have been there but for such language as that which Lord Beaconsfield held towards Russia at the Guildhall; he would not have been there had not our Government sustituted a vain policy of menace for the concert of Europe; he would not have been there had there been no exhibition of that language and policy which have received their most severe condemnation in the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin.

We must go forward now; we must have an Afghan war. Lord Sandhurst calculated that 30,000 troops would be necessary for the Ameer's overthrow, and as the former war is estimated to have cost 12,000,000*l.* with a very insufficient force, this may cost 20,000,0 0*l.* But the time is coming when those who have brought this trouble and burden upon us will surely have to stand up for judgment by the country. As an opponent of his administration, I should feel great confidence in asking any sensible Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman whether Lord Beaconsfield is exactly the sort of person with whom—as seen in his Asiatic policy—he would like to go into business, and how far we can trust such men as Mr. Cross and Sir Stafford Northcote, when we see them leading themselves so readily to the costly and visionary schemes of their chief. I fancy the reply will exhibit an opinion like that of Lord Derby, that under such a captain the ship is not safe, and that the pressure which must be yet greater of "bloated armaments," and consequently depressed trade, will lead many back to the more wholesome Liberal policy of peace, retrenchment, and reform.
—Your faithful servant, ARTHUR ARNOLD.

45, Kensington-park-gardens, W., Oct. 8.

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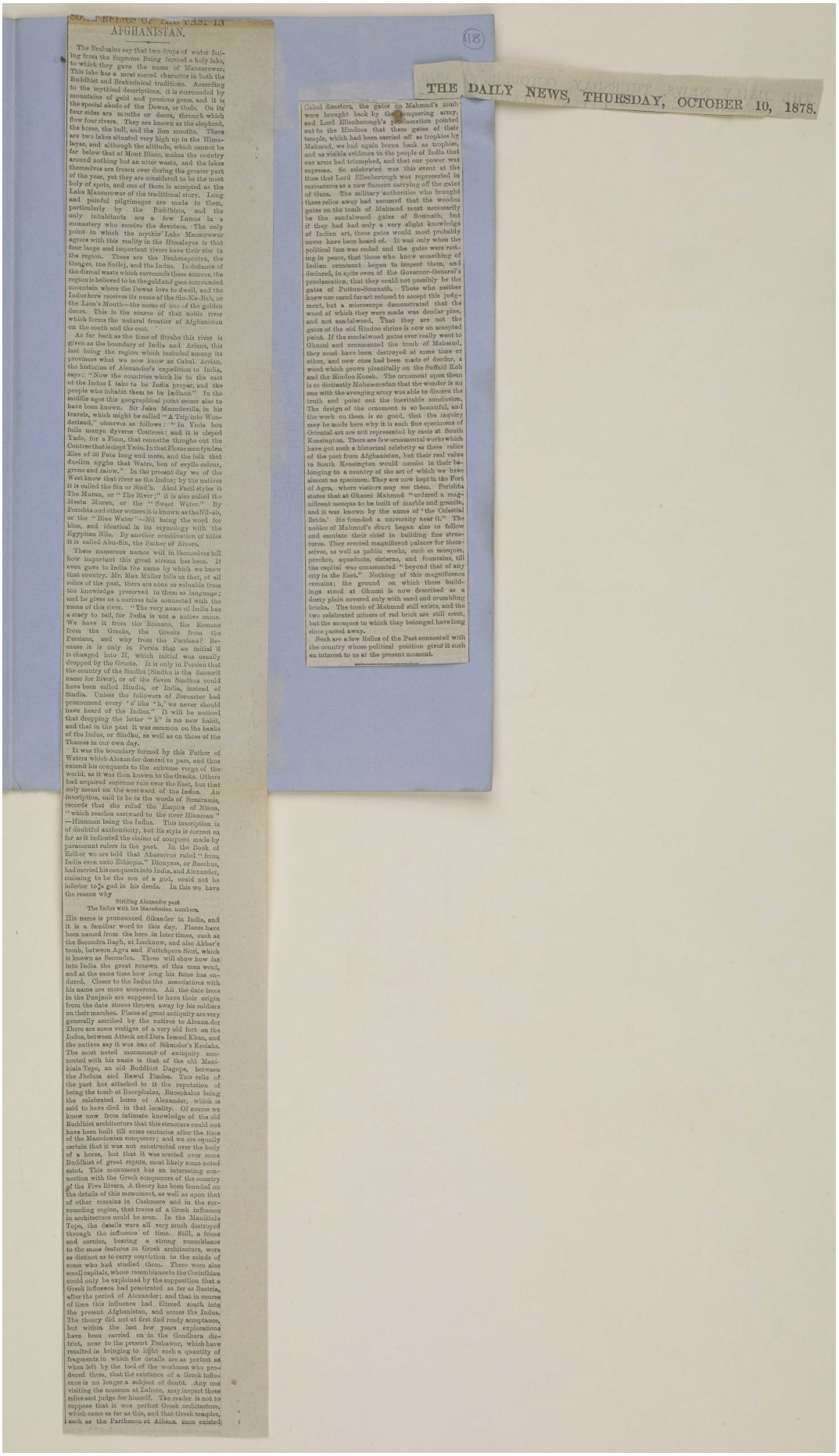

RELICS OF THE PAST IN AFGHANISTAN.

The Brahmins say that two drops of water falling from the Supreme Being formed a holy lake, to which they gave the name of Mansurowar. This lake has a most sacred character in both the Buddhist and Brahminical traditions. According to the mythical descriptions, it is surrounded by mountains of gold and precious gems, and it is the special abode of the Dewas, or Gods. On its four sides are mouths or doors, through which flow four rivers. They are known as the elephant, the horse, the bull, and the lion mouths. There are two lakes situated very high up in the Himalayas, and although the altitude, which cannot be far below that of Mont Blanc, makes the country around nothing but an utter waste, and the lakes themselves are frozen over during the greater part of the year, yet they are considered to be the most holy of spots, and one of them is accepted as the Lake Mansurowar of the traditional story. Long and painful pilgrimages are made to them, particularly by the Buddhists, and the only inhabitants are a few Lamas in a monastery who receive the devotees. The only point in which the mythic Lake Mansurowar agrees with this reality in the Himalayas is that four large and important rivers have their rise in the region. These are the Brahmapootra, the Ganges, the Sutlej, and the Indus. In defiance of the dismal waste which surrounds these sources, the region is believed to be the gold and gem surrounded mountain where the Dewas love to dwell, and the Indus here receives its name of the Sin-Ka-Bab, or the Lion's Mouth—the name of one of the golden doors. This is the source of that noble river which forms the natural frontier of Afghanistan on the south and the east.

As far back as the time of Strabo this river is given as the boundary of India and Arians, this last being the region which included among its provinces what we now know as Cabul. Arrian, the historian of Alexander's expedition to India, says: "Now the countries which lie to the east of the Indus I take to be India proper, and the people who inhabit them to be Indians." In the middle ages this geographical point seems also to have been known. Sir John Maunderville, in his travels, which might be called "A Trip into Wonderland," observes as follows: "In Ynde ben fulle manys dyverse Contrees: and it is cleped Ynde, for a Flom, that renneth throghe out the Contree that is clept Ynde. In that Flome men fynden Ries of 30 Fote long and more, and the folk that dwelln nyghe that Watre, ben of eyllo colour, grene and ynlow." In the present day we of the West know that river as the Indus; by the natives it is called the Sin or Sind'h. Abul Fazil styles it The Muran, or "The River;" it is also called the Mesta Muran, or the "Sweet Water." By Persians and other writers it is known as the Nil-ab, or the "Blue Water"—Nil being the word for blue, and identical in its etymology with the Egyptian Nile. By another combination of titles it is called Abu-Sin, the Father of Rivers.

These numerous names will in themselves tell how important this great stream has been. It even gave to India the name by which we know that country. Mr. Max Muller tells us that, of all relics of the past, there are none so valuable from the knowledge preserved in them as language; and he gives us a curious tale connected with the name of this river. "The very name of India has a story to tell, for India is not a native name. We have it from the Romans, the Romans from the Greeks, the Greeks from the Persians, and why from the Persians? Because it is only in Persia that an initial S is changed into H, which initial was usually dropped by the Greeks. It is only in Persian that the country of the Sindhu (Sindhu is the Sanscrit name for River), or of the Seven Sindhus could have been called Hindia, or India, instead of Sindia. Unless the followers of Zoroaster had pronounced every 's' like 'h,' we never should have heard of the Indies." It will be noticed that dropping the letter "h" is no new habit, and that in the past it was common on the banks of the Indus, or Sindhu, as well as on those of the Thames in our own day.

It was the boundary formed by this Father of Waters which Alexander desired to pass, and thus extend his conquests to the extreme verge of the world, as it was then known to the Greeks. Others had acquired supreme rule over the East, but that only meant on the westward of the Indus. An inscription, said to be in the words of Semiramis, records that she ruled the Empire of Ninus, "which reaches eastward to the river Hinanan" —Hinaman being the Indus. This inscription is of doubtful authenticity, but its style is correct so far as it indicated the claims of conquest made by paramount rulers in the past. In the Book of Esther we are told that Ahasuerus ruled "from India even unto Ethiopia." Dionyson, or Bacchus, had carried his conquests into India, and Alexander, claiming to be the son of a god, could not be inferior to a god in his deeds. In this we have the reason why

Striding Alexander past
The Indus with his Macedonian numbers.

His name is pronounced Sikander in India, and it is a familiar word to this day. Places have been named from the hero in later times, such as the Secundra Bagh, at Lucknow, and also Akbar's tomb, between Agra and Futtehpore Sicri, which is known as Secundra. These will show how far into India the great renown of this man went, and at the same time how long his fame has endured. Closer to the Indus the associations with his name are more numerous. All the date trees in the Punjaub are supposed to have their origin from the date stones thrown away by his soldiers on their marches. Places of great antiquity are very generally ascribed by the natives to Alexander. There are some vestiges of a very old fort on the Indus, between Attock and Dera Ismael Khan, and the natives say it was one of Sikander's Kealahs. The most noted monument of antiquity connected with his name is that of the old Manikiala Tope, an old Buddhist Dagope, between the Jhelum and Rawul Pindee. This relic of the past has attached to it the reputation of being the tomb of Bucephalus, Bucephalus being the celebrated horse of Alexander, which is said to have died in that locality. Of course we know now from intimate knowledge of the old Buddhist architecture that this structure could not have been built till some centuries after the time of the Macedonian conqueror; and we are equally certain that it was not constructed over the body of a horse, but that it was erected over some Buddhist of great repute, most likely some noted saint. This monument has an interesting connection with the Greek conquerors of the country of the Five Rivers. A theory has been founded on the details of this monument, as well as upon that of other remains in Cashmere and in the surrounding region, that traces of a Greek influence in architecture could be seen. In the Manikiala Tope, the details were all very much destroyed through the influence of time. Still, a frieze and cornice, bearing a strong resemblance to the same features in Greek architecture, were so distinct as to carry conviction to the minds of some who had studied them. There were also small capitals, whose resemblance to the Corinthian could only be explained by the supposition that a Greek influence had penetrated as far as Bactria, after the period of Alexander; and that in course of time this influence had filtered south into the present Afghanistan, and across the Indus. The theory did not at first find ready acceptance, but within the last few years explorations have been carried on in the Gandhara district, near to the present Peshawur, which have resulted in bringing to light such a quantity of fragments in which the details are as perfect as when left by the tool of the workmen who produced them, that the existence of a Greek influence is no longer a subject of doubt. Any one visiting the museum at Lahore, may inspect these relics and judge for himself. The reader is not to suppose that it was perfect Greek architecture, which came so far as this, and that Greek temples, such as the Parthenon at Athens, once existed

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THE DAILY NEWS, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1878.

Cabul disasters, the gates on Mahmud's tomb were brought back by the conquering army, and Lord Ellenborough's proclamation pointed out to the Hindoos that these gates of their temple, which had been carried off as trophies by Mahmud, we had again borne back as trophies, and as visible evidence to the people of India that our arms had triumphed, and that our power was supreme. So celebrated was this event at the time that Lord Ellenborough was represented in caricatures as a new Samson carrying off the gates of Gaza. The military authorities who brought these relics away had assumed that the wooden gates on the tomb of Mahmud must necessarily be the sandalwood gates of Somnath, but if they had had only a very slight knowledge of Indian art, these gates would most probably never have been heard of. It was only when the political fuss was ended and the gates were resting in peace, that those who knew something of Indian ornament began to inspect them, and declared, in spite even of the Governor-General's proclamation, that they could not possibly be the gates of Putten-Somnath. Those who neither knew nor cared for art refused to accept this judgment, but a microscope demonstrated that the wood of which they were made was deodar pine, and not sandalwood. That they are not the gates of the old Hindoo shrine is now an accepted point. If the sandalwood gates ever really went to Ghuzni and ornamented the tomb of Mahmud, they must have been destroyed at some time or other, and new ones had been made of deodar, a wood which grows plentifully on the Suffaid Koh and the Hindoo Koosh. The ornament upon them is so distinctly Mohammedan that the wonder is no one with the avenging army was able to discern the truth and point out the inevitable conclusion. The design of the ornament is so beautiful, and the work on them is so good, that the inquiry may be made here why it is such fine specimens of Oriental art are not represented by casts at South Kensington. There are few ornamental works which have got such a historical celebrity as these relics of the past from Afghanistan, but their real value to South Kensington would consist in their belonging to a country of the art of which we have almost no specimen. They are now kept in the Fort of Agra, where visitors may see them. Perishta states that at Ghazni Mahmud "ordered a magnificent mosque to be built of marble and granite, and it was known by the name of 'the Celestial Bride.' He founded a university near it." The nobles of Mahmud's court began also to follow and emulate their chief in building fine structures. They erected magnificent palaces for themselves, as well as public works, such as mosques, porches, aqueducts, cisterns, and fountains, till the capital was ornamented "beyond that of any city in the East." Nothing of this magnificence remains; the ground on which these buildings stood at Ghuzni is now described as a dusty plain covered only with sand and crumbling bricks. The tomb of Mahmud still exists, and the two celebrated minars of red brick are still erect, but the mosques to which they belonged have long since passed away.

Such are a few Relics of the Past connected with the country whose political position gives it such an interest to us at the present moment.

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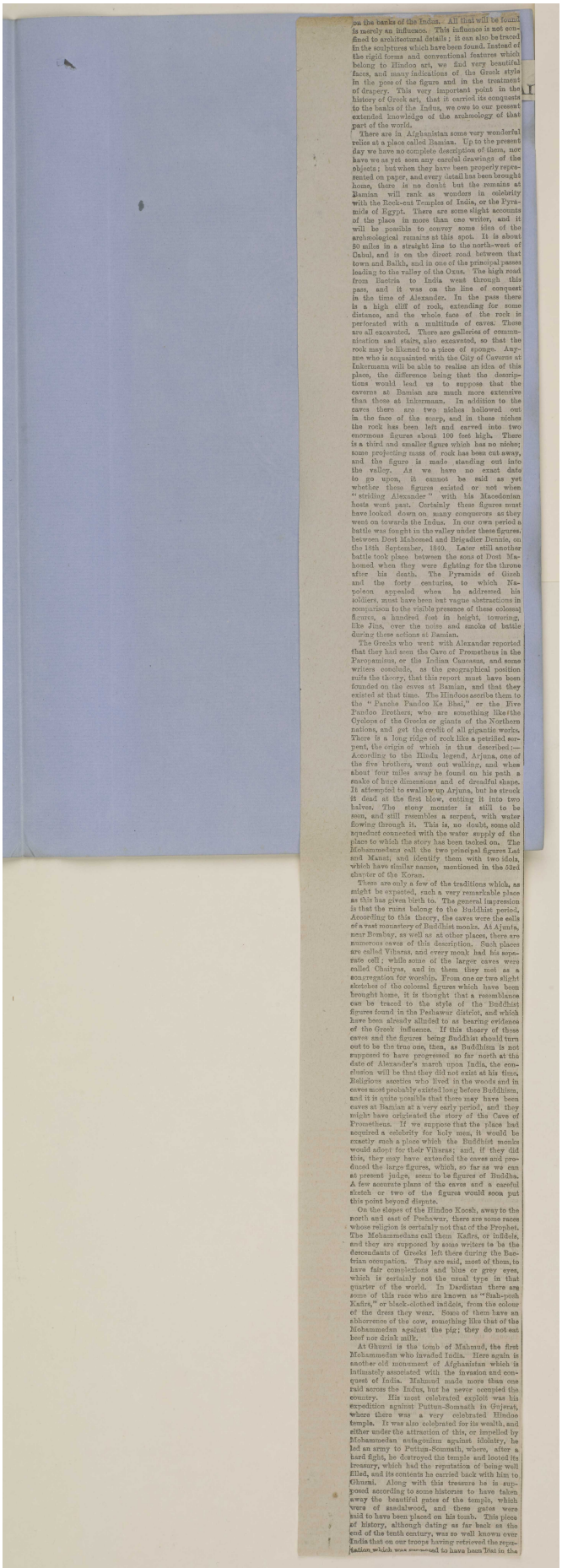

on the banks of the Indus. All that will be found is merely an influence. This influence is not confined to architectural details; it can also be traced in the sculptures which have been found. Instead of the rigid forms and conventional features which belong to Hindoo art, we find very beautiful faces, and many indications of the Greek style in the pose of the figure and in the treatment of drapery. This very important point in the history of Greek art, that it carried its conquests to the banks of the Indus, we owe to our present extended knowledge of the archæology of that part of the world.

There are in Afghanistan some very wonderful relics at a place called Bamian. Up to the present day we have no complete description of them, nor have we as yet seen any careful drawings of the objects; but when they have been properly represented on paper, and every detail has been brought home, there is no doubt but the remains at Bamian will rank as wonders in celebrity with the Rock-cut Temples of India, or the Pyramids of Egypt. There are some slight accounts of the place in more than one writer, and it will be possible to convey some idea of the archæological remains at this spot. It is about 80 miles in a straight line to the north-west of Cabul, and is on the direct road between that town and Balkh, and in one of the principal passes leading to the valley of the Oxus. The high road from Bactria to India went through this pass, and it was on the line of conquest in the time of Alexander. In the pass there is a high cliff of rock, extending for some distance, and the whole face of the rock is perforated with a multitude of caves. These are all excavated. There are galleries of communication and stairs, also excavated, so that the rock may be likened to a piece of sponge. Anyone who is acquainted with the City of Caverns at Inkermann will be able to realise an idea of this place, the difference being that the descriptions would lead us to suppose that the caverns at Bamian are much more extensive than those at Inkermann. In addition to the caves there are two niches hollowed out in the face of the scarp, and in these niches the rock has been left and carved into two enormous figures about 100 feet high. There is a third and smaller figure which has no niche; some projecting mass of rock has been cut away, and the figure is made standing out into the valley. As we have no exact data to go upon, it cannot be said as yet whether these figures existed or not when "striding Alexander" with his Macedonian hosts went past. Certainly these figures must have looked down on many conquerors as they went on towards the Indus. In our own period a battle was fought in the valley under these figures, between Dost Mahomed and Brigadier Dennie, on the 18th September, 1840. Later still another battle took place between the sons of Dost Mahomed when they were fighting for the throne after his death. The Pyramids of Gizeh and the forty centuries, to which Napoleon appealed when he addressed his soldiers, must have been but vague abstractions in comparison to the visible presence of these colossal figures, a hundred feet in height, towering, like Jins, over the noise and smoke of battle during these actions at Bamian.

The Greeks who went with Alexander reported that they had seen the Cave of Prometheus in the Paropamisus, or the Indian Caucasus, and some writers conclude, as the geographical position suits the theory, that this report must have been founded on the caves at Bamian, and that they existed at that time. The Hindoos ascribe them to the "Panche Pandoo Ke Bhai," or the Five Pandoo Brothers, who are something like the Cyclops of the Greeks or giants of the Northern nations, and get the credit of all gigantic works. There is a long ridge of rock like a petrified serpent, the origin of which is thus described:—According to the Hindu legend, Arjuna, one of the five brothers, went out walking, and when about four miles away he found on his path a snake of huge dimensions and of dreadful shape. It attempted to swallow up Arjuna, but he struck it dead at the first blow, cutting it into two halves. The stony monster is still to be seen, and still resembles a serpent, with water flowing through it. This is, no doubt, some old aqueduct connected with the water supply of the place to which the story has been tacked on. The Mohammedans call the two principal figures Lat and Manat, and identify them with two idols, which have similar names, mentioned in the 53rd chapter of the Koran.

There are only a few of the traditions which, as might be expected, such a very remarkable place as this has given birth to. The general impression is that the ruins belong to the Buddhist period. According to this theory, the caves were the cells of a vast monastery of Buddhist monks. At Ajunta, near Bombay, as well as at other places, there are numerous caves of this description. Such places are called Viharas, and every monk had his separate cell; while some of the larger caves were called Chaityas, and in them they met as a congregation for worship. From one or two slight sketches of the colossal figures which have been brought home, it is thought that a resemblance can be traced to the style of the Buddhist figures found in the Peshawur district, and which have been already alluded to as bearing evidence of the Greek influence. If this theory of these caves and the figures being Buddhist should turn out to be the true one, then, as Buddhism is not supposed to have progressed so far north at the date of Alexander's march upon India, the conclusion will be that they did not exist at his time. Religious ascetics who lived in the woods and in caves most probably existed long before Buddhism, and it is quite possible that there may have been caves at Bamian at a very early period, and they might have originated the story of the Cave of Prometheus. If we suppose that the place had acquired a celebrity for holy men, it would be exactly such a place which the Buddhist monks would adopt for their Viharas; and, if they did this, they may have extended the caves and produced the large figures, which, so far as we can at present judge, seem to be figures of Buddha. A few accurate plans of the caves and a careful sketch or two of the figures would soon put this point beyond dispute.

On the slopes of the Hindoo Koosh, away to the north and east of Peshawur, there are some races whose religion is certainly not that of the Prophet. The Mohammedans call them Kafirs, or infidels, and they are supposed by some writers to be the descendants of Greeks left there during the Bactrian occupation. They are said, most of them, to have fair complexions and blue or grey eyes, which is certainly not the usual type in that quarter of the world. In Dardistan there are some of this race who are known as "Siah-posh Kafirs," or black-clothed infidels, from the colour of the dress they wear. Some of them have an abhorrence of the cow, something like that of the Mohammedan against the pig; they do not eat beef nor drink milk.

At Ghuzni is the tomb of Mahmud, the first Mohammedan who invaded India. Here again is another old monument of Afghanistan which is intimately associated with the invasion and conquest of India. Mahmud made more than one raid across the Indus, but he never occupied the country. His most celebrated exploit was his expedition against Puttun-Somnath in Gujerat, where there was a very celebrated Hindoo temple. It was also celebrated for its wealth, and either under the attraction of this, or impelled by Mohammedan antagonism against idolatry, he led an army to Puttun-Somnath, where, after a hard fight, he destroyed the temple and looted its treasury, which had the reputation of being well filled, and its contents he carried back with him to Ghuzni. Along with this treasure he is supposed according to some historns to have taken away the beautiful gates of the temple, which were of sandalwood, and these gates were said to have been placed on his tomb. This piece of history, although dating as far back as the end of the tenth century, was so well known over India that on our troops having retrieved the reputation which was supposed to have been lost in the

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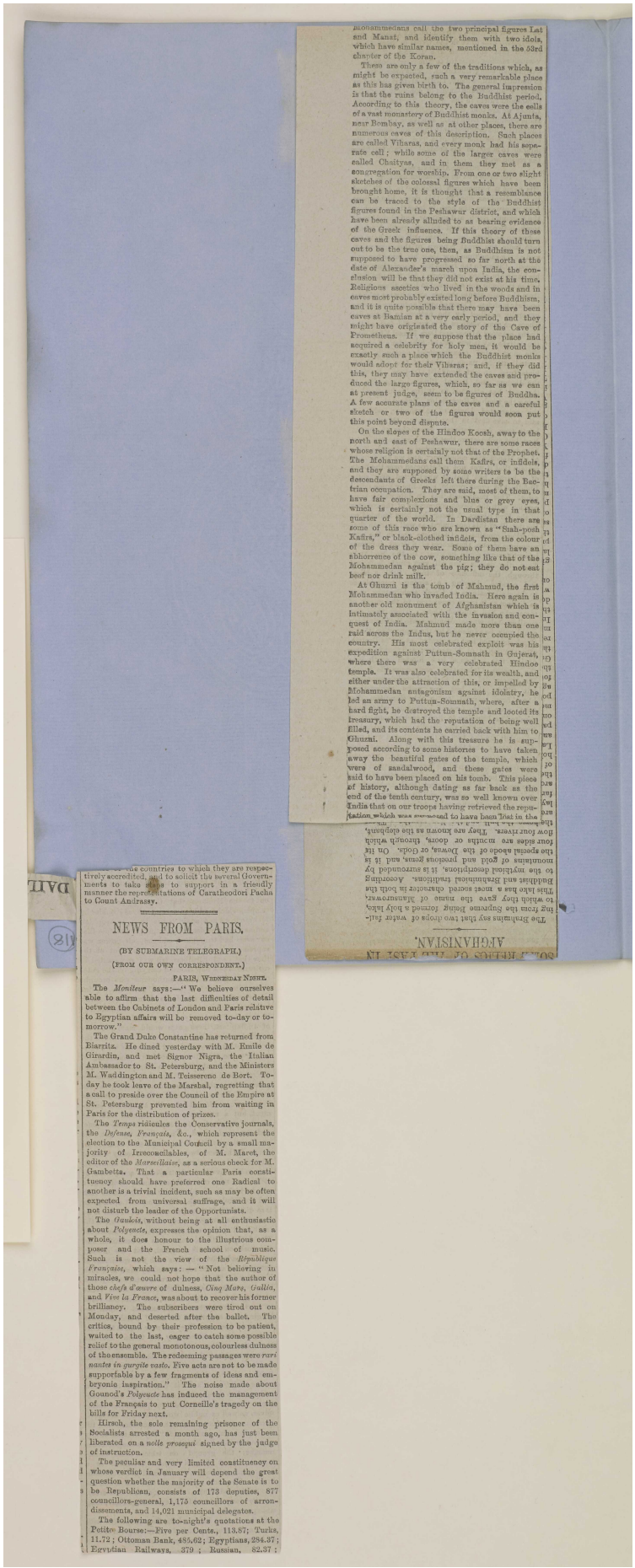

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AFGHANISTAN.

The Brahmins say that two drops of water falling from the Supreme Being formed a holy lake, to which they gave the name of Manasowar. This lake has a most sacred character in both Buddhism and Brahminical traditions. According to the mythical descriptions, it is surrounded by mountains of gold and precious gems, and it is the special abode of the Devas, or Gods. On the four sides are marble or stone steps, through which four rivers, the Ganges, Sinde, Sirsa, and Jumna, are known as the colossal

tively accredited, and to solicit the several Governments to take steps to support in a friendly manner the representations of Caratheodori Pacha to Count Andrassy.

NEWS FROM PARIS.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

The *Moniteur* says:—"We believe ourselves able to affirm that the last difficulties of detail between the Cabinets of London and Paris relative to Egyptian affairs will be removed to-day or to-morrow."

The Grand Duke Constantine has returned from Biarritz. He dined yesterday with M. Emile de Girardin, and met Signor Nigra, the Italian Ambassador to St. Petersburg, and the Ministers M. Waddington and M. Teisserenc de Bort. To-day he took leave of the Marshal, regretting that a call to preside over the Council of the Empire at St. Petersburg prevented him from waiting in Paris for the distribution of prizes.

The *Temps* ridicules the Conservative journals, the *Defense*, *Français*, &c., which represent the election to the Municipal Council by a small majority of Irreconcilables, of M. Maret, the editor of the *Marseillaise*, as a serious check for M. Gambetta. That a particular Paris constituency should have preferred one Radical to another is a trivial incident, such as may be often expected from universal suffrage, and it will not disturb the leader of the Opportunists.

The *Gaulois*, without being at all enthusiastic about *Polyeucte*, expresses the opinion that, as a whole, it does honour to the illustrious composer and the French school of music. Such is not the view of the *République Française*, which says:—"Not believing in miracles, we could not hope that the author of those *chefs d'œuvre* of dulness, *Cinq Mars*, *Galilée*, and *Vive la France*, was about to recover his former brilliancy. The subscribers were tired out on Monday, and deserted after the ballet. The critics, bound by their profession to be patient, waited to the last, eager to catch some possible relief to the general monotonous, colourless dulness of the ensemble. The redeeming passages were *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*. Five acts are not to be made supportable by a few fragments of ideas and embryonic inspiration." The noise made about Gounod's *Polyeucte* has induced the management of the Français to put Corneille's tragedy on the bills for Friday next.

Hirsch, the sole remaining prisoner of the Socialists arrested a month ago, has just been liberated on a *nolle prosequi* signed by the judge of instruction.

The peculiar and very limited constituency on whose verdict in January will depend the great question whether the majority of the Senate is to be Republican, consists of 173 deputies, 877 councillors-general, 1,175 councillors of arrondissements, and 14,021 municipal delegates.

The following are to-night's quotations at the Petite Bourse:—Five per Cents., 113.87; Turks, 11.72; Ottoman Bank, 485.62; Egyptians, 284.37; Egyptian Railways, 379; Russian, 82.37;

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Daily Telegraph Oct 10

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

MARCH ON THULL.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, OCT. 9 (9.25 P.M.)

The troops composing the Kurram column are now rapidly collecting at Kohat, where General Roberts arrived to-day.

Two regiments marched to-day from Kohat to Thull.

The Council will sit in Calcutta under a President in Council during the Viceroy's absence at Lahore.

The new King of Burmah has announced the remission of some commercial taxes.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

The *Exchange Gazette*, of St. Petersburg, publishes the following:

If our constant advance in Central Asia has any fixed object—if we are to derive any real profit from our possessions there, and not allow them to suck our blood and exhaust our treasury for ever—we cannot remain neutral in the Afghan question. The problem as to whether we can protect ourselves against England's pretensions in the East can only be solved in Afghanistan. If the mountain passes continue to be under our influence, our strength in the East will equal that of the English, but if the passes go to England there will be no end to her claims and interference in our Central Asiatic affairs. Afghanistan is the most important strategical point in the whole territory involved in the Eastern dispute, and there we can oppose England most advantageously with every hope of success. We can oblige England to throw her entire resources into a war with Afghanistan—to play the Empire of India and the question of her political rank on one card—whereas war in Afghanistan would require hardly any effort on our part. . . . . It is consequently in our interest not only to afford assistance to the Ameer, but to make his cause our own.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

SIMLA, OCT. 9.

It is officially stated that no collision with the Afghans has yet occurred anywhere on the frontier, and no immediate attack on Ali Musjid is contemplated. Beyond active military preparations nothing has been done, and all statements to the contrary must be received with caution.

Standard Oct 10

THE AFGHAN WAR.

REPORTED CAPTURE OF THE KHYBER PASS.

ADVANCE UPON DAKKA.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

I have just been informed, upon what I believe to be good authority, that the column under General Ross has passed the fort of Ali Musjid, and that Dakka will be captured to-morrow at any cost.

It is now definitely settled that the Government will leave for Calcutta on the 10th of November. The Viceroy will remain at Lahore till the 20th of December.

The new King of Burmah has issued a decree considerably relaxing the Customs duties at the ports, and has also lightened the internal taxation of the kingdom. Various reforms are to be introduced.

It is now stated that Abdulla Jan died of heart disease.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

CALCUTTA, WEDNESDAY MORNING.

It is considered here to be improbable that any further advance beyond Jumrood will be made for some days, in order that the troops now going up may arrive before serious operations commence, but no official information whatever is forthcoming as to what is taking place.

It is rumoured that a letter has arrived from the Ameer.

The Afghan force at Ali Musjid now amount to eight regular regiments of infantry and eighteen guns. Colonel Villiers, military secretary to the Viceroy, and brother to Lady Lytton, will accompany the Peshawur column.

The news telegraphed to us at a late hour last night by our Correspondent at Simla is of the highest importance: he states that he has good authority for saying that General Ross's column has passed the fort of Ali Musjid and is marching on Dakka, which is to be attacked and captured at any cost. The Dakka meant is, of course, Dakka Kalan, which lies at the Afghan mouth of the Khyber Pass, and is distant only two miles from Lalpura. The news certainly is surprising, as our telegrams for the last two days had prepared us for a delay of some length before the commencement of hostilities. Still, it is possible that the facts may be as stated, as a portion at least of the large reinforcements known to be on the march may have arrived at Jumrood and thus raised the force under General Ross to a point which would, in the opinion of the military authorities, justify an advance.

It is to be remarked that the telegram does not say that the fort of Ali Musjid has been captured, but that it has been passed. It could not be passed by a column advancing up the Pass; for the gorge is completely swept by its guns, and if the British troops are in the upper part of the valley marching upon Dakka, they must have been guided by the Khyberees over some mountain paths known only to them. This is quite possible, but in that case the troops advancing cannot have taken guns with them. It appears a bold step for such a column to throw itself in the rear of a strong force such as that which holds the fort of Ali Musjid, but boldness in a case like this is often the safest policy, and the chances are that if the Afghans defending the fort of Ali Musjid find that we are in their rear, they will at once evacuate the fort and retreat across the hills as best they may. Dakka is probably defended, like the majority of Afghan towns, by a mud wall, and four thousand British troops once in possession could hold the place against an unlimited force of Afghans. The possession would not only strike a panic in the minds of the enemy's force in the Khyber Pass, but it would prevent further reinforcements from arriving, and would especially prevent the Momunds, who are known to be coming down, from effecting their junction with the Afghans at Ali Musjid.

If such an advance has really been made some four or five thousand men will probably have been employed upon it. The forces at Jumrood and Peshawur should by this time amount to fully ten thousand men. Half that number, with all the artillery, would be ample for a demonstration up the Pass towards Ali Musjid while the remainder were crossing the mountains, and would, of course, advance so as to make a feigned attack upon the fort directly it was known that the first column had done their work.

The telegram has at least this point in its favour, that though an unfounded rumour that we had attacked and captured Ali Musjid would be likely enough to get about, it seems somewhat improbable that anyone would have invented the news of our having turned Ali Musjid and of our marching upon Dakka before the fall of the guardian fortress of the Khyber. If the story be a true one, the exploit is worthy of the best traditions of the prowess of the British army in India. The boldness of the deed will strike the native mind throughout India, and will have a most depressing influence upon the defence of the Afghans. There is nothing improbable in our finding a mountain path which would lead us to the rear of Ali Musjid. It has often been asserted that the position could be turned. There are very few mountain passes which cannot be turned when an advancing army can obtain guides from among the natives. There are tracks from village to village unmarked upon any map, but constantly used by the country people; and by a path such as this the Khyberees may possibly have guided our advancing column. The Ameer of Cabul made a great mistake when, instead of doing his best to tempt the Afredees back to their allegiance to him, he gave orders to his troops to harass their villages as a punishment for allowing our Mission to enter the Pass. Anger and interest should alike serve to cement the alliance between ourselves and these mountain tribes, and if the present news be true, the benefit we have already obtained from their friendship would be cheaply purchased at a price sufficient to enrich them for a generation.

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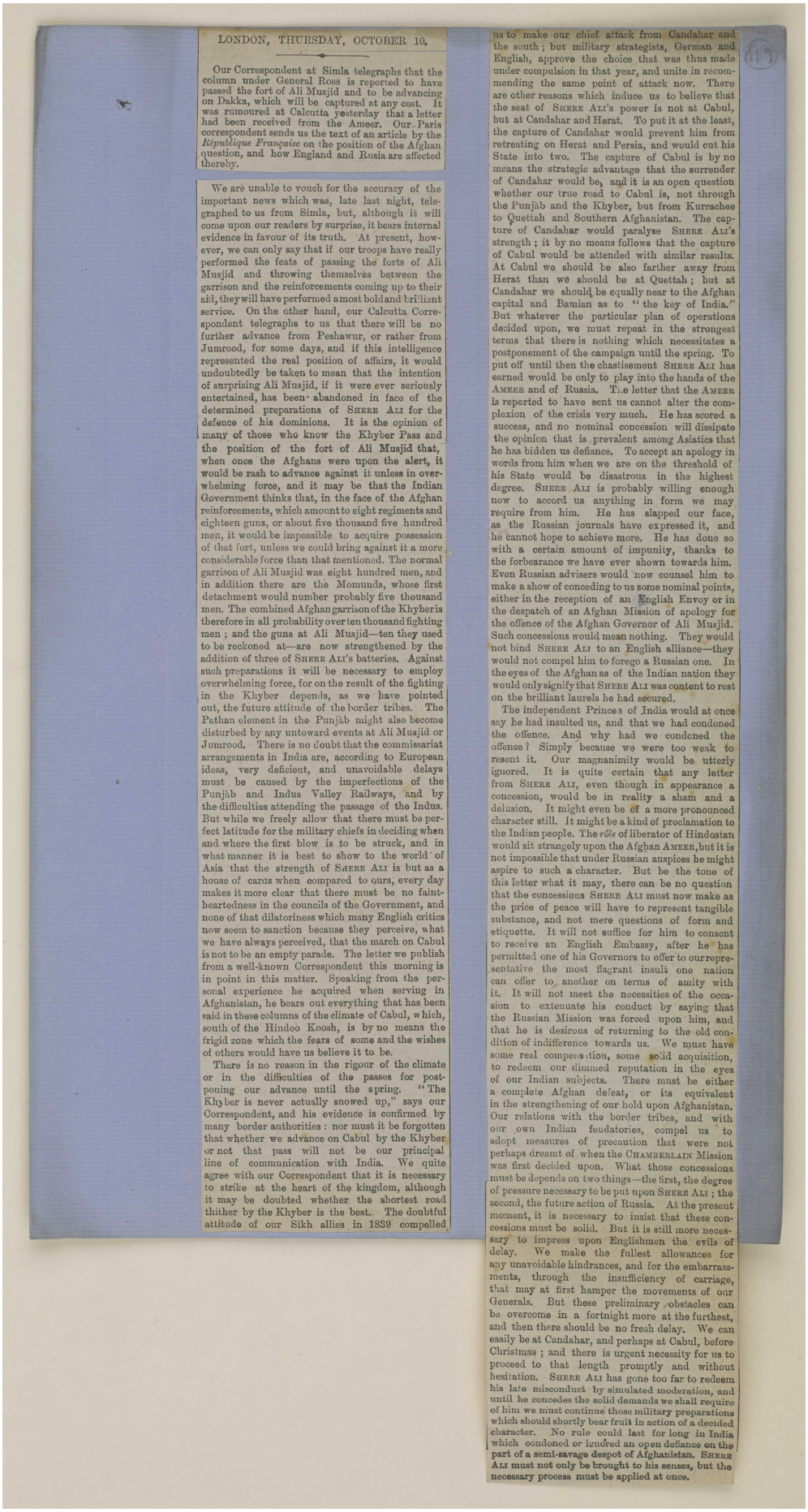

LONDON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10.

Our Correspondent at Simla telegraphs that the column under General Ross is reported to have passed the fort of Ali Musjid and to be advancing on Dakka, which will be captured at any cost. It was rumoured at Calcutta yesterday that a letter had been received from the Ameer. Our Paris correspondent sends us the text of an article by the *République Française* on the position of the Afghan question, and how England and Rusia are affected thereby.

We are unable to vouch for the accuracy of the important news which was, late last night, telegraphed to us from Simla, but, although it will come upon our readers by surprise, it bears internal evidence in favour of its truth. At present, however, we can only say that if our troops have really performed the feats of passing the forts of Ali Musjid and throwing themselves between the garrison and the reinforcements coming up to their aid, they will have performed a most bold and brilliant service. On the other hand, our Calcutta Correspondent telegraphs to us that there will be no further advance from Peshawur, or rather from Jumrood, for some days, and if this intelligence represented the real position of affairs, it would undoubtedly be taken to mean that the intention of surprising Ali Musjid, if it were ever seriously entertained, has been abandoned in face of the determined preparations of SHERE ALI for the defence of his dominions. It is the opinion of many of those who know the Khyber Pass and the position of the fort of Ali Musjid that, when once the Afghans were upon the alert, it would be rash to advance against it unless in overwhelming force, and it may be that the Indian Government thinks that, in the face of the Afghan reinforcements, which amount to eight regiments and eighteen guns, or about five thousand five hundred men, it would be impossible to acquire possession of that fort, unless we could bring against it a more considerable force than that mentioned. The normal garrison of Ali Musjid was eight hundred men, and in addition there are the Momunds, whose first detachment would number probably five thousand men. The combined Afghan garrison of the Khyber is therefore in all probability over ten thousand fighting men; and the guns at Ali Musjid—ten they used to be reckoned at—are now strengthened by the addition of three of SHERE ALI's batteries. Against such preparations it will be necessary to employ overwhelming force, for on the result of the fighting in the Khyber depends, as we have pointed out, the future attitude of the border tribes. The Pathan element in the Punjâb might also become disturbed by any untoward events at Ali Musjid or Jumrood. There is no doubt that the commissariat arrangements in India are, according to European ideas, very deficient, and unavoidable delays must be caused by the imperfections of the Punjâb and Indus Valley Railways, and by the difficulties attending the passage of the Indus. But while we freely allow that there must be perfect latitude for the military chiefs in deciding when and where the first blow is to be struck, and in what manner it is best to show to the world of Asia that the strength of SHERE ALI is but as a house of cards when compared to ours, every day makes it more clear that there must be no faint-heartedness in the councils of the Government, and none of that dilatoriness which many English critics now seem to sanction because they perceive, what we have always perceived, that the march on Cabul is not to be an empty parade. The letter we publish from a well-known Correspondent this morning is in point in this matter. Speaking from the personal experience he acquired when serving in Afghanistan, he bears out everything that has been said in these columns of the climate of Cabul, which, south of the Hindoo Koosh, is by no means the frigid zone which the fears of some and the wishes of others would have us believe it to be.

There is no reason in the rigour of the climate or in the difficulties of the passes for postponing our advance until the spring. "The Khyber is never actually snowed up," says our Correspondent, and his evidence is confirmed by many border authorities: nor must it be forgotten that whether we advance on Cabul by the Khyber or not that pass will not be our principal line of communication with India. We quite agree with our Correspondent that it is necessary to strike at the heart of the kingdom, although it may be doubted whether the shortest road thither by the Khyber is the best. The doubtful attitude of our Sikh allies in 1839 compelled us to make our chief attack from Candahar and the south; but military strategists, German and English, approve the choice that was thus made under compulsion in that year, and unite in recommending the same point of attack now. There are other reasons which induce us to believe that the seat of SHERE ALI's power is not at Cabul, but at Candahar and Herat. To put it at the least, the capture of Candahar would prevent him from retreating on Herat and Persia, and would cut his State into two. The capture of Cabul is by no means the strategic advantage that the surrender of Candahar would be, and it is an open question whether our true road to Cabul is, not through the Punjâb and the Khyber, but from Kurrachee to Quettah and Southern Afghanistan. The capture of Candahar would paralyse SHERE ALI's strength; it by no means follows that the capture of Cabul would be attended with similar results. At Cabul we should be also farther away from Herat than we should be at Quettah; but at Candahar we should be equally near to the Afghan capital and Bamian as to "the key of India." But whatever the particular plan of operations decided upon, we must repeat in the strongest terms that there is nothing which necessitates a postponement of the campaign until the spring. To put off until then the chastisement SHERE ALI has earned would be only to play into the hands of the AMEER and of Russia. The letter that the AMEER is reported to have sent us cannot alter the complexion of the crisis very much. He has scored a success, and no nominal concession will dissipate the opinion that is prevalent among Asiatics that he has bidden us defiance. To accept an apology in words from him when we are on the threshold of his State would be disastrous in the highest degree. SHERE ALI is probably willing enough now to accord us anything in form we may require from him. He has slapped our face, as the Russian journals have expressed it, and he cannot hope to achieve more. He has done so with a certain amount of impunity, thanks to the forbearance we have ever shown towards him. Even Russian advisers would now counsel him to make a show of conceding to us some nominal points, either in the reception of an English Envoy or in the despatch of an Afghan Mission of apology for the offence of the Afghan Governor of Ali Musjid. Such concessions would mean nothing. They would not bind SHERE ALI to an English alliance—they would not compel him to forego a Russian one. In the eyes of the Afghan as of the Indian nation they would only signify that SHERE ALI was content to rest on the brilliant laurels he had secured.

The independent Princes of India would at once say he had insulted us, and that we had condoned the offence. And why had we condoned the offence? Simply because we were too weak to resent it. Our magnanimity would be utterly ignored. It is quite certain that any letter from SHERE ALI, even though in appearance a concession, would be in reality a sham and a delusion. It might even be of a more pronounced character still. It might be a kind of proclamation to the Indian people. The *rôle* of liberator of Hindostan would sit strangely upon the Afghan AMEER, but it is not impossible that under Russian auspices he might aspire to such a character. But be the tone of this letter what it may, there can be no question that the concessions SHERE ALI must now make as the price of peace will have to represent tangible substance, and not mere questions of form and etiquette. It will not suffice for him to consent to receive an English Embassy, after he has permitted one of his Governors to offer to our representative the most flagrant insult one nation can offer to another on terms of amity with it. It will not meet the necessities of the occasion to extenuate his conduct by saying that the Russian Mission was forced upon him, and that he is desirous of returning to the old condition of indifference towards us. We must have some real compensation, some solid acquisition, to redeem our dimmed reputation in the eyes of our Indian subjects. There must be either a complete Afghan defeat, or its equivalent in the strengthening of our hold upon Afghanistan. Our relations with the border tribes, and with our own Indian feudatories, compel us to adopt measures of precaution that were not perhaps dreamt of when the CHAMBERLAIN Mission was first decided upon. What those concessions must be depends on two things—the first, the degree of pressure necessary to be put upon SHERE ALI; the second, the future action of Russia. At the present moment, it is necessary to insist that these concessions must be solid. But it is still more necessary to impress upon Englishmen the evils of delay. We make the fullest allowances for any unavoidable hindrances, and for the embarrassments, through the insufficiency of carriage, that may at first hamper the movements of our Generals. But these preliminary obstacles can be overcome in a fortnight more at the furthest, and then there should be no fresh delay. We can easily be at Candahar, and perhaps at Cabul, before Christmas; and there is urgent necessity for us to proceed to that length promptly and without hesitation. SHERE ALI has gone too far to redeem his late misconduct by simulated moderation, and until he concedes the solid demands we shall require of him we must continue those military preparations which should shortly bear fruit in action of a decided character. No rule could last for long in India which condoned or ignored an open defiance on the part of a semi-savage despot of Afghanistan. SHERE ALI must not only be brought to his senses, but the necessary process must be applied at once.

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THE AFGHAN WAR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

SIR,—Having served two years in Afghanistan in the years 1839-40, I desire, with your permission, to write a few words regarding the present posture of affairs between the Indian Government and the Ameer of Cabul.

I thoroughly agree with those who urge that the blow, if blow there is to be, should be struck at once. Delay would not only produce a bad moral effect throughout India, but would give the Afghans time to prepare for a more stubborn resistance and to seek aid from without.

Nearly three months of open weather lie before us, which would be ample for the purpose, should our commissariat arrangements not require any great delay before commencing a forward move.

While some advocate an advance on Candahar, and others operations in the Koorum Valley, thus threatening Cabul from the south, I can myself perceive no means more forcible to bring the Ameer to his senses, or otherwise to avenge the affront which he has put upon us, than a march upon his capital. It is useless to strike at the extremities. The heart of the kingdom should be our object.

There is some misapprehension, I think, regarding the climate between our frontier at Peshawur and Cabul. At no time is the Khyber Pass, as a rule, blocked by snow. It does fall on the summits of the mountains in the winter, but to no great extent. I marched through the Pass with Horse Artillery guns in the middle of December; the difficulties of the route were by no means great, and the cold was moderate, not more intense than in the northern parts of the Punjaub. The valley of Jellallabad possesses a mild climate. At Cabul itself snow does not fall to any great extent until after Christmas; and the passes and defiles, though they have obtained a mournful celebrity, do not present any serious difficulties to the passage of an army with artillery. When I made the march at the close of 1840, we found no obstacles in our way that our own teams could not overcome, with an occasional pull at the drag-ropes. The country generally between Peshawur and Cabul is nothing more than what a well-appointed army, skilfully directed, should be able to traverse successfully, even though opposed by brave mountaineers, as the hills which command the passes and defiles are accessible, and should be crowned by flanking parties before the gorges are entered by the columns. Under such circumstances, with troops in good order and high spirits, the Khyber, Jugdulluck, and Koord Kabul Passes would lose much of their supposed importance, even though there might be, perhaps, some snow in the last-mentioned defile.

It must be remembered that when our troops commenced that disastrous retreat from Cabul in January, 1842, they were, with a few noble exceptions, already in a demoralised state. For two months they had been almost completely shut up in their cantonments, and unfortunately that portion of the brigade upon which commanders are wont to rely principally in times of extreme danger had lost all spirit, and had learned to turn their backs to their enemies.

There was another circumstance that added most materially to the difficulties of the situation, and that was the enormous number of camp followers that accompanied the brigade. They far outnumbered the effective fighting men, and at each renewal of the Ghiljies' attack they so crowded upon and hampered our soldiers that the latter could scarce use their weapons against the enemy, but had often to turn them against the poor shivering fugitives, to clear the way for their own march.

These were the real evils of the flight; otherwise, neither the snow nor the passes, nor the incessant assaults of the mountaineers, could have so entirely overthrown an Anglo-Indian brigade, under British officers. So I trust that neither dread of the snow, nor an exaggerated idea of the difficulties of the road will induce those in whom the direction of affairs rests to order any half measures, or indirect attacks, except that these latter would be useful as aiding in the general plan of the campaign, and perhaps tend to mislead the enemy. But the real attack, I feel confident, should be through the Khyber, against Cabul itself.

Much, of course, depends on the commissariat, for it would never do to depend on the valley of the Cabul river for supplies for our troops. If there be no difficulty on this head, I do not see why we should not march upon the capital at once. I dare say the Afghans can fight better (I do not mean more bravely only, but with more skill also) than was the case forty years since; and doubtless we have, since we annexed the Punjaub in 1849, made enemies of many hill tribes on our own borders, who must be looked after while our brigades are across the frontier.

But if the Afghans have acquired some of the science of warfare, and are better provided with ordnance than when we first encountered them, so, on the other hand, are our officers and soldiers better accustomed to mountain operations, and the latter more usefully armed with weapons of precision than was the case in former days.

Doubtless, however, it will take a considerably larger force now to accomplish the invasion successfully than that which was under the orders of Sir John Keane in 1839. Then the Afghans did not know that they could beat us under any circumstances, and then our Sepoys little dreamed that anything but victory could attend our arms. A native brigade with six light guns could then open the Khyber Pass. But now I should be sorry to see any force of less than two divisions attempt to force its way through. A check at the outset would be provocative, perhaps, of further disaster.

There is still nearly three months before us, for snow need not be taken into calculation till January. But if there be a little snow, what then? Have we not lately read what the Russians did at the passage of the Etropol Balkans? How they worked 'mid snow and ice? Can British soldiers not accomplish what others have done? But, south of the Hindu Koosh, there need be no apprehension of such difficulties as were encountered in the Turkish mountains.

Of the two years that I served in Afghanistan, twelve months were passed in the Bamian Valley. There, indeed, we were blocked up by snow. For months no horse or baggage animal of any kind could cross the snow; and often, for intervals of two and even three weeks, not even a footman could pass the mountains. For more than twenty days we had not a word of intelligence from the south; while further north we constantly received information of the movements of the Russians.

But the communication between Jellallabad and Cabul is never so completely broken.

There is more that I would say on the subject at another time, if you will permit me.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

October 8. E. K.

THE FRENCH PRESS ON THE AFGHAN QUESTION.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, WEDNESDAY.

The *République Française* to-day publishes an important article on the Afghan Question. It says:—

"There can be no doubt that the English Government has resolved to teach Shere Ali a severe lesson. This Afghan Prince has gravely insulted England, and must be punished for it. But what increases the gravity of the fact is that the Ameer, who has never liked the English, has not given vent to his hatred till after the visit of a Russian Mission to his capital. Public opinion in England has been aroused by these two facts; and the English see in them, and not without reason, a serious menace to their Indian Empire. From all points of view this Afghan affair was bound to produce a great impression both on the people and Government of Great Britain. First of all there was a premeditated offence to the Envoy of the Viceroy of India, and without desiring to discuss with the adversaries of the Ministry the question whether Lord Lytton took the right means to get the Mission of General Chamberlain accepted at Cabul, we cannot disguise the fact that the discourteous and brutal conduct of the Ameer's officers was absolutely intolerable. Let us not be told that we ought to be indulgent towards half-civilised Orientals, towards barbarians ignorant of the rules of diplomatic and international civility, and that what would not be borne from a European Government is of no consequence when the insult comes from an Eastern Power. Nowhere more than in an Asiatic Court are forms and ceremonies regarded, and Shere Ali knew perfectly well what he was doing when he prohibited the English Mission from entering his territory. Now it must not be thought that because there are few or no newspapers, telegraphs, or rapid means of publicity or communication in the East the people are not informed. News spreads there with surprising rapidity, and the gossip and talk of the bazaars do the work of the press. If the Ameer of Cabul remained unpunished the *prestige* of England in Asia would soon be diminished, and she would quickly lose her authority over her neighbours, her vassals, and her subjects in India. From this point of view alone the British Government is bound to adopt a policy of action. But there is another and not less powerful motive why England should take up the gauntlet thrown down to her by Shere Ali. The progress of Russia in Central Asia is continual, and little by little the Empire of the Czar is extending like a stain of oil over the map of that region. From the valley of the Lower Yaxartes and the Kirghise Steppes Russian domination has reached the rich valley of the Zerafchan. Samarkand has

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been annexed, and Bokhara placed under a kind of vassalage. Then Khiva came, and the mouths of the Oxus were taken possession of. After this Russia entered the Turcoman Steppes, which extend as far as Mero Korassan, and the neighbourhood of Herat. What the Cossack has done in these Steppes, and how far he has pushed his reconnaissances and established his posts, is not known. Later on Khokand was annexed, and Russia advanced as far as the vast solitudes of Pamir, where the routes of her officers got almost entangled with those of English explorers. Finally, topographical missions were sent to the Hissar, the Karaneglione, and the Valley of the Oxus, and a few months ago General Kaufmann was preparing to cross that river and encamp at the entrance to Afghanistan. The security of India might be compromised in twenty-four hours, and, thanks to the complicity of the Ameer of Cabul, an army of invasion might suddenly debouch by the defiles of the Soliman mountains into the rich plains of the Indus and the Ganges, in imitation of the great Emperors of the Middle Ages. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that the English Government should be master of the passes which lead to its Indian Empire, whose security can only be obtained at that price. The Cabinet of Lord Beaconsfield appears to have seen this fact from the outset, and the resolutions attributed to it are in conformity with the view thus taken."

In connection with the antagonism between Russia and England in Asia, the *Temps* states that Persia is likely to play an important part in the event of hostilities breaking out. It asserts that the Shah had been displaying great activity in the reorganisation of his army. Officers have been engaged in Austria; arms have been ordered in Europe; and it anticipates that by next spring it will be possible for Persia to concentrate eighteen battalions, five squadrons, and thirty guns on the Afghan frontier. The new Persian Minister of war, Mirza Hussein Khan, is said to be a partisan of Russia. The railway between Ezeli on the Caspian and Teheran is to be commenced on the 1st of December, and a road is being made between the capital and the Russian Trans-Caucasian frontier. The Russian Envoy at Teheran is also said to be assisting the Shah by his counsels, and he has promised him more substantial support. The unanimity with which the Russian press urges on the Government the duty of supporting Shere Ali is considered by the *Temps* as a symptom of unquestionable gravity.

Colonel STANLEY, M.P., was present yesterday at the opening of a new Conservative Club at Blackpool. Referring to the Afghan war, he said that at the present moment we had no right to complain of the action of any Government; but without wishing for aggression or conquest we were determined to conduct our business in our own untrammelled way. The hon. and gallant member also commented at length upon the negotiations at and subsequent to the Berlin Congress.

Sir LAWRENCE PALK, M.P., and Sir J. KENNAWAY, M.P., speaking at the annual dinner of the Axminster Agricultural Society, referred to Eastern affairs. The former explained his motives for originating a movement to remonstrate with the Government for inaction on the Eastern question; the latter, referring to the Afghan war, said that as we held India by the sword we must plainly demonstrate that no stranger shall with impunity meddle with our North-Western frontier.

PALL MALL GAZETTE, OCTOBER 10, 1878.

SUMMARY OF THIS MORNING'S NEWS.

The correspondent of the *Standard* at Simla sends a report, for which he says he has good authority, that the column under General Ross has passed the fort of Ali Musjid, and is advancing on Dakka, which will be captured at any cost. A despatch from Calcutta in the same paper, on the other hand, says that it is considered improbable that any advance will be made beyond Jumrood for some days. The *Daily Telegraph* publishes a telegram from Simla, which states that General Roberts arrived yesterday at Kohat, where the troops composing the Kuram column are now rapidly collecting. Two regiments marched yesterday from that place to Thull.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Colonel Burnaby writes to us as follows:—"In the *Times* of yesterday is found the following information with reference to the disposition of our troops in Hindostan:—'It may be of interest to some (?) [the note of interrogation is my own] to learn that the total strength of our forces on the immediate frontier, from the sea to Abbotabad, including Kurrachee, Hyderabad, ... together with the reserves at Rawul Pindee . . . . and the advanced post of Quetta, amounts to 800 British and 7,000 native cavalry; 12,000 British and 21,000 native infantry, with 102 guns. Many of these are at stations which it is absolutely impossible to denude of British troops—namely, Umritsir, the headquarters of the Sikh religion; Lahore, with its fort and large fanatical population; Ferozepore, with its arsenal; Attock, with its bridge of boats over the Indus. Then, too, any stoppage of the rail at Jhelum will prevent any very rapid movement up country.' Now, Sir, all this information is telegraphed from the Russian Embassy in London to St. Petersburg and Tashkend; from thence it is retranslated and sent on to the Ameer of Afghanistan. Is it right on the part of the editor of the *Times* to publish the above military data at the present time, when we are probably on the eve of one of the most serious wars that we have been engaged in since 1815?"

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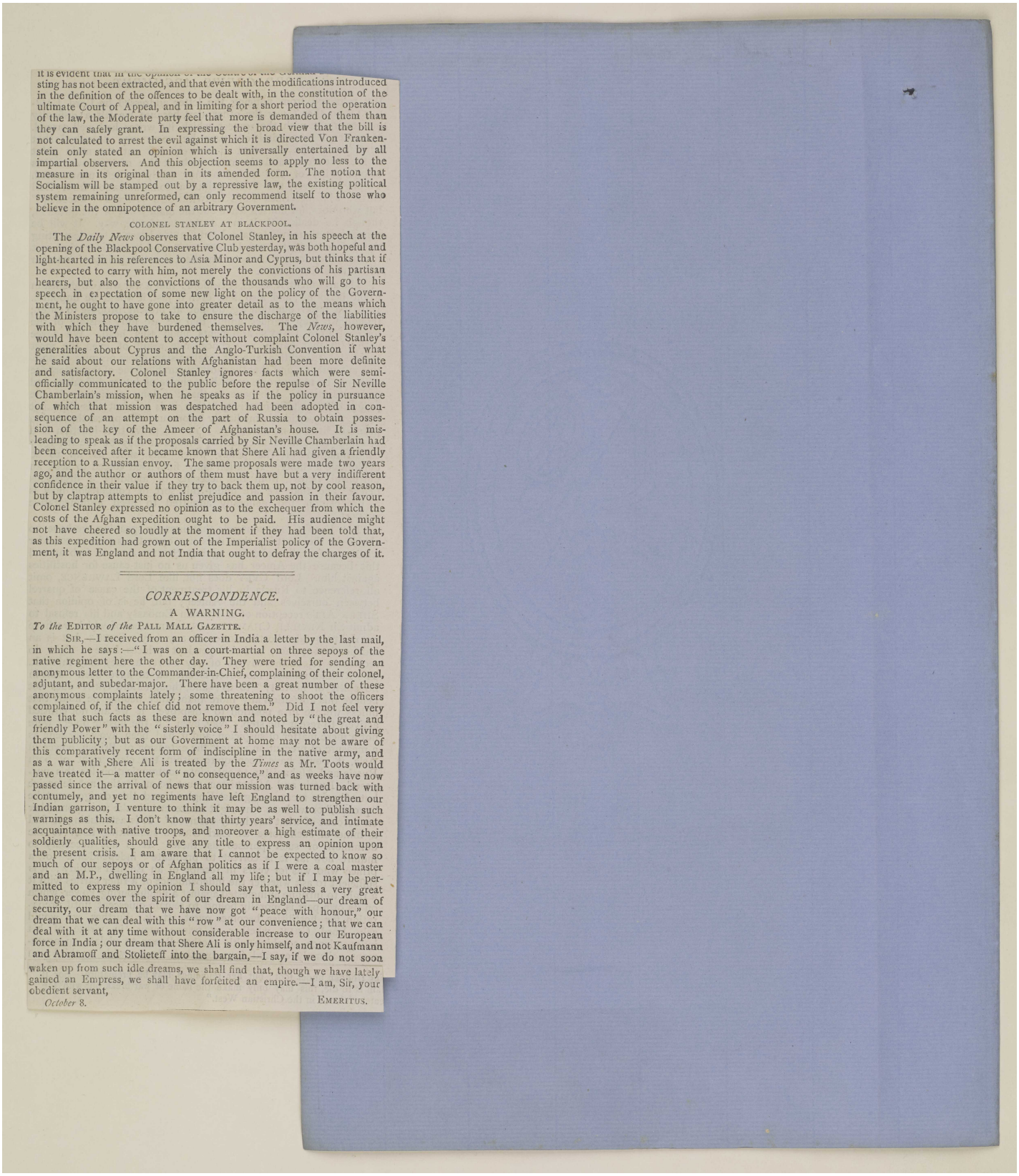

it is evident that in the opinion of the Council of the Commercial sting has not been extracted, and that even with the modifications introduced in the definition of the offences to be dealt with, in the constitution of the ultimate Court of Appeal, and in limiting for a short period the operation of the law, the Moderate party feel that more is demanded of them than they can safely grant. In expressing the broad view that the bill is not calculated to arrest the evil against which it is directed Von Frankenstein only stated an opinion which is universally entertained by all impartial observers. And this objection seems to apply no less to the measure in its original than in its amended form. The notion that Socialism will be stamped out by a repressive law, the existing political system remaining unreformed, can only recommend itself to those who believe in the omnipotence of an arbitrary Government.

COLONEL STANLEY AT BLACKPOOL.

The *Daily News* observes that Colonel Stanley, in his speech at the opening of the Blackpool Conservative Club yesterday, was both hopeful and light-hearted in his references to Asia Minor and Cyprus, but thinks that if he expected to carry with him, not merely the convictions of his partisan hearers, but also the convictions of the thousands who will go to his speech in expectation of some new light on the policy of the Government, he ought to have gone into greater detail as to the means which the Ministers propose to take to ensure the discharge of the liabilities with which they have burdened themselves. The *News*, however, would have been content to accept without complaint Colonel Stanley's generalities about Cyprus and the Anglo-Turkish Convention if what he said about our relations with Afghanistan had been more definite and satisfactory. Colonel Stanley ignores facts which were semi-officially communicated to the public before the repulse of Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission, when he speaks as if the policy in pursuance of which that mission was despatched had been adopted in consequence of an attempt on the part of Russia to obtain possession of the key of the Ameer of Afghanistan's house. It is misleading to speak as if the proposals carried by Sir Neville Chamberlain had been conceived after it became known that Shere Ali had given a friendly reception to a Russian envoy. The same proposals were made two years ago, and the author or authors of them must have but a very indifferent confidence in their value if they try to back them up, not by cool reason, but by claptrap attempts to enlist prejudice and passion in their favour. Colonel Stanley expressed no opinion as to the exchequer from which the costs of the Afghan expedition ought to be paid. His audience might not have cheered so loudly at the moment if they had been told that, as this expedition had grown out of the Imperialist policy of the Government, it was England and not India that ought to defray the charges of it.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A WARNING.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I received from an officer in India a letter by the last mail, in which he says:—"I was on a court-martial on three sepoys of the native regiment here the other day. They were tried for sending an anonymous letter to the Commander-in-Chief, complaining of their colonel, adjutant, and subedar-major. There have been a great number of these anonymous complaints lately; some threatening to shoot the officers complained of, if the chief did not remove them." Did I not feel very sure that such facts as these are known and noted by "the great and friendly Power" with the "sisterly voice" I should hesitate about giving them publicity; but as our Government at home may not be aware of this comparatively recent form of indiscipline in the native army, and as a war with Shere Ali is treated by the *Times* as Mr. Toots would have treated it—a matter of "no consequence," and as weeks have now passed since the arrival of news that our mission was turned back with contumely, and yet no regiments have left England to strengthen our Indian garrison, I venture to think it may be as well to publish such warnings as this. I don't know that thirty years' service, and intimate acquaintance with native troops, and moreover a high estimate of their soldierly qualities, should give any title to express an opinion upon the present crisis. I am aware that I cannot be expected to know so much of our sepoys or of Afghan politics as if I were a coal master and an M.P., dwelling in England all my life; but if I may be permitted to express my opinion I should say that, unless a very great change comes over the spirit of our dream in England—our dream of security, our dream that we have now got "peace with honour," our dream that we can deal with this "row" at our convenience; that we can deal with it at any time without considerable increase to our European force in India; our dream that Shere Ali is only himself, and not Kaufmann and Abramoff and Stolieteff into the bargain,—I say, if we do not soon waken up from such idle dreams, we shall find that, though we have lately gained an Empress, we shall have forfeited an empire.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October 8. EMERITUS.

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servedly recognized by both parties to it as necessary to the security of the State for whose benefit it was made. Because *that*—although Lord GREY seems to see it as little as Lord LAWRENCE—is our case against Afghanistan in consequence of the recent action of the Ameer. To repeat what we said on this point the other day, the despatch of the mission to Cabul, the contrivances, whatever they may have been, by which Russia ensured its establishment there, are a complete breach of the pledges upon which the peaceful relations of England and Russia in that region were well understood to rest. The Russian Government has been allowed to carry its so-called civilizing mission in the East up to our very gates on promises and pledges of the most unequivocal kind that no attempt would be made to disturb our own civilizing mission within those gates: interference in Afghanistan being specifically included among the attempts at such disturbance from which Russia bound herself to abstain. It is idle in the face of facts like these to talk of the Ameer's reception of a Russian envoy as an act necessarily within his right as an independent prince; and indeed all talk about his independence is, for this purpose at any rate, a mere irrelevance. It might have been open perhaps to Lord GREY to argue that our remedy is in the first instance against Russia, and that she should have been called upon to observe her engagements and to withdraw her envoy before any action was taken against SHERE ALI; and such an argument we should have little concern to contest. But Lord GREY, as we have seen, has expressly debarred himself from employing it. He contends that "we have no right whatever to make war upon either Russia or Afghanistan on account of what has occurred." Such a contention as this is its own answer. If nations may not make war to enforce the observance of agreements entered into by them for their own protection, there is nothing for which either in justice or policy they may make war at all. Common-sense, however, repudiates the conclusion to which Lord GREY'S arguments inevitably lead. It is well understood, and has been virtually admitted by Russia, that interference in Afghanistan would justify and even necessitate military measures of self-protection on our part; and it was and is equally well understood by SHERE ALI himself. In combining with Russia to violate her engagements to us he has chosen virtually to convert himself into an ally in a hostile enterprise against England; and there can be no injustice in subjecting him to the consequences which he has thereby deliberately invited.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Standard* publishes the following telegram from Simla, dated Wednesday night:—"I have just been informed, upon what I believe to be good authority, that the column under General Ross has passed the fort of Ali Musjid, and that Dakka will be captured to-morrow at any cost." The Calcutta correspondent of the same journal telegraphs:—"It is considered here to be improbable that any further advance beyond Jumrood will be made for some days, in order that the troops now going up may arrive before serious operations commence, but no official information whatever is forthcoming as to what is taking place. It is rumoured that a letter has arrived from the Ameer. The Afghan force at Ali Musjid now amounts to eight regular regiments of infantry and eighteen guns. Colonel Villiers, military secretary to the Viceroy, and brother to Lady Lytton, will accompany the Peshawur column."

The Indian Government, it is said to be now definitely settled, will leave for Calcutta on the 10th of November. The Viceroy will remain at Lahore till the 20th of December. The Council will sit in Calcutta under a President in Council during the Viceroy's absence.

The Russian press continues to discuss the Afghan complication. The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* says that even the most pacific portion of the press is enchanted with the delightful prospect of settling England definitively. The St. Petersburg *Bourse Gazette*, a paper which was steadily opposed to the Turkish war, says that Afghanistan is the one point where the entire might and influence of England may be effectually resisted and paralyzed by Russia. The English press, it says, headed by the *Times* newspaper, "is hounding public opinion against the defenceless Ameer. Russia should make the Ameer's cause her own, and by the despatch of a sufficient force render Afghanistan invincible. A small Russian corps would suffice to force England to stake her Asiatic position on the issue of the struggle. For Russia to defend the Ameer is to vindicate her own Imperial interest, an office altogether different from the Quixotic defence of the Slav."

The Moscow correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* says that in the coming war between England and Afghanistan Russia may assist the latter Power with officers, guns, iron, and steel; but there is no prospect of her giving it material aid in the shape either of men or of gold. She has neither men nor gold to spare. However, she is not prepared to allow England to steal a march upon her in Asia. If England gains a footing in Afghanistan, as now seems probable, Russia will obtain compensation elsewhere. What England gains in Afghanistan Russia will seek to gain in Kashgar.

The *Nord* of last night says:—In the negotiations which have taken place between the Cabinets of London and St. Petersburg on the subject of the delimitation of the spheres of influence of the one and the other Power, Afghanistan was, from the Russian point of view, to play the part of a neutral zone, destined to separate the Anglo-Russian frontiers in their greatest extension. If this zone were interfered with in a lasting manner by England, it is evident that there would arise logically for the Cabinet of St. Petersburg the question whether there is not to be practised in Central Asia the policy of precautions and compensations which the Government of Great Britain has followed in the regulation of the Eastern Question.

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THE STORY OF RUSSIAN INTRIGUE IN ASIA: BROKEN PLEDGES.—III.

HAVING completed the narrative of Russia's engagements with regard to Khiva, let us resume the story of her pledges in respect of Afghanistan. We have shown that in January, 1873, England achieved a diplomatic victory over Russia by obtaining the line of the Upper Oxus as the boundary of Afghanistan, and that Russia endeavoured to hold this country responsible for Shere Ali's good behaviour. England did not formally repudiate that obligation, though Mr. Gladstone declared in Parliament that the resposibility referred solely to "moral influence." Our negotiations with Shere Ali were directed towards making that responsibility a reality. The Ameer, alarmed by the example of the Khivan expedition and the reported advance upon Merv, declined to share England's confidence in the promises of Russia. Directly after the fall of Khiva he sent a special envoy to the Viceroy of India, at Simla, to express his apprehensions and to suggest means of mutual defence. In those negotiations it is curious to observe that the Ameer treated the safety of Afghanistan as essentially necessary to the safety of India, and he proposed that the British Government should assist him with money and arms. Money he had already received to the extent of two lakhs of rupees, and he was now promised ten lakhs in addition, as well as 10,000 Enfield and 5,000 Snider rifles. But it soon appeared that these large grants did not satisfy the Ameer's wants. He evidently thought it the duty of England to supply him with whatever he deemed necessary to place Afghanistan secure from invasion. He dreaded a Russian advance upon Merv, and he wished to make this country responsible for protecting him against the consequences of that advance being continued to Herat. The English Government showed no unwillingness to accept a considerable share of the duty which the Afghan ruler desired to place upon them. It was declared that "in the event of any aggression from without, the British Government would in all probability afford material assistance in repelling an invader," and Lord Derby stated in the House of Lords (May 8, 1874) that "it was highly probable this country would interfere" in the case of any attack upon the independence of Afghanistan. Nevertheless the negotiations with the Ameer did not progress favourably. The chief obstacle to a definite course of action arose from the refusal of Shere Ali to enter into reciprocal engagements. He declined to accept a proposed survey by English officers of the frontier which he considered to be exposed to Russian attack; and he was equally indisposed to permit the presence of Residents at Cabul, Herat, or Candahar, whom the English Government desired to place there in order to prevent this country from undertaking any measures on behalf of Shere Ali without knowing why. From that period we may date the defection of Shere Ali from the English alliance. The circumstances which led to it are not within the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that shortly after the Simla conference had revealed to the Ameer that England considered some return for her responsibility necessary on his part, we find him in communication with General Kaufmann. That officer was wise enough to express horror at the rebellion of Yakoob Khan, which naturally pleased the Ameer better than our intercession in the young prince's behalf. But all the time that General Kaufmann was thus coquetting with Shere Ali, Prince Gortschakoff was renewing his promises to have nothing to do with Afghanistan. The last engagement of which we took notice was in January, 1874, when the Russian Chancellor replied to the feeble remonstrances of Lord Granville respecting the conquest of Khiva. No official correspondence has been issued from the Foreign Office since that date, and we must therefore fall back upon other sources of information. The Indian, the German, and the Russian press, and the debates in Parliament, have given us glimpses into the course of affairs, which enable us to follow the negotiations pretty closely. In 1874 and 1875 statements were current in this country respecting an expedition from Krasnovodsk to Kizil Arvat, in order to punish the Turcomans, and the apprehension prevailed that Russia would seize that post as a step towards Merv. Some representations appear to have passed between the two Governments, and, according to the declarations of an Indian newspaper, in the summer of 1875 Russia pledged herself not to extend her territory in the direction of the Atrek. Within a few weeks of that engagement we had news of a scientific exploring expedition, starting from Krasnovodsk to "the old bed of the Oxus." Instead, however, of its having that innocent object, it turned out to be a Cossack force from Chickislar, along the course of the Atrek, which succeeded in obtaining the submission of certain tribes in the neighbourhood of that river and the Soombar. This was in 1875, and other expeditions followed in 1876 and 1877. All this time the Russian Government, according to their semi-official journals, were endeavouring to restrict General Lomakin's operations, and it came with surprise upon this country in the autumn of 1876 that in the course of that year a small Russian expedition had actually reached Kizil Arvat. That demonstration, however, seems to have been no more than a reconnaissance; but in the following year a new expedition, consisting of 4,000 men, marched in the same direction. Beyond the announcement that the force reached Kizil Arvat, the Russian newspapers threw no light upon its operations. Current reports, which were probably true, represented that Genera Lomakin suffered a severe defeat, and this was ultimately admitted by the *Russky Mir*. The information supplied by the Indian press respecting these expeditions indicates that the Russian endeavour to advance towards Merv was not overlooked by the Viceroy and his Council. These were the days of Lord Salisbury's appeals to large-scale maps, and we suppose it would astonish no one to hear that he scouted all proposals that may have been made by the Indian Government for counteracting Russian enterprise against the Turcomans and Merv. It may be that the Indian Secretary received some assurances from the Russian authorities that

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Merv was not to be interfered with, and that his simple faith in Russia's promises was undisturbed. Indeed, an Allahabad paper recently announced that in 1876 Prince Gortschakoff added one more to the long series of pledges "to regard Afghanistan as remaining outside the sphere of Russia's action."

While these varied negotiations were going on respecting the many points threatened by Russia's advance, she was tranquilly continuing her course of pledge-breaking in regard to Bokhara and Khokand. Just as the conquest of Tashkend followed that of Tchemkend notwithstanding the famous circular of 1864; just as the occupation of Khojend and Samarcand succeeded that of Tashkend, spite of similar reassuring despatches, so, in the face of reiterated engagements to the contrary, the remnants of Khokandian territory and Bokharian independence were destroyed. It will be remembered how often the Czar and his Chancellor professed to regret the conquest of the northern portion of Bokhara; how frequently they described increase of territory as altogether opposed to their wishes; how, as a proof of that disposition, they promised to restore Samarcand; and how they asseverated their firm resolve never to annex any more Bokharian territory. They have not even yet surrendered Samarcand; they added another town to their Bokharian possessions, and to crown all, they concluded, in 1873, a treaty with the Ameer which virtually placed his country in their possession. The course of procedure with regard to Khokand was exactly similar. In that case also there were the professed regrets at the cruel necessity of annexing a portion of the territory. There were the same promises that the terms of Russian advance in that region had been reached, and that what was left should be independent. Nevertheless, on the 7th of February, 1876, the portion of the country that had been suffered to remain under the the rule of Khudayar Khan was annexed, and received the name of Ferghana, its feudatory State of Karatagin being alone left in a condition of semi-independence.

The recent development of Russian activity in Central Asia should be no surprise after all this. In April of the present year a German newspaper informed us that an expedition was being concentrated at Krasnovodsk, composed partly of Russian troops and partly of militia selected from the local tribes. That statement was corroborated by the fact that 10,000 men were ordered to Krasnovodsk from the Russian army which had been operating in Armenia; and as the year advanced the Russian papers darkly hinted that General Melikoff was preparing an expedition against the Turcomans of 20,000 men. The true reading of this announcement was that Russia was preparing for a demonstration against India by way of Merv, in case hostilities broke out between her and this country. We have no news of how far that project was carried into effect, and for aught we know the expedition may at this moment be working its way towards Merv. The recent telegram announcing the capture of Kizil Arvat gives encouragement to that view, for Kizil Arvat is the halfway house to Merv. It was evidently a part of the Russian plan that the Krasnovodsk column should act in co-operation with the army whose movements accompanied the progress of the Russian envoy to the Afghan capital. The Eastern Turkestan forces numbered about 15,000 men. There were three columns, but only one or two at the most reached the neighbourhood of the Upper Oxus. The *Turkestan Gazette* announced that Samarcand was to be the rendezvous of the principal column. The right wing was to concentrate at a fort opposite Khiva and march to Charjui, to operate, no doubt, with the Krasnovodsk column against Merv. The left wing was to be established in Ferghana. How far these three columns advanced southwards we have no intelligence. Six weeks ago the statement was current that the Ferghana column had suffered disaster. St. Petersburg telegrams indicated that the central or Samarcand forces penetrated farther than either of the other two columns; and there is strong reason for believing that the main body of the army reached Karki, and that the advanced guard even touched the Balkh fords of the Oxus. The intelligence of this rapid advance was followed by announcements in the St. Petersburg papers that the Eastern Turkestan army had been recalled, and directly afterwards we had news of the reception of a Russian mission at Cabul, under the influence, no doubt, of that military demonstration. We have no more trustworthy ground for believing that the Russian forces have been recalled in their march upon the Oxus than paragraphs in the St. Petersburg papers.

This short narrative of the events of the past few months shows that Russia has been guilty of a complete rupture of the arrangements on which the policy of the two countries rested in Central Asia. Nor has she been content with violating her engagements in one respect only. After her repeated declarations that Afghanistan was outside the sphere of her influence, she has brought that country within the radius of her operations, not only diplomatically, but also in a military sense. The despatch of an envoy to Cabul was of itself a violation of her pledges; but this offence becomes tenfold greater by the fact that the diplomatic demonstration was backed up by an armed force. These events seem to have aroused the British Government to something like an appreciation of the dangers of the situation. The Russian Foreign Office was, therefore, interrogated as to the intentions of General Kaufmann; and so recently as July last, when General Stolieteff was already on Afghan territory, when a part of the Turkestan army was a few miles from the Afghan frontier, and the Krasnovodsk column was in full march on Kizil Arvat, a specific pledge was given that Russia had no intention to send an envoy to Cabul, or to direct an army against the Turcomans. As our Foreign Office is in no hurry to publish the long-promised correspondence upon Central Asian affairs, we will bring down the narrative of events yet further. Russia's last annexation was that of Khokand in 1876. Her most recent maps show a yet further advance; for she has absorbed a large part of Karatagin, and brought her frontier across the Pamir steppe to within 150 miles of Cashmere. This step is the more significant, because it is a direct advance towards the most easy pass into India—namely, the valley of the Chitral.

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THE TIMES, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1878.

RUSSIAN POLICY.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, OCT. 8.

Two uncommonly important articles on Eastern affairs have appeared on the same day in the St. Petersburg *Golos*. I begin with the Afghanistan effusion :—

"According to the latest telegrams, a first exchange of opinion has already passed between London and St. Petersburg upon Afghan affairs. The English Chargé d'Affaires has asked the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs in what way the mission of General Stoletoff can be reconciled with the obligation undertaken by Russia to refrain from seeking political influence in Afghanistan. The answer is stated to have been that General Stoletoff's mission was determined upon in circumstances which no longer exist, and that the exclusive object of the Embassy, moreover, was to pay a compliment to the Ameer. In our opinion, if the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had really given some such reply to the British Government, the answer did not refer to the refusal of the Ameer to receive Sir Neville Chamberlain. Logic and the rules of diplomatic intercourse forbid us to entertain any such idea. The English Chargé d'Affaires cannot have been commissioned to put such a question at a moment when the English Ambassador was on his way to this capital. Lord Loftus left London almost immediately after the arrival of the Ali Musjid news. On his way he saw the Russian Chancellor, and, of course, discussed with him Afghan affairs. At that particular moment the Chargé d'Affaires cannot have been ordered to put questions at St. Petersburg. Such being the case, and taking into account that no date is signified in the telegram touching the inquiry of the British Government, it follows that the question must have been asked at the time when the reception given to the Russian Embassy at Cabul first became known in Europe. It is important to fix the date of the event in this way. After what has happened, it is altogether impossible to admit that the Russian Government can have returned such an answer to such a query now. No Russian Government could have adopted an apologetic tone when the step concerning which an explanation was demanded had been previously stigmatized as hostile by the English Government and Press. Russia has been openly charged in England with instigating the Ameer of Afghanistan to make war against Great Britain. How, then, could the Russian Government have brought themselves to vouchsafe a declaration bordering upon excuse? An answer in this strain has not been given, nor ever will be. Should the English Government desire us to account for the affront they have sustained at the hands of the Ameer, a reference to the attitude of the English Government before and during the war of 1877 will be all the reply granted. But surely no such reprimand will be torn from us. Only a few days ago *The Times* stated that England was at peace with Russia, and that it was to the interest of both countries to maintain neutral relations. In all probability this will be the motto adhered to by British diplomacy. British diplomats cannot, but foresee that should they ever presume to question us upon matters connected with Afghanistan, we should be obliged to retort in a style which it would not be very pleasant for them to have to publish in a Blue-book."

The above is an *avis au lecteur* which speaks for itself. There can be little doubt that the Russian Government, having directly or indirectly encouraged the Ameer of Afghanistan to take a step calculated to involve him in war with England, now stand upon their dignity and refuse official allusion to the subject. Private conversations between Excellencies may be held, and even provoked, but these do not count.

The other article, turning upon the relations between Russia and Turkey, is perhaps even more interesting :—

"Besides the Afghan difficulty, the symptom of a definite crisis in Central Asiatic affairs, the great question of the day is the *rapprochement* between Russia and Turkey. It may be remembered that even in the midst of the war, when excitement was at its highest pitch, we attributed to the Ottoman race certain commendable qualities required for the prolonged maintenance of their rule over subject races. We did so at the risk of being denounced as Turcophils by those who dreamt of achieving victory by despising the enemy. At present when a change has supervened and our late enemy is about to sign a treaty which makes him if not actually our ally at least our 'friend in perpetuity,' the question arises what we are to think of the Turks and of their former and present bearing towards us. Recalling to mind the savage enthusiasm with which war to the knife was preached against us, we are tempted to think that we had better expel the Osmanli race from Europe; while if present friendly assurances are sincere we cannot but wonder at the sudden evaporation of the bitter and revengeful spirit displayed during the war. In endeavouring to reconcile this apparent contradiction, we ought to bear in mind that there are no sudden leaps in the history and character of nations. There is ample evidence that the atrocities which made some denounce the Ottomans as so many unreclaimable savages, were a frequent yet transient phenomenon, brought on by circumstances. Though displaying the defective political organization of Turkey, these atrocities by no means prove the entire race cannibals. The Osmanlis, after all, have shown themselves competent to vindicate the rights of the conqueror, and a people possessed of other qualities likewise. When our armies were liberating the subject races they had sufficient opportunity to become convinced that though the rayah had no political rights, they were very well off indeed in point of property and finance. The tens of thousands of Turkish prisoners, too, who have been sojourning in Russia for so many months have convinced our people that, far from being savages, the Osmanlis are willing and industrious, though not very expert at work. The Osmanlis in their turn, thanks to the prolonged presence of our troops under the walls of Constantinople, and the accounts given by Ottoman soldiers returning from captivity, have learned something about the Russian people. Direct contact, notwithstanding the acrimony raised by vainglorious and narrow-minded talkers, has not only diminished the painful impression created by rayah sufferings, but has also produced in both nations a favourable disposition towards each other. When we began to respect the Turkish army as a worthy adversary, we made the first step towards modifying our views of the Turkish people; and at present it is impossible not to admit that our returning soldiers speak much more of the wealth they have seen in Turkey than of the barbarism of the Turks. It is very likely that we shall learn to think yet better of the Turks, now that our Slavonic co-religionists in the Ottoman Empire are admitted to an equality of rights with the Mussulmans. This spontaneous awakening of a friendly disposition between Turk and Russ is one of the most important results of the war, and if turned to account by diplomacy may secure the pacific solution of the Oriental question, to the mutual advantage of both parties. Those political robbers of Europe who count upon dividing the inheritance of the Porte are entirely mistaken as to the enduring importance of recent changes. Referring as they do the Anglo-Turkish *rapprochement* to a mere diplomatic combination, which, created by the exigencies of the moment, must be evanescent, they yet can not help feeling some considerable uneasiness about the good relations springing up between the Russian and Turkish Governments. It is just possible that our late enemy may shortly become our only ally, and a near future will demonstrate whether we are wise enough to effect this result.

"As to the Afghan question we have the fact that while our own Embassy to Cabul has been perfectly successful, the English mission has been treated with open hostility by the Ameer. Russia, it is well known, forced by the pressure of her political destiny and the necessities of her geographical situation, since she first rose into existence, has been compelled to extend her Asiatic frontiers. Annexation after annexation has occurred, for Imperial purposes. The real significance of this policy will be seen in the future, while the present requires only continual sacrifices. Whatever the future may bring, present sacrifices, though of no great magnitude in themselves, are oppressive because our means are limited, and because we have economical problems nearer home requiring our immediate attention. That the early solution of these problems is indispensable, not only to develope our wealth, but to supply our daily wants, renders the expenditure involved in our Asiatic policy the more onerous. Another drawback to our Asiatic doings is that while our great aims can only be realized in the future, one immediate result is to diminish the population of Russia Proper, already so thin, by emigration to the far East.

"However, if the direct interests of the Russian people, whose taxes have to support these diplomatic doings, have nothing in common with Afghanistan, there is the fact that England, hostile to Russia, may by an Afghan war have her action diverted from Asia Minor and the Balkan to Cabul. What we can lose in these troubles in Central Asia is insignificant, while to England any Indian complication is simply a question of life and death. Russia being thus advantageously placed, she will no doubt profit by her Asiatic opportunities to paralyze England's policy in Europe. This does not, of course, mean that the principal burden of the strife will have to be borne by Central Asia. To transfer the feud to Asia would be unprofitable and inconvenient to us. It would impose upon us immense sacrifices and yet settle nothing."

To add anything to these comprehensive avowals is as unnecessary as it is impossible. They are neither more nor less than a condensed retrospect of the past, and a stereoscopic shadowing forth of the future. The rayahs, said to be the daily sport of Turkish assassins and thieves, were found to be so very well off as to astonish the poor Moujiks sent to deliver them. The atrocities once declared a proof of the inveterate savagery of the unspeakable Turk are now represented as a desperate means to repress rebellion adopted by a warlike, hard-bested race, fighting for life. After these admissions as regards the past, we have the cool statement that the Turk, being recognized as a respectable fellow by the suddenly-illumined Russ, every effort is made to convert him into the ally of his late would-be exterminator. The means used, as we know from other sources, is to represent to the successor of the Caliph that, having satisfied Russia in Europe, there is no occasion for him to be at the expense and trouble of obliging England in Asia. This much being done to deprive England of her European ally, we are further treated to the avowal that to cripple British action in Europe entirely an Afghan complication is purposely got up by sagacious diplomatists on the Neva. And, as if all this were not enough to unveil the momentous objects pursued, this suite of confessions is closed by the remark that Russia has a destiny to work out in Asia which, unfulfilled after centuries of annexation, will only show its true bearing when in the future fresh events happen. For the present, it is significantly added, Russia is not in a position to wish to fight England chiefly in Asia. Indeed, if her business can be done by the Ameer in Asia and the Sultan in Europe, why need she fight at all?

The *Golos* is one of the most discreet and best-edited papers of the Russian Empire. Unlike some other organs it is not given to indulge in speculative boastings while events are maturing and the issue doubtful.

The Turkish alliance is suddenly advocated along the whole line of the Russian Press. It is almost superfluous to observe that the move is accompanied with attacks upon Austria. If the Sultan can be led to see things from the Russian point of view, the national Slavonic armoury may once more be made available for weapons against Austrian competition.

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AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Your Correspondent at Berlin telegraphs a passage from a letter in the *Golos*, dated from Orenburg, wherein it is stated that the British loss in the passes during the retreat from Cabul in the winter of 1841-42, was 20,000 men, and, strange to say, a work just published by the author of "In my Indian Garden," places the number at 26,000. It would be as well, therefore, that the Russian military party, for whose edification the *Golos* letter was written, and that portion of the English public who do not care to read bulky standard works on the subject, should know that our entire loss was only 5,000 soldiers, of whom only about 700 were Europeans, and 10,000 unarmed camp-followers. And here I would note regarding the work of Mr. Robinson, that he is incorrect in stating that Sir George Pollock received a "severe check" at Ali Musjid during his advance on Cabul in 1842. As the author of the "Life" of the late Field Marshal, written from his papers before his decease in 1872, I can give this assertion an absolute contradiction. The army under Sir George Pollock sustained no check from the time of starting on its victorious march from Peshawur until the British flag was planted on the Bala Hissar of Cabul.

Yours faithfully, C. R. LOW.

Kensington, Oct. 9.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—As any opinion expressed by Lord Lawrence must naturally influence very greatly the views of the public on the great question that at present occupies men's minds in connexion with our relations with Afghanistan, and with respect to the causes that have led us to the brink of war with that country, it is only right that his letter, which appeared in *The Times* of the 2d inst., should be carefully analyzed to see how far the statements and inferences it contains are based upon a fair and sound estimate of our position in India.

Lord Lawrence considers it to have been a serious mistake to organize a mission to Cabul before we had ascertained whether Ameer Shere Ali was prepared to receive our overtures or not. But the wisdom or otherwise of the action of the Indian Government in this matter depends upon what the Imperial and Indian Governments were bound to do in the interest of our Indian Empire under the circumstances of a Russian Mission being established at Cabul, and on this vital question Lord Lawrence is silent.

It is not so much the question why the Russian Mission is at Cabul with which we have to deal—whether it is owing to our policy in Europe, or whether it is in accordance with a well-considered Russian policy in Central Asia; for whatever the cause, the result is the same. Russian influence is at present predominant from the Russian frontiers to the Khyber Pass. Upon the effect the acceptance of a Russian Mission and the rejection of a British Mission at Cabul are likely to have upon the various Native States in India Lord Lawrence likewise does not touch; but he speaks of the dangers and expense that would attend the invasion of Afghanistan. Both of these are, however, a necessity of our position in India; danger and expense must be ever present, whether an advance be forced upon us or we hold back, and the latter being probably the more dangerous of the two, it may be, consequently, the most expensive policy.

It may, however, be well to endeavour to trace the cause of the present attitude of the Ameer and of Russia, whether it has been the result of Imperial or of local policy, or of both, as the question may affect the future decision as to whether England or India will have to bear the expenses of the war.

It is well-known that Russian intrigues have been active for many years past in Cabul, and that these intrigues, through the Ameer, react on the native hill tribes inhabiting the country adjacent to our frontier boundaries. The object of these intrigues has doubtless been to secure to Russia such an ascendant position in Asia that she could at any moment, if we endangered the success of her policy in Europe, create difficulties for us in India, and the conduct of our Government not unnaturally led Russia to think the time had arrived for giving effect to this policy.

Lord Lawrence considers that we have abandoned the old policy of forbearance with the Afghans; but how far was that policy to carry us, and how far was the departure from that policy the inevitable result of the very policy for which Lord Lawrence, whether rightly or not, is generally considered responsible?

The occupation of Quettah is said to be one great cause now influencing Shere Ali's policy, but was the occupation of Quettah altogether an optional policy, or one that was consequent upon the course of events? It is not possible within the limits of this letter to enter fully into this question, but it will be remembered that Major Sandeman's mission, accompanied by a large escort to Khelat, left Jacobabad prior to the Government of India being made over by Lord Northbrook to Lord Lytton. What Lord Northbrook's ultimate policy might have been it is impossible to say; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that the policy he had wisely inaugurated, by sending Major Sandeman to endeavour to reconcile the differences between the Khan and his Sirdars, and of arriving at some satisfactory understanding with respect to the Khelat Treaty of 1853, might have led him to the same conclusion at which Lord Lytton arrived. Once admit the wisdom of the policy of putting an end to the disturbances that have frequently necessitated the interference of the Government of India, and the occupation of Quettah as the best security against the recurrence of these difficulties follows almost as a natural sequence.

The question, however, may well be asked why were our relations with the Ameer not as friendly and as cordial as those between the Ameer and the Russian Government? Our occupation of Quettah might be set down as one cause, were it not that our unsympathetic relations with the Ameer date from a much earlier period, and it will be difficult to find any sufficient answer to the question other than that to be gathered from the policy of successive Indian Governments—to hold aloof from the Ameer, to reject his advances, and to refuse all his requests, and yet to attempt to propitiate him by the payment of a tribute, sometimes in money, sometimes in arms, a proceeding that he must have found difficult to reconcile with our other policy unless dictated by fear of his power. This was the grand non-interference policy which, while it held aloof from appeals made to us for our friendship, armed the man on whose friendship we could not depend until he believed himself strong enough, through the means we had thus placed at his disposal, to give way to his inclinations and repay England for his many fancied wrongs by giving his friendship to Russia. The present crisis may be partly the result of the European policy of the Imperial Government, it may be partly due to the policy of successive Indian Governments; but there is this strong fact that stands out beyond all question, that the present position is the result of a policy long pursued by Russia; it may or may not have been developed sooner than Russia intended; but there we find the machinery all ready to be put in motion when required. I am not one of those who think that Russia, in the absence of a well-defined understanding with England, is not justified in the course she pursues; she has her ambition, and so have we; she has interests to guard, and so have we; but her influence in Afghanistan is not compatible with our safety in India. Let us secure our boundaries, if necessary, by a rectification of our frontier; let the Ameer be punished for his insolence, and thus let the native Princes of India see we cannot and will not tolerate insult. But let us annex as little country as possible; let the independence of such portion of Afghanistan as is not required for the correction of our frontier line be guaranteed; let a cordial and honest understanding be arrived at with Russia with respect to our several interests in the East; and let us endeavour to view these questions not only as Englishmen but as Russians, who have an equal interest in the honour and greatness of their country as we have in that of ours.

Your obedient servant,

H. B. L.

SHERE ALI'S SWORD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Permit me, through *The Times*, to call to the mind of Shere Ali, at this present crisis, the solemn declaration which on the occasion of the celebrated Durbar in 1869 he privately and emphatically made to the late Earl of Mayo, then Governor-General of India, who, in token of existing friendship, had presented the Ameer with his own sword. "I accept the sword," said the Afghan ruler, "as a token of peace with England; against which country it shall never be unsheathed. When I look upon this sword it shall mean to me, 'Peace with England.'" As above implied, these words were uttered at a private assembly, and I am enabled to vouch for the truth of the interesting incident upon the highest authority.

Yours obediently, W. CHAPMAN.

Waverley-house, Kingston-on-Thames.

"THE BANKRUPTCY OF INDIA."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—If "C." will make inquiry he will find that the great bulk of the 7,000,000 bullocks, cows, horses, donkeys, and camels in the Punjab are supported out of the produce of the cultivated area. But I fully admit that the Punjab is the most prosperous province in India with the exception of a few districts in Bengal. If "C." will apply his method to the North-West Provinces or Madras—not forgetting the seed and keep for the agricultural bullocks—I fear he will be somewhat alarmed at the results he will obtain. Even in the Punjab, however, I cannot make "C.'s" figures agree with mine. Taking this good year, with wheat at a low price and other grains cheap in proportion, I do not discover the high standard of well-being. When deduction is made for taxation and seed, it seems to me that there are not left more than seven bushels of grain (about half of inferior kinds) per head of population, without making any allowance whatever for the keep of the 7,000,000 head of live stock. I do not notice either that "C." offers any explanation of the scarcity now prevalent in the southern Punjab. It should be remembered also that it was the most celebrated Lieutenant-Governor who ever administered the Punjab, who said, on the 10th of June, 1873,—"The mass of the people in India are so miserably poor that they have barely the means of subsistence; it is as much as a man can do to feed his family, or to half feed them, let alone spending money on what you would call luxuries or conveniences." I only wish, Sir, heartily, that "C." could "expose" or explain away this sentence of Lord Lawrence's, as well as prove the fallacy of the facts on which it is based. None certainly would then be better pleased than

Your obedient servant,

H. M. HYNDMAN.

October 9.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—There has lately been some discussion in *The Times* between "C." and Mr. Hyndman, chiefly on some figures in my pamphlet on "The Poverty of India." It may be expected that some explanation or correction of any error I may have made is due from me; but as in the present state of Indian matters I should not give any occasion for the least possible suspicion that even an humble native of India like myself (and I believe, natives generally) has the remotest desire to see Russia to be in England's place in India, I think I would postpone any explanations I may have to make to an appropriate time. In the meantime I may request "C." to read my pamphlet fully, and if, after doing so, he still thinks it requisite for me to explain or correct any facts or figures given in my pamphlet, I shall readily do so, as may be necessary.

Your obedient servant,

DADABHAI NAOROJI.

32, Great St. Helen's, Oct. 10.

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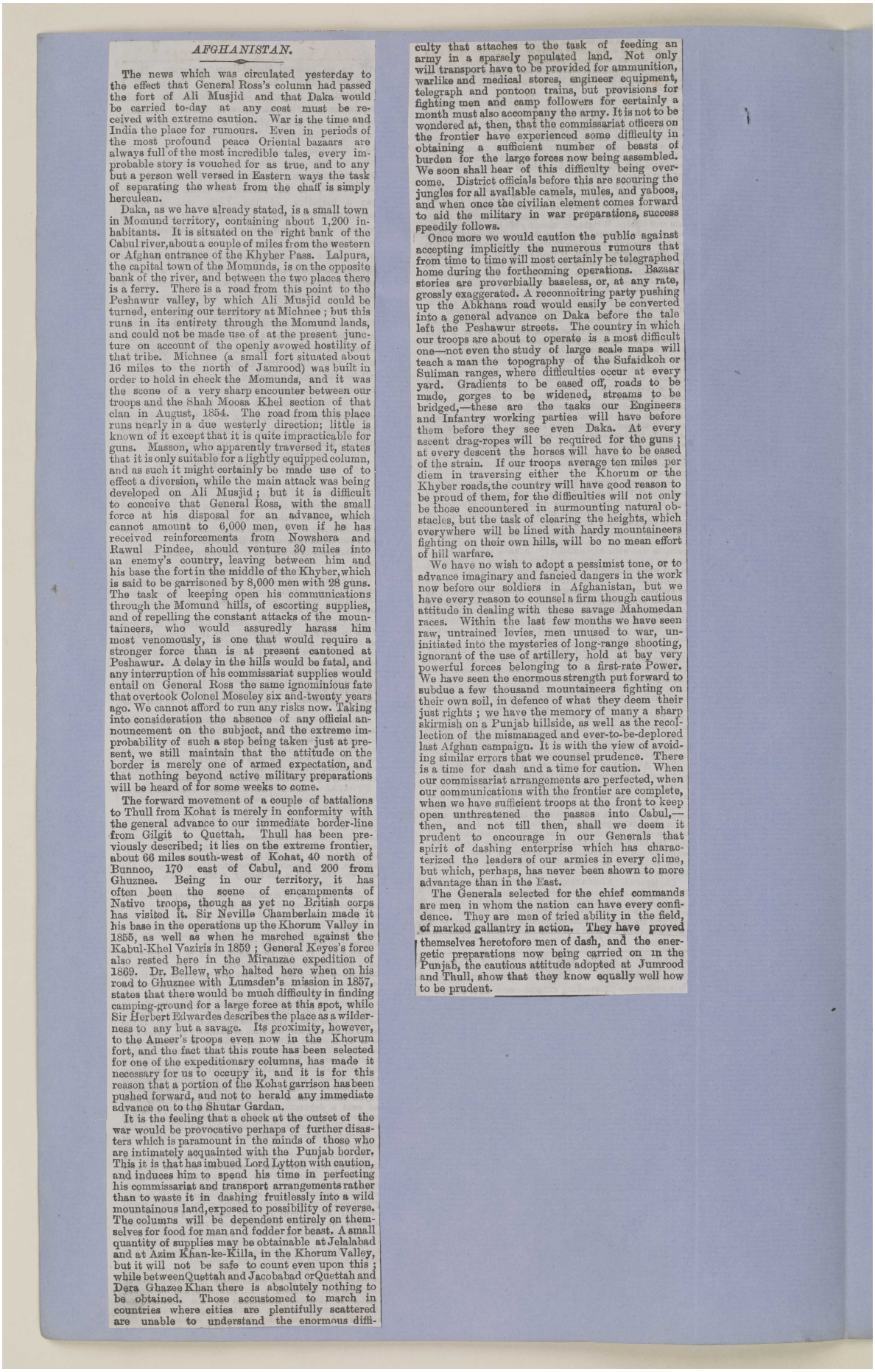

AFGHANISTAN.

The news which was circulated yesterday to the effect that General Ross's column had passed the fort of Ali Musjid and that Daka would be carried to-day at any cost must be received with extreme caution. War is the time and India the place for rumours. Even in periods of the most profound peace Oriental bazaars are always full of the most incredible tales, every improbable story is vouched for as true, and to any but a person well versed in Eastern ways the task of separating the wheat from the chaff is simply herculean.

Daka, as we have already stated, is a small town in Momund territory, containing about 1,200 inhabitants. It is situated on the right bank of the Cabul river, about a couple of miles from the western or Afghan entrance of the Khyber Pass. Lalpura, the capital town of the Momunds, is on the opposite bank of the river, and between the two places there is a ferry. There is a road from this point to the Peshawur valley, by which Ali Musjid could be turned, entering our territory at Michnee; but this runs in its entirety through the Momund lands, and could not be made use of at the present juncture on account of the openly avowed hostility of that tribe. Michnee (a small fort situated about 16 miles to the north of Jamrood) was built in order to hold in check the Momunds, and it was the scene of a very sharp encounter between our troops and the Shah Moosa Khel section of that clan in August, 1854. The road from this place runs nearly in a due westerly direction; little is known of it except that it is quite impracticable for guns. Masson, who apparently traversed it, states that it is only suitable for a lightly equipped column, and as such it might certainly be made use of to effect a diversion, while the main attack was being developed on Ali Musjid; but it is difficult to conceive that General Ross, with the small force at his disposal for an advance, which cannot amount to 6,000 men, even if he has received reinforcements from Nowshera and Rawul Pindee, should venture 30 miles into an enemy's country, leaving between him and his base the fort in the middle of the Khyber, which is said to be garrisoned by 8,000 men with 28 guns. The task of keeping open his communications through the Momund hills, of escorting supplies, and of repelling the constant attacks of the mountaineers, who would assuredly harass him most venomously, is one that would require a stronger force than is at present cantoned at Peshawur. A delay in the hills would be fatal, and any interruption of his commissariat supplies would entail on General Ross the same ignominious fate that overtook Colonel Moseley six and-twenty years ago. We cannot afford to run any risks now. Taking into consideration the absence of any official announcement on the subject, and the extreme improbability of such a step being taken just at present, we still maintain that the attitude on the border is merely one of armed expectation, and that nothing beyond active military preparations will be heard of for some weeks to come.

The forward movement of a couple of battalions to Thull from Kohat is merely in conformity with the general advance to our immediate border-line from Gilgit to Quettah. Thull has been previously described; it lies on the extreme frontier, about 66 miles south-west of Kohat, 40 north of Bunnoo, 170 east of Cabul, and 200 from Ghuznee. Being in our territory, it has often been the scene of encampments of Native troops, though as yet no British corps has visited it. Sir Neville Chamberlain made it his base in the operations up the Khorum Valley in 1855, as well as when he marched against the Kabul-Khel Vaziris in 1859; General Keyes's force also rested here in the Miranzae expedition of 1869. Dr. Bellew, who halted here when on his road to Ghuznee with Lumsden's mission in 1857, states that there would be much difficulty in finding camping-ground for a large force at this spot, while Sir Herbert Edwardes describes the place as a wilderness to any but a savage. Its proximity, however, to the Ameer's troops even now in the Khorum fort, and the fact that this route has been selected for one of the expeditionary columns, has made it necessary for us to occupy it, and it is for this reason that a portion of the Kohat garrison has been pushed forward, and not to herald any immediate advance on to the Shutar Gardan.

It is the feeling that a check at the outset of the war would be provocative perhaps of further disasters which is paramount in the minds of those who are intimately acquainted with the Punjab border. This it is that has imbued Lord Lytton with caution, and induces him to spend his time in perfecting his commissariat and transport arrangements rather than to waste it in dashing fruitlessly into a wild mountainous land, exposed to possibility of reverse. The columns will be dependent entirely on themselves for food for man and fodder for beast. A small quantity of supplies may be obtainable at Jelalabad and at Azim Khan-ke-Killa, in the Khorum Valley, but it will not be safe to count even upon this; while between Quettah and Jacobabad or Quettah and Dera Ghazee Khan there is absolutely nothing to be obtained. Those accustomed to march in countries where cities are plentifully scattered are unable to understand the enormous difficulty that attaches to the task of feeding an army in a sparsely populated land. Not only will transport have to be provided for ammunition, warlike and medical stores, engineer equipment, telegraph and pontoon trains, but provisions for fighting men and camp followers for certainly a month must also accompany the army. It is not to be wondered at, then, that the commissariat officers on the frontier have experienced some difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of beasts of burden for the large forces now being assembled. We soon shall hear of this difficulty being overcome. District officials before this are scouring the jungles for all available camels, mules, and yaboos, and when once the civilian element comes forward to aid the military in war preparations, success speedily follows.

Once more we would caution the public against accepting implicitly the numerous rumours that from time to time will most certainly be telegraphed home during the forthcoming operations. Bazaar stories are proverbially baseless, or, at any rate, grossly exaggerated. A reconnoitring party pushing up the Abkhana road would easily be converted into a general advance on Daka before the tale left the Peshawur streets. The country in which our troops are about to operate is a most difficult one—not even the study of large scale maps will teach a man the topography of the Sufaidkoh or Suliman ranges, where difficulties occur at every yard. Gradients to be eased off, roads to be made, gorges to be widened, streams to be bridged,—these are the tasks our Engineers and Infantry working parties will have before them before they see even Daka. At every ascent drag-ropes will be required for the guns; at every descent the horses will have to be eased of the strain. If our troops average ten miles per diem in traversing either the Khorum or the Khyber roads, the country will have good reason to be proud of them, for the difficulties will not only be those encountered in surmounting natural obstacles, but the task of clearing the heights, which everywhere will be lined with hardy mountaineers fighting on their own hills, will be no mean effort of hill warfare.

We have no wish to adopt a pessimist tone, or to advance imaginary and fancied dangers in the work now before our soldiers in Afghanistan, but we have every reason to counsel a firm though cautious attitude in dealing with these savage Mahomedan races. Within the last few months we have seen raw, untrained levies, men unused to war, uninitiated into the mysteries of long-range shooting, ignorant of the use of artillery, hold at bay very powerful forces belonging to a first-rate Power. We have seen the enormous strength put forward to subdue a few thousand mountaineers fighting on their own soil, in defence of what they deem their just rights; we have the memory of many a sharp skirmish on a Punjab hillside, as well as the recollection of the mismanaged and ever-to-be-deplored last Afghan campaign. It is with the view of avoiding similar errors that we counsel prudence. There is a time for dash and a time for caution. When our commissariat arrangements are perfected, when our communications with the frontier are complete, when we have sufficient troops at the front to keep open unthreatened the passes into Cabul,—then, and not till then, shall we deem it prudent to encourage in our Generals that spirit of dashing enterprise which has characterized the leaders of our armies in every clime, but which, perhaps, has never been shown to more advantage than in the East.

The Generals selected for the chief commands are men in whom the nation can have every confidence. They are men of tried ability in the field, of marked gallantry in action. They have proved themselves heretofore men of dash, and the energetic preparations now being carried on in the Punjab, the cautious attitude adopted at Jumrood and Thull, show that they know equally well how to be prudent.

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DAILY TELEGRAPH, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11,

(124)

RUSSIA AND CABUL.

The correspondent of the *Times of India*, writing on the 12th ult. from Rawul Pindee, says: "The mission to Cabul is the all-absorbing topic of public interest here just now, and will, I suppose, continue so until its return with the Ameer's answer to the Viceroy's demands. Sir Neville Chamberlain and suite arrived here last night, and left for Peshawur this morning, where they will arrive to-night, and as all the arrangements for the departure of the mission have been most assiduously pushed forward by Major Waterfield, it is expected to leave Peshawur by the 15th at the latest. The escort that is to accompany the mission is very generally pronounced here as being much too weak; it will consist of a squadron of the Guide Cavalry, fifty sabres 11th Bengal Cavalry, and fifty rifles of the Guides, all armed with the Snider. If this force could be supplemented with a couple of Gatling guns it would be sufficiently formidable to keep at bay a very considerable number of such troops as the Afghans could bring against them, should they, in violation of the laws of nations, attempt violence towards the mission. The chances of such a catastrophe occurring, however, are very remote; for, infatuated and misguided as Shere Ali may be, he cannot be blind to the fact that an attack on the mission would be an unpardonable offence, which would only precipitate hostilities on our part, and inevitably terminate in his dethronement. Whatever promises of assistance the Russians may make, it is highly improbable that, at the present critical juncture, when the political horizon in Europe is so unsettled, and she herself so greatly weakened after her recent struggle with Turkey, she would hazard a war with England, to support so vacillating and treacherous an ally as the Ameer of Cabul. I do not think that a better opportunity than the present for pressing our terms on the Ameer could have presented itself, and the Indian Government would do wisely to make much of it. We can do that to-day in Afghanistan with 20,000 troops that we will not be able to do ten years hence—if we let this opportunity slip—with 100,000. Pacific overtures, backed by costly presents, consisting of Arab horses, rifles, jewellery, clothing, &c., are evidently to receive a fair trial, but should these fail in bringing Shere Ali to his senses, it is fervently to be hoped the stern alternative of war will unhesitatingly be held out to him."

The Indian *Daily News* of Sept. 17 remarks: "With the good wishes of all Anglo-Indians, almost we had written the approval of all Anglo-Indians, Sir Neville Chamberlain has started on his mission. A fortnight ago people seemed to think and care very little about that mission. It is not so now. The critical state of the political situation in Europe, keener realisation of the scope and meaning of the Russian advance in Central Asia, accumulating proofs that Russian promises are not worth pie-crust—all these considerations have had their influence in determining the bent of men's minds on the subject; but more than anything else perhaps has the keen unwonted interest manifested by the English press influenced opinion. Prestige may be a primitive, old-world, quite exploded idea, but it is as the breath of life to the British Empire in India, and we simply cannot afford to have it said in Indian bazaars, and places where men congregate, that the Russians are gaining an advantage over us in diplomacy and war, and everything else, and must soon displace us in India. That is what would be said if we allowed Russia to acquire preponderating influence at the Court of Cabul; and the value of prestige might then become manifest, inasmuch as the loss of it would necessitate the keeping up of much larger armaments than we have occasion to employ now; and that would entail expense. It will be cheaper, therefore, and better in every way to settle the business now, and to settle it thoroughly. All these subsidies and rifles, and bribes of all sorts that we have been paying off and on for years, have after all only put off the evil day, and put it off to a more inconvenient season. And the money might have been much better spent. Let us have no more such bribery. It is unworthy; and worse than that, it is useless. Therefore, let us now assert ourselves, and if fighting there must be let us fight. That seems to be the argument."

The Moscow correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* states that in the coming war between England and Afghanistan Russia may assist the latter Power with officers, guns, iron, and steel; but there is no prospect of her giving it material aid in the shape either of men or gold. She has neither men nor gold to spare. However, she is not prepared to allow England to steal a march upon her in Asia. If England gains a footing in Afghanistan, as now seems probable, Russia will obtain compensation elsewhere. The Chinese persist in their claim to Kuldja, and if Russia was to give up that place that would unquestionably be to the advantage of England. However, Russia is not thinking of such a sacrifice. What England gains in Afghanistan, Russia will seek to gain in Kashgar. The correspondent adds that the first step which Russia will take in this direction will be to annex the fertile province of Turfan, in which both cotton and silk are cultivated to a considerable extent, and with good results. England, it is thought, will be quite unable to prevent such a step.

The Vienna *Fremdenblatt* gives the following account of the circumstances attending the Durbar held by Shere Ali of all the chiefs who recognise his supremacy: "These chiefs numbered forty-two. They were received in a camp arranged especially for them outside the town, and were entertained at the expense of the Ameer. Two days after their arrival Shere Ali, accompanied by his Ministers and Generals and the most important ulemas of Cabul, repaired to this camp, where he was received by the chiefs and their followers with great enthusiasm. He announced to them all that the Padishah of the Russians, Iskander (Alexander), had sent an embassy to him in order to bind more closely the friendly relations already existing between the two countries, so that in future they may live on a good understanding between them. He asked the assembly whether he had done well to receive such an embassy with distinction, and the reply on all sides was 'Very good, very good.' Shere Ali then ordered his Mehurdar (keeper of the seals) to give to the assembly a short description of the power of the Russians and of the extent of their country, in order that the Afghans might understand with what a formidable Empire they had to deal; and then, speaking himself, the Ameer said, 'Return to your brethren and sharpen your sabres and point your lances, so that you may be ready to enter the field well armed in case I should have to call upon you to combat the enemies of your country.' The Ameer then returned to the town, and for two days his Ministers and the chiefs of the tribes held council on the subject of the finances and the military strength of the country, and the sixth day after their arrival these same chiefs took leave of Shere Ali in his residence of Baha Hissar, and returned to their homes."

PALL MALL OCTOBER 11, 1878.

At the close of an article in to-day's *Times*, under the heading of "Afghanistan," there appear some judicious admonitions, which admit of further application than that made of them by the writer. He disclaims "any wish to adopt a pessimist tone"—an unnecessary disclaimer to put forward in respect of anything allowed to appear in the journal for which he writes—"or to advance imaginary and fancied dangers in the work now before our soldiers in Afghanistan, but we have every reason to counsel a firm though cautious attitude in dealing with these savage Mahommedan races. Within the last few months we have seen raw, untrained levies, men unused to war, uninitiated into the mysteries of long-range shooting, ignorant of the use of artillery, hold at bay very powerful forces belonging to a first-rate Power. We have seen the enormous strength put forward to subdue a few thousand mountaineers fighting on their own soil, in defence of what they deem their just rights; we have the memory of many a sharp skirmish on a Punjaub hillside, as well as the recollection of the mismanaged and ever-to-be-deplored last Afghan campaign. It is with the view of avoiding similar errors that we counsel prudence. There is a time for dash and a time for caution. When our commissariat arrangements are perfected, when our communications with the frontier are complete, when we have sufficient troops at the front to keep open unthreatened the passes into Cabul—then, and not till then, shall we deem it prudent to encourage in our generals that spirit of dashing enterprise which has characterized the leaders of our armies in every clime, but which, perhaps, has never been shown to more advantage than in the East." These warnings appear to us very wise; but in urging the necessity of "having sufficient troops at the front to keep open and unthreatened the passes into Cabul," the writer suggests to us the further question whether the troops now in India are sufficient for the work to be done; bearing in mind that there are always other duties for our soldiers in that country than those which are performed "at the front," and duties, too, which cannot without the greatest danger be neglected or performed "underhanded." We are not in a position to say for ourselves how this may be; but it is time the question should be asked.

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A letter from Teheran, dated the 7th ult., in the *Deutsche Zeitung*, says that the Persian Government is watching with great anxiety the development of affairs in Afghanistan, but that it is entirely dependent for news on the wandering dervishes or merchants, as there is no postal communication between the two countries. "The Shah is well aware that a war between England and Afghanistan would have serious consequences for Persia, and he fears to be himself drawn into the conflict. . . . At the same time it is the general opinion here that such a war will be sooner or later inevitable, and the Persian merchants have consequently almost ceased to despatch their goods to Afghanistan. The Government, too, is strengthening its garrisons on the Afghan frontier, as during the war of 1838-42 several Afghan nomadic tribes made raids into the Persian frontier districts, murdering and robbing their inhabitants. . . . . News has arrived here from Herat that the Russian Embassy at Cabul will shortly visit several of the chief Afghan towns in order to obtain information as to their industry and trade, and especially as to the feeling of the population. The Russians have considerably strengthened their flotilla on the Sea of Aral, and have begun to erect fortresses on the borders of Kashgar."

THE OVERLAND MAIL.

The Indian papers brought by the Bombay Mail of September 26 state that at that date the Afghanistan question occupied the foremost place in public attention. The *Bombay Gazette* says :—

The policy which the Government of India ought to adopt is much discussed, a powerful section of politicians contending that nothing will ever thoroughly secure India but the occupation of Jellalabad, Herat, the Bamian Pass (that is, the only road from Bokhara to Cabul), and Cabul itself. Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission is still at Peshawur ready to start for Cabul as soon as final instructions are received from the Viceroy. The Viceroy's messenger is said to have been well received by the Ameer. News has been received of the arrival of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan at Cabul on the 10th inst. He was hospitably received and entertained on the road and at Cabul, and on the 12th inst. had a private interview with the Ameer, at which he delivered the Viceroy's letters. The Mir Akhor is believed to be the bearer of the Ameer's instructions regarding the mission, and is hourly expected at Ali Musjid. The mission is at Peshawur awaiting the Mir Akhor's communication ; the Khyberee headmen are also at Peshawur. A khillat (that is, a State present) is being prepared by the Government of India for the Ameer of Cabul. The Russians are said to have given him already a particularly handsome khillat.

The banquet given at Peterhoff, Simla, on the 14th inst., in honour of Sir Neville Chamberlain and the Cabul Mission, appears to have been interesting and impressive as became a grave occasion, and the close proximity of events which touch our national fortunes to the quick and must give a decided bent to the flow of Indian politics in one direction or another. The Viceroy bade God-speed to his departing guest in that earnest, nervous, half-impassioned language of which he is so complete a master. Sir Neville replied, as a soldier should, in a few modest and unstudied sentences. Few and modest as they were, they inspired his audience with the conviction that a mission calling so imperatively for all the aid that tact, insight, judgment, dignity of manner, and a spirit tempered to a heroic calm, could not have been entrusted to fitter hands than his.

The same paper says that the information received by telegraph in India that the *Times* had published an article stating that the time had come when native chiefs like Scindiah and Holkar must be content either with no army at all or an army which shall constitute a wing of British troops, has been received with great satisfaction in India. The Bombay paper says :—

Anglo-Indian politicians who have placed the interests of England on a higher level than the interests of native chiefs have long contended that the native armies, numbering fully 350,000 men, are a curse to the country, because they eat up the resources of the people and are of no earthly use beyond being instruments to feed the pride, and possibly foster the ambition, of native princes. We say of no use, because as England guarantees the integrity of each native State, no native prince has an enemy against whom he can employ his forces or from whom he can defend himself. Moreover, these armies, laden as they are with the disaffected vagabondage of India, and the most atrocious scoundrels of the Mutiny period, are a source of political weakness to England, for, in any great crisis such as that of 1857, she would always have to fear the injuries which native States with powerful armies might do her. Some time ago a circular was surreptitiously published which purported to be instructions from the Government of India to political officers in native States to "suggest" to the chiefs that their armies should be cut down to the dimensions actually necessary for the performance of mere civil duties. The circular was discredited by the Government of India, which said that it had no intention of cutting down the armies of the native feudatories. The *Times* (which, as usual, has doubtless received its inspiration from the India Office) has, however, revealed the Government of India's real intentions. Seeing that the native armies could not be cut down without raising an immense outcry about infringed rights and offended dignity, the Viceroy has diplomatically resolved to let the armies stand as they are, but to insist that they shall be at least partially officered by British officers and amalgamated with British troops. The amalgamation is a mere matter of detail, but there is probably no important military station in India where feudatory armies could not be constantly brigaded with European troops and taught to believe that they are part of an Imperial force instead of the mere ornamental appendages of a native durbar.

The Lahore paper, writing on the same subject, says :—

In the event of hostilities with Cabul, it is a moot question whether the best portion of the forces of some of the great feudatories of the British Government could not be utilized with good political effect. Of course, in considering the question there is a good deal to be said both in favour of and against it. There is no doubt, however, that great chiefs like Scindia, with martial proclivities and aspirations, would highly appreciate military employment of this kind, and that it would be wisely politic to give them an opening for the outlet of unwholesomely suppressed martial ardour, and at the same time to thus help in actively employing, on our side, the numerous restless, adventurous, and discontented characters for whom our regular army affords no congenial field of employment, and who therefore wander about and seek military service in native States, and are prone to render themselves dangerously troublesome in disturbed times. The old Khalsa soldier of the former Sikh Government has not yet died out, and the best specimens of him will be found preferentially seeking service in native States. There are many in the Jummoo territory, in the Cis-Sutlej protected Sikh States, and even as far south and down country as Hyderabad in the Deccan.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* thus summarizes two articles which he previously translates from the *Golos* :—

They are neither more nor less than a condensed retrospect of the past, and a stereoscopic shadowing forth of the future. The rayahs, said to be the daily sport of Turkish assassins and thieves, were found to be so very well off as to astonish the poor moujiks sent to deliver them. The atrocities once declared a proof of the inveterate savagery of the unspeakable Turk are now represented as a desperate means to repress rebellion adopted by a warlike, hard-bested race, fighting for life. After these admissions as regards the past, we have the cool statement that, the Turk being recognized as a respectable fellow by the suddenly illumined Russ, every effo rt is made to convert him into the ally of his late would-be exterminator. The means used, as we know from other sources, is to represent to the successor of the Caliph that, having satisfied Russia in Europe, there is no occasion for him to be at the expense and trouble of obliging England in Asia. This much being done to deprive England of her European ally, we are further treated to the avowal that to cripple British action in Europe entirely an Afghan complication is purposely got up by sagacious diplomatists on the Neva. And, as if all this were not enough to unveil the momentous objects pursued, this suite of confessions is closed by the remark that Russia has a destiny to work out in Asia which, unfulfilled after centuries of annexation, will only show its true bearing when in the future fresh events happen. For the present, it is significantly added, Russia is not in a position to wish to fight England chiefly in Asia. Indeed, if her business can be done by the Ameer in Asia and the Sultan in Europe, why need she fight at all?

It is added that "the Turkish alliance is suddenly advocated along the whole line of the Russian press. It is almost superfluous to observe that the move is accompanied with attacks upon Austria. If the Sultan can be led to see things from the Russian point of view, the national Slavonic armoury may once more be made available for weapons against Austrian competition."

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ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

BOMBAY, Oct. 11.

The *Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore* states that General Haines will take the command at Peshawur. The force is composed of 35,000 men. An outbreak of hostilities is regarded as inevitable. It is believed that Ali Musjid is armed with stronger guns than was expected. The Afghans are practising with heavy guns in the Khyber Pass. The garrison of Peshawur is being strongly reinforced.

AFGHANISTAN.

The native troops throughout India, we learn, are displaying great enthusiasm in the present crisis. Such a feeling was to be expected after the loyal manner in which men volunteered to fill the vacancies in those corps ordered to Malta, and fully refutes the unfavourable estimate given by the St. Petersburg Correspondent of the Berlin *National Zeitung* of the British military strength in Hindostan. Not only is the actual force under arms deemed insufficient by this critic for the exigencies of warfare beyond our border, but the native troops are stigmatized as "very untrustworthy, being kept together only by rigorous discipline." In point of fact, this is far from being the case; the discipline of the native army is most satisfactory. A reference to the reports of general officers who have been associated with our Indian forces shows that, whatever may be their views as to the efficiency of the present irregular system, or as to the stamina of some of the regiments recruited in Southern India, there is but one opinion as to the state of discipline of the native regiments. Drunkenness, the curse of the British Army, is almost unknown. Half-a-dozen cases in a battalion per annum is considered excessive. Desertions, too, are rare; insubordination equally so. Petty acts of slackness on duty, caused by a lack of sufficient European supervision, are the principal cases with which commanding officers have to deal. Sir Arthur Borton's farewell order to the native contingent on their embarcation for Cyprus and the Duke of Cambridge's repeated references to the excellent condition of the Indian brigade at Malta show that the feeling of our own military authorities is not that indulged in by the Correspondent of the *National Zeitung*.

Turning from the question of discipline, which is a mere matter of fact, to that of the strength required for an efficient garrison for India, which is a matter of opinion, we cannot but hold that, although at a first glance the number of troops we consider sufficient to overawe the inhabitants of Hindostan seems strangely inadequate,—a trifle over one soldier to 1,000 inhabitants in a far distant land scarcely appears a safe preventive for insurrection,—in reality, however, the regiments of our Indian Army are capable of great expansion, and fortunately the means are close at hand. The system which enables a soldier after three years' service to take his discharge has filled the country with a vast number of able-bodied young men, thoroughly drilled, inured to discipline, fond of our rule, and proud of their connexion with the Army. Of these many thousands annually, owing to domestic trouble, come up again for re-enlistment, while many hundreds are ready in their villages and quite willing to join our standard should inducement offer. A prospect of service and hope of loot would now, as it did in 1857, not only bring up the younger soldiers to their old corps, but rouse the love of war in the breast of the older pensioners. When the regiments of the Punjab Frontier Force were marching through the Sikh country *en route* to Delhi at the height of the Mutiny, their numbers were swelled by several hundred stalwart men, many of whom had passed through the service, all anxious to fight for the Sirkar, and earn a little plunder for themselves. One well-known story may be given, as it illustrates the spirit that pervades the fighting races of Northern India. An old Subadar, who had lost a limb in the Bozdar Expedition but two months previously, came out to meet his old corps, "Coke's Rifles," as it passed near his village. Maimed as he was, the gallant old man was there, sword in hand, to beg that he might be permitted to accompany his late regiment. He could not bear the thought of the "Awal pultan" being engaged and he not with it. His request was granted; and not the least loss the 1st Punjab Infantry suffered during the siege was the death of the Sikh Subadar from a gun-shot wound on the ridge of Delhi. The spirit which animates the Sikhs is equally strong among the Pathan tribes within our border, such as the Yusufzae and the Khuttuks; while those who skirt our frontier line, jealous as they are of the appearance of an Englishman within their lands, came down in great numbers on the augmentation of our Army in 1857. In the last Afghan war the very men who so strenuously opposed our passage through the Khyber were willing enough to enlist under our flag and to keep open the pass for us when once our footing was made in Cabul. We dwelt at some length on Friday last on our relations with these border tribes, and pointed out the necessity of taking them into consideration in dealing with any questions as to forcing the northern passes into Afghanistan. Dangerous as they are as tribes, there is no doubt that many, very many, individuals would come down and enlist under our flag at the first tap of the drum of war. No raw recruits would these men be, but trained soldiers, conversant with our drill and adepts in mountain warfare.

In 1857, when our rule in India was shaken to its very foundation, the personal influence of our frontier officers was sufficient to call up these wild Afghans in thousands. We may be sure the old race has not died out. When it was found that the Bengal Army had gone and that the safety of India depended on the 10,000 British bayonets scattered through the length and breadth of the land, and on the little irregular brigade with which Brigadier Neville Chamberlain guarded our Punjab frontier, Lord Lawrence, with that marvellous knowledge of men which was his chief characteristic, at once detached officers from each Punjab corps. He placed them at the head of small bodies of their old regiments, and directed them to raise new corps. In this manner an army was collected, which not only held the Punjab, but aided most materially in saving India. The names of these levies were familiar enough 20 years ago. Probyn's and Fane's Horse were among them, and not an expedition has left the shores of India or crossed the frontier, whether in the north-east or north-west, that has not been in the main composed of these corps. The Indian Government has not forgotten the lesson taught by the experiences of 1857; for we learn that orders have already been issued to raise the various infantry battalions composing the expeditionary force to a strength of 100 bayonets per company, the cavalry at the same time being augmented to 75 sabres per troop. It would be comparatively easy, should Government consider the step advisable, to extend the order, and by applying it to all the native corps in India increase our Army there at one stroke by 4,000 sabres and 30,000 bayonets.

At this season of the year, with the harvest stored and but little labour going on, recruits would be plentiful in Oude and the Punjab, the two chief recruiting grounds of India. The frontier tribes, ever anxious for war, would readily come forward in great numbers. In enlisting these men it would be necessary to have recourse to those Pathans already serving in our ranks, and to confine enlistments to those clans who have already proved faithful servants. For, odd as it may appear, when it is remembered that all Afghans are born soldiers, yet it is nevertheless true that comparatively few of the border races enlist readily, while others, though willing to enlist, are looked upon unfavourably either by commanding officers or else by Government, who on more than one occasion have forbidden the entertainment of men belonging to certain tribes. Among those who skirt our border, the Jadoons enlist but rarely, nor are they much sought after. The Bonairwals, in spite of their animosity to our rule, make most admirable soldiers; but, unfortunately, they are averse to the strict discipline of our service. The Swatis are not considered good soldiers, and the fact of their connexion with such a powerful religious lever as the Akhoond was to Mussulmans was doubtless the cause of the judicious order on the part of Government to discontinue their enlistment. The Momunds, gallant as they have proved themselves in more than one engagement with our troops, have not a high reputation as soldiers among British officers, and, though a considerable number are in our ranks, no efforts are made to induce them to enlist or to remain when once in the service. The next great clan, the Afridis, furnishes the largest number of soldiers of any border tribe. It is hard to say how many are in the ranks, certainly several thousands. Homesickness is as common among them as it usually is with all mountaineers, consequently unless inducements are held out to them to remain in the service they do not serve long. As Light Infantry soldiers the Afridis have few equals. Indeed, their love for the profession of arms is unbounded. They have shown themselves most gallant and loyal towards us, and even when operating against their own clansmen desertions are almost unknown. Many hold commissions in the Native Army; some are decorated with the Order of British India. An officer who can speak their own Pushtoo completely wins their hearts; and if this acquisition is combined with a fine *physique*, cheery manner, and personal gallantry, the heart of the Afridi is completely won. The Orakzaes do not enlist freely, nor do the Ranizaes, the Utmankhel, the Dawaris, or Vaziris. A few years ago an attempt was made to induce some Mahsoods to join a Punjab regiment; but the scheme broke down, as did a similar one which was meant to provide a complete company of Siahposh Kafirs for the corps of Guides. The tribes further south, such as the Bozdars, Kasranis, Sheoranis, and Ushteranis, with the various Belooch clans on the Scinde border, are not found in the Bengal Army, though some are in the ranks of that of Bombay.

A goodly contingent of native troops comes from the far-off tribes of Bajawar, Ningrahar, Hazara, and Logar, all immediate subjects of the Ameer, while in many corps men from Cabul,

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Ghuznee, and Candahar are to be found. Although there is no reason to doubt the loyalty of these men, yet in the event of hostilities with Cabul, it would be most inadvisable to increase their number to any great extent; indeed, it would be unnecessary. The personal influence of many of our frontier officers is quite sufficient to cause the "jawans" of Tirah, Yusufzae and the Khuttuk Hills to flock to our standard, in numbers more than sufficient for our wants, hardy mountaineers, of grand *physique*, with great dash in action, though not much reliability in time of great trouble. These men with a good substratum of steady Sikh and British bayonets would prove invaluable in any warfare. Their climate is rigorous, their country rugged and precipitous, their system of living frugal, quite unused to comforts or even, as we term them, the ordinary necessaries of life. These Pathans in all our mountain expeditions have carried themselves to the satisfaction of all Englishmen with whom they have come in contact, and we have every reason to believe that, properly led and properly cared for, the Pathan soldiers in our own army will prove far more than a match for Shere Ali's army. It may be well to dwell on the fact that during the height of the crisis with Russia many of the Indian chieftains spontaneously offered the use of their levies in the threatened war. This was considered a striking instance of the loyalty of the native Princes, but it is not so generally known that not a single expedition has taken place on the Punjab border in which the forces of some of the local Nawabs have not been engaged. These men, though Pathans, of the same faith as the tribes with whom we have been at enmity—in many cases even connected with these clans by many ties—have never hesitated to come forward and offer us substantial aid. Not only in petty acts of warfare has this been the case, but in 1849, when Herbert Edwardes was holding the Trans-Indus Provinces in the face of fearful odds, the Multanis of Dera Ismail Khan, the Nawabs of Isa Khel, Tank, and Tawana all came forward to help him. In 1857 these men promptly raised levies. Some, such as Lind's and Cureton's Horse, were formed into regiments, and sent down to Hindostan; others, as the Niazis of Isa Khel, were intrusted with the care of distant cities, such as Peshawur; others, again, guarded their own frontier, and thus released the regular troops for service in the field. The Khattak Khan, Sir Khodja Mahomed, though now a very old man, has repeatedly placed himself at the head of his followers, and accompanied our frontier troops on war service. The Nawab of Amb in like manner distinguished himself by his personal gallantry in Hazara. Numerous instances might be cited to prove that these are not mere acts of fair-weather loyalty, but genuine support of our rule. There is little doubt that the various Pathan chiefs all down the Trans-Indus frontier will as readily come forward to our aid in a war with the Ameer as they did in 1857, or in many a subsequent small expedition.

Turning from the Pathan to the Sikh element in our native forces, we have men who in the olden days, under their own leaders, over and over again drove back the Afghans within their own mountain ranges. The recollection of the Sutlej and the Punjab campaigns is enough to show that men who were foemen worthy of the steel Gough and Hardinge led against them are not likely to be behindhand when led by British officers. In the Mutiny, in China, and in all our recent petty border wars the Sikh has shown that he has not degenerated one whit. In fighting qualities he is generally considered the superior of the Pathan, for, while but little inferior to him in *élan*, he is gifted with far more solid pluck, and it is the boast of the Sikh that his religion does not permit him to turn his back on the foe. The faith of Nanuck is undoubtedly calculated to inspire heroism; the baptismal rite, when the adult, after having recited the professions of his religion, drinks a bowl of sweetened water, which is previously stirred by a priest with the point of Nanuch's sword, is a ceremony not easily forgotten by the young Jat, and it is a wise custom in the Native Army to compel all Sikh recruits to take the Pahal before enlistment. Although it is said that the Sikh element is dying out, a visit to the chief fairs in the Punjab in the spring of the year gives ample proof that there is yet a large field for recruiting, and the willingness with which fine young men come forward for service is evidence that the religion of the Sikh, essentially military in its character, has not suffered by the introduction of British rule into the Punjab. With the exception of the Ghoorkas, whose gallantry and hardihood are proverbial, the other races which compose our Native Army have not changed since the last Afghan war, when the Poorbiah Sepoys of our Bengal Regiments in fair fight were even a match for the Cabul troops. The rigorous climate, however, told on men used to the plains of Hindostan, and they succumbed to a worse enemy than the sword. Now, however, when our Native regiments are so largely recruited from tribes indigenous, as it were, to Afghanistan itself, we shall have little reason to fear that they will be affected by extreme cold. The Pathan soldiers will be in their element in the snowy ranges of Cabul, while the Sikh, accustomed to the biting winds of the Punjab, will be less liable to suffer from extremes of temperature than his Oude brother.

It will thus be seen that although the mountain ranges which intervene between us and Afghanistan are inhabited by tribes who, in all probability, will oppose our advance to a certain extent, yet these very men are, in spite of the opposition of the masses, a source of strength, inasmuch as they enlist freely in our service; and a long experience has taught us that they consider loyalty to our flag a far higher virtue than patriotism, so that we may rest assured of their warm co-operation, not only in forcing their own mountain passes, but in operating against the Ameer's troops.

DAILY TELEGRAPH, OCTOBER 12,

QUALITY OF OUR INDIAN TROOPS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH."

SIR—In view of the impending entrance of British troops into Afghanistan, it is interesting and instructive to know that there are probably at present no troops in the world to whom the peculiarities of hill warfare are better known, or who have had more practice in this peculiar kind of fighting, than some of our native Indian regiments. In this respect we stand at present in a far more favourable position than we did at the commencement, at least of the last Afghan war; although, in the course of four years' campaigning in that country, under leaders like Nott, Sale, and Pollock, some of our regiments, both English and native, took a very high degree of proficiency in an art which, to the ordinary British regiment of the line, and still more to the ordinary Sepoy regiment, is one full of difficulty and of not unnatural apprehension.

When the army under Sir John Keane first entered the Bolan Pass, I may say, without fear of contradiction, that there was not a man or an officer in it who had ever so much as seen a defile or a hill-side under the conditions of a military operation. There is a well-known and grand despatch of General Nott's, addressed to General England after his first unsuccessful attempt to succour Candahar, which shows how familiar practice had made the supposed terrors of hill warfare to the Candahar garrison and their commander at least; but this was written late in 1841, and when the troops, both British and native, had acquired the confidence begotten of three years' incessant and successful campaigning.

Now, however, we commence the contest under a vastly different condition of things. I say nothing of our modern arms of precision, and of the advantage which the possession of the Martini-Henry and Snider rifle gives the troops of the present day over those who were only armed with the now despised "Brown Bess." I refer to the training which the numerous hill expeditions that have taken place since the Punjaub was annexed have imparted to many of the native Indian regiments, and, in particular, to the excellence in hill warfare to which all the regiments of the "Punjaub Frontier Force" have attained in the course of nearly thirty years' service on the Trans-Indus border, from Jacobabad upwards to the Peshawur valley.

It is not generally known, but in the annexation of the Punjaub, in 1849, six regiments of native infantry and five of cavalry were organised by the late Sir Henry Lawrence, in addition to an existing corps of almost European fame, the "Guide Corps," for the defence of the Trans-Indus border. To these have since been added four distinguished regiments of native infantry, and a battalion of Ghoorkas, making a total of six regiments of cavalry and twelve of infantry, to which, under the name of the "Punjaub Frontier Force," has been confided the guardianship of the hill frontier from the confines of Scinde to Peshawur. These regiments have served unremittingly for twenty-eight years at the various frontier stations and posts, and being largely composed of men from the various independent, as well as subject, hill tribes, and supplemented by Sikhs, Ghoorkas, Dogras, and other well-known fighting material, and having been incessantly trained on the frontier by some of the best of our Indian officers, either in actual warfare or in the best substitute that can be found for it—prolonged encampments for drill purposes in the Trans-Indus hills—are now quite fit to cope with the best and bravest of the Afghan troops whom Shere Ali can array against us. It is to be hoped that the Indian Government will draw largely upon these excellent troops, ready made to its hand when the various columns for the expected operations come to be organised.

Nor is it to be supposed that we are dependent entirely upon the troops specially designated above for the operations we are about entering upon. The native army of Bengal (I leave those better acquainted with the Bombay and Madras armies to proclaim their merits) contains numerous regiments, to mention which by their numbers would be invidious, which are scarcely if at all inferior to the "Frontier Force." For instance, there are four battalions of Ghoorkas on the list of the Bengal army; and there are also many regiments, recruited originally in the Punjaub, and containing, like the regiments of the "Frontier Force," a fair proportion of soldiers from the independent and subject frontier tribes, which have covered themselves with honour in some of the frontier campaigns—notably in that of Umbeyla—and whose training only falls short of that of the special frontier regiments.

Thus I think we may enter upon the coming campaign with the conviction that we are quite prepared for it, so far as the possession of the best of weapons and the most tried and experienced troops in the art of hill warfare can serve us; and that in this respect we start with infinitely greater advantages than we did when we entered upon our last campaign in Afghanistan, whilst those who will be arrayed against us have either been standing still or absolutely retrograding from an abortive attempt on the part of Shere Ali to Europeanise his raw levies.—Your obedient servant,

J. L. VAUGHAN, Lieutenant-General.

Junior United Service Club, Oct. 6.

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ENGLAND AND CABUL.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

BOMBAY, OCT. 11.

The *Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore* states that General Haines will take the command at Peshawur. The force is composed of 35,000 men. An outbreak of hostilities is regarded as inevitable.

It is believed that Ali Musjid is armed with stronger guns than was expected. The Afghans are practising with heavy guns in the Khyber Pass. The garrison of Peshawur is being strongly reinforced.

WHILE the volunteered explanation of the Russian return to Tchekmedji and Tchataldja—prepared for European credulity—is that the defenceless condition of the Christian population in Constantinople necessitates that step, quite another reason is revealed by the telegraphic despatches from our Special Correspondent at Pera and other sources which we publish to-day. As to the charge against the Mussulmans of ill-treating Christians upon the withdrawal of the occupying army, it seems to have been promptly investigated by Sir HENRY LAYARD, with the result of discovering that very few cases of violence had occurred, and that these had been perpetrated by the desperadoes whom the Russian troops leave behind in their track. We should be obliged, therefore, to dismiss at once such an excuse for the illegal action of the Czar's Government even if no more probable elucidation were furnished; but the message of our Correspondent places it beyond doubt that this solicitude for the Christians of Roumelia is the merest and falsest pretext. He states that Prince LOBANOFF, in an interview with SAFVET Pasha on Wednesday, told the Grand Vizier very frankly that a definitive treaty between Russia and Turkey must be concluded without delay. It must be based, the Russian representative added, on the points in the San Stefano Treaty which that of Berlin had passed over, and until his master had made such a convention with the Porte there would and did exist a "state of war" between the Governments. The Czar's agent finished by declaring that the Russian troops would certainly not evacuate Adrianople until three months had elapsed from the ratification of such a compact.

This revelation—the general truth of which it will be difficult for the Government of St. Petersburg to impugn—puts on one side completely the mendacious pretence that anxiety for the Christians inspired the retrograde movement of the retiring Russians. For the twentieth time we see them pursuing a policy the hidden object of which is one thing and the published cause entirely another; nor need we waste time in pointing out what is notorious, that alone among European statesmen Russian diplomats can never again be trusted to tell the truth or keep their word. We pass over this commonplace of modern history to observe that the terms of the convention thus pressed upon the Porte are already known in their superficial but not in their secret clauses. The chief point among the conditions made public, and remaining from the San Stefano document, is the payment of a very considerable indemnity in money, being the balance of a perfectly absurd and fantastic sum, of which it suits the vanity of the Czar to pretend that his Asiatic gains in territory are worth about a thousand million roubles. If he had fixed their value at fourteen thousand millions the demands of San Stefano would have been exactly satisfied by this imaginary arithmetic. But Russia wants a pecuniary hold over Turkey, and since the Berlin Congress refused to deal with the matter, the invading Power has a technical ground for pressing the claim. The Porte, however, is equally at liberty to refuse any such sacrifice beyond what has been already yielded in compliance with the views of the Congress; and Russia would have but a poor prospect of either completing the bankruptcy of the Sultan's Empire, or compelling ABDUL HAMID to submit to the secret conditions which no doubt are also proposed, if it were not for the totally unjustifiable menaces with which the extortion is being accompanied.

The Russian representative, it appears, insists upon the conclusion of this separate concordat on the ground that failing its execution the state of war exists and will continue between the two Governments. Now this in itself is an impudent resuscitation of the San Stefano Treaty, and a contemptuous disregard of the superior authority belonging to that signed in Berlin by the European Powers. Nothing is more certain than that the Congress proceeded upon the submission of the San Stefano document to the Plenipotentiaries, or that the instrument drawn up and signed by them replaced and abolished the compact wrung from the Porte by grossly unfair proceedings. Besides, the Berlin Treaty gave to the Czar certain territories of the Sultan on the double basis that the San Stefano pact should be dropped, and that peace for the future existed between the belligerents. Consequently it is at once most flagrantly immoral as well as grossly insulting to Europe to lay hands on Kars and the rest of those concessions and then turn round and say, "But if we do not also get the money bargained for at San Stefano, it is still 'war' between us, and we shall not relinquish the Turkish provinces which we hold." In this last threat occurs, indeed, a second affront offered to European law, for the Berlin Congress made the evacuation of Roumelia depend, not upon petitions from the Christians, or upon the compliance of the Porte with any ulterior exactions, but on the lapse of certain intervals of time very plainly defined. This conduct, then, on the part of Russia is violently unfaithful to her signature and cynically insolent towards the signatories of the Berlin peace; nor is it confined to mere verbal menace. Not only have her troops halted in their homeward march far short of Adrianople, and actually returned to occupy the commanding lines of Tchekmedji and Tchataldja, but General SKOBELEFF declines simultaneously to evacuate Bourgas and Kirk Kilissa, and the Russian authorities have suspended the railway service in order to gather all rolling stock at Adrianople. The numbers which have been so ostentatiously forwarded to Odessa from San Stefano and Rodosto were largely composed of sick or non-combatant men, and it is said that—again in defiance of the provisions of the treaty—the Russians retain, and mean long to retain, a total of one hundred and fifty thousand soldiers north and south of the Balkans. In this state of affairs there would naturally be but one course for the Porte to pursue. It would adduce the very obvious arguments which we have used, founded upon the Berlin Treaty, and then flatly refuse even to entertain the idea of paying an indemnity, or of agreeing to those other demands, its provisional consent to which at San Stefano had been voided by subsequent events and by the superior authority of the document signed at Berlin. Strong on these moral and political grounds, it might then summon Russia to fulfil her undertakings conformably to her word, and call upon the signatory States at the same time to support at once their own honour and the rights of his Imperial Highness the Sultan. But though, no doubt, some such step will be taken by the Porte, it must not be forgotten that Russia has chosen the hour for this trick of diplomacy with consummate art. Austria, by her mismanagement of the Bosnian business, has been led into deplorable bloodshed, which makes it difficult or impossible for the Sultan's Government to join hands with her in any convention. England is supposed to be absorbed in the Indian crisis cunningly prepared for her. Germany wants peace at any price, in order that she may deal with internal difficulties, and France is in the same condition, while Italy and Austria have an international quarrel privately ripening, which Russia knows how to foment, so that the Porte may all the more probably be left to its fate. A study of these and other collateral features of the situation will throw light upon the scorn with which Russian generals and diplomats have recently spoken of the Berlin Treaty, even before the Roumelian Commissioners. They do not mean to set it violently aside, for this would be dangerous; but they propose to re-establish between its lines all they care for of the lapsed San Stefano arrangement, and, by creating constant delays, to make the Berlin Treaty practically null and void, except in those provisions by which they have already profited. If they can but be allowed, unreprimanded, thus to threaten Turkey with continued hostility and the national agony and anarchy of this occupation, they trust either to extort special supplementary terms, which will make the Sultan their vassal, or by foregoing these upon favourable conditions to wrest from his fears or jealousies a friendly alliance by which our English policy in Asia Minor will be defeated, and the grand double-headed conspiracy that aims at India and Constantinople virtually advanced far beyond the limits which the Congress seemed to fix.

If such sinister scheming be not promptly disavowed and relinquished it will be impossible for the British Government to permit its pro-

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secution. The "peace with honour" which was brought back hither from Berlin had better lose its first than its last characteristic, and it were better that the "state of war" with which Prince LOBANOFF menaces the Sultan should be roundly recognised than that Great Britain should look on while the provisions enforced upon Russia at Berlin are openly set at naught. One of the first measures adopted by her Majesty's Ministers, if this intelligence is confirmed, ought to be the return of our Fleet to the vicinity of Constantinople, together with its strong and immediate reinforcement. Any feebleness in our action against one flank of this vast Russian plot will only enhance the difficulties to be encountered at the other; while, if we are firm with Prince GORTSCHAKOFF in Roumelia, the advantages of that policy will quickly be seen in Cabul. The intimate connection between Russia's breach of her pledge as regards Afghanistan, and her contempt for international faith as regards the evacuation of Turkish territory, is no longer matter of doubt. No temporising or tentative steps will therefore serve to uphold the security and credit of Great Britain, cajoled and defied, as she is, along the whole line of her Oriental interests from the Bosphorus to the Khyber Pass. The Czar's Government must be compelled to observe its contract to the letter in all dates and details of the evacuation of European Turkey, just as surely as his agents must be made to withdraw from Afghanistan, never again to re-enter it, except with British permission. In five years' time this programme of resolute right and wise insistance might indeed become difficult of execution, but the case is not so now, when Russia is labouring under financial embarrassment and internal disaffection, and carries on her twofold plot in the trust that she may obtain by audacity what she has not strength enough left to snatch by force. To a firm front opposed by Turkey, with the support of England, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF will most probably at once yield. But the language employed by the QUEEN'S Ministers must in any case be unmistakable, and the retreat of Russia from her aggression through Cabul and from her present attempt upon the validity of the Berlin Treaty ought to be made as public as her assault upon our peace in India and her machinations against our honour and interests at Constantinople.

Daily News Oct 12

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

STRENGTHENING OF THE KHYBER GARRISON.

INTENDED ADVANCE OF BRITISH TROOPS.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, FRIDAY EVENING.

The Ameer makes no sign. He has, however, greatly strengthened the Khyber garrison.

All pacific hopes are ended.

There is no news of the Viceroy's Envoy; in fact, no trustworthy news whatever from Cabul.

The meditated surprise of Ali Musjid has been abandoned. The military considered it useless unless we were prepared to proceed beyond. October is a deadly month in the Pass to troops occupying it. The original programme of a combined advance at two or three different points early in November will be adhered to. Preparations to that end are being vigorously carried on.

The temper of the frontier tribes remains friendly.

Many additional regiments have been ordered for service. The force of 13,000 already sanctioned is likely to be doubled.

The Viceroy and the military and foreign secretaries and military members of the Council, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab will proceed to Lahore next month. The Viceroy's Council will meet in Calcutta as usual.

(BY SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, FRIDAY NIGHT.

Considerable discussion is going on in the Russian Press over the question whether or no Russia ought to give the Ameer of Afghanistan aid in the coming conflict with England. Various shades of opinion are represented, the extreme anti-English view being apparently that of the St. Petersburg *Exchange Gazette*, which, assuming that General Chamberlain's military mission was undertaken because the Ameer had refused to expel the Russian envoy on the demand of the Viceroy, and that it was arrested because its military character made it a species of menace, declares that it would be pusillanimous for Russia to abandon a friend who had got into trouble on her account.

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

BOMBAY, OCT. 11.

The *Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore* states that General Haines will take the command at Peshawur. The force is composed of 35,000 men. An outbreak of hostilities is regarded as inevitable.

It is believed that Ali Musjid is armed with stronger guns than was expected.

The Afghans are practising with heavy guns in the Khyber Pass.

The garrison of Peshawur is being strongly reinforced.

OUR Correspondent at Simla sends us a telegram which is full of interest. It helps to clear away much of the uncertainty which for a few days hung around the condition of things at Peshawur, and which furnished occasion or excuse for various exciting and bewildering rumours. Indeed, if we are not mistaken, some portion of the public of London have during the past week been reading daily accounts of great military movements in the Khyber Pass; of forts captured, important positions seized, and a war in fact already tolerably far advanced. Our Simla Correspondent tells us what has really happened. There was, it would appear, some intention to make a dash and surprise the Ali Musjid fort, but the plan has been given up. The military authorities considered the capture of Ali Musjid a useless performance, unless it were part of a general movement, and we were prepared to go farther at once. This was exactly the opinion which we expressed the other day when the report came that the fort had been captured, and which we repeated when it was made certain that the rumour was unfounded. Our Correspondent tells us that the original plan of combined advance from two or three points will be carried out early next month, as the military authorities consider October a peculiarly unfavourable month for operations in the Passes. An advance does not necessarily mean, in this case we presume does certainly not mean, an advance on Cabul, but only on some points that in the opinion of the VICEROY and his advisers would be suitable for the demonstration from which they are believed to expect so much. Many additional regiments have been ordered for service. The forces already sanctioned are likely, our Correspondent believes, to be doubled. The VICEROY and his staff will remove to Lahore next month, but the VICEROY'S Council will remain in Calcutta. The AMEER has made no sign—that is to say, no friendly sign. He has strengthened his force in the Khyber Pass, and our Correspondent states that all hopes of a pacific settlement are at an end. The temper of the tribes that were friendly to us remains, he adds, just the same, and this is perhaps the only particularly encouraging piece of information contained in his long and interesting despatch. He sees no prospect of any peaceful end to the dispute, anticipates an immediate doubling of the force our military authorities originally ordered, and is plainly of opinion that long and troublesome operations are to be expected. All this is the result of a controversy which most persons are satisfied ought never to have been entered upon, and which when entered upon was conducted with a lack of discretion and a profusion of something very like discourtesy well calculated to bring any discussion to an unsatisfactory conclusion. Were we at a loss to account for the attitude of SHERE ALI, explanation enough might be found in the fact that in all probability he inferred from the proceedings and the demeanour of the Indian Government a determination to make war on him in any case, and he therefore believed that there was nothing to be gained by any attempt at compromise or conciliation.

We are going to war with SHERE ALI, if we are to regard war as unavoidable, in a quarrel and for a purpose which are disapproved by the highest authority on Indian policy now in England—we were going to say, now alive. Other men, not perhaps of authority as high as Lord LAWRENCE, but whose judgment on Indian affairs every one respects, have added their influence to his in warnings which we fear will prove now too late, against the course of policy on which the Government appear to have long since entered. There were indeed warnings given long before, but they were founded on conjecture, not on certainty; and they were readily met by assurances that her MAJESTY'S Ministers had no such purpose as that ascribed to them. There was no way of bringing public opinion to bear upon the plans of the Government, for the plans were not known, and every tendency to such a purpose was disavowed as soon as it was conjectured. The one thing on which the public in general seem to have made up their mind was that the policy of intervention in the affairs of Afghanistan was absolutely a thing of the past. Most men would as soon have expected to hear of a new French project for the invasion of Mexico as an English plan for an invasion of Afghanistan. Therefore such warnings as were given failed to arouse much attention. When a member of the Government had to say anything on the subject he com-

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monly spoke as if the conjectures made by suspicious persons were too preposterous to call for serious refutation. Thus we find ourselves on the very verge of a war which the public of England never knew that we were approaching; indeed, has had the fullest assurances that there was not the remotest chance of war approaching. When we engaged more than twenty years ago in the Persian War, there was a strong feeling entertained and expressed by independent observers belonging to all sections of political life because of the manner in which the war had been undertaken without the consent or knowledge of the people of England. But in that case the emergency was sudden. The conditions which brought it about had not been anticipated by many, or perhaps confidently expected by any; the success was immediate and complete; the war was over before most people supposed it had well begun, and the attention of England was quickly drawn away to other events of infinitely greater importance. Had it not been for those facts the policy which made war without the concurrence or knowledge of the country's representatives would probably have been called into much more serious question than it actually underwent. This present case does not furnish the Government with any of the excuses which might have been pleaded for the statesmen who made the Persian War. The crisis which brought on that war was not of the making of our Government. It came on them and they had to deal with it. In this instance her MAJESTY'S Ministers have themselves brought about the crisis which they now say compels them to act.

This is the gravest part of the accusation which will one day or other have to be made against the present Government. No matter what may be said of the necessity for action now imposed upon them, and no matter how they may get through the task they have volunteered to undertake, the question will still have to be asked —why did they enter on such a policy? Why, above all, did they enter on it without the concurrence of the country? So far as we can read the history of the recent transactions, the Government appear to have prepared step by step, and in what we cannot help calling secrecy, for the very crisis which has now arisen. Even if the course they took could be shown to have been justifiable and prudent in itself, it would cease to be either justifiable or prudent the moment it was undertaken without the sanction of the English people. Of course there may be occasions when a Government may have to decide on a policy of warlike intervention without waiting for the express consent of Parliament or of public opinion. Such occasions, surely, are very rare; they cannot arise often in the history of a generation; but they may arise. It will, however, be found, we think, that when they do occur they arise out of one of two very different conditions. Either some utterly unexpected emergency has arisen which, not allowing foresight, will not wait for deliberation; or some new incident has come up in a long and familiar controversy. In the first instance a Government may be compelled to act independently of all considerations, and without any possibility of consulting public opinion. In the second, the incident, although itself unexpected, is part of a controversy so well understood and closely followed by the country, that the Government are fairly entitled to act in anticipation of what they know public opinion would be. Nothing could have less affinity to either situation than the condition of things to which we are now brought. The quarrel with SHERE ALI was not unexpected by the Government. On the contrary, they had every reason to know that it must come, and were, as we are assured, fully prepared for it. Nor was it a controversy which the public had followed. On the contrary, the public knew nothing at all about it. Had it been known that such a policy was in contemplation as that which the Government have pursued, it is certain that the voice of the vast majority of the English people would long ago have protested against it. If the course which her MAJESTY'S Ministers have taken be allowed to pass without national remonstrance, then it will be idle to talk of this country as constitutionally ruled, so far at least as its foreign policy is concerned. No despotic Power can ask more of a people than the right to make what policy and what wars it pleases, without entering into any consultation of the popular will or applying for the consent of any representative institution.

Globe Oct 12

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SATURDAY EVENING,
OCTOBER 12.

THE RUSSIAN SCHEME.

We yesterday surmised, in connection with General TODLEBEN'S sudden halt *en route* for Adrianople, that "the CZAR may think that the application of a little military pressure to the SULTAN will remove the latter's objections to the audacious project for a Russo-Turkish Treaty which was lately given to the world." The soundness of this opinion is already proved, for we learn from Constantinople, under date of yesterday, that "the Russian troops would not be withdrawn from Adrianople until the signature of the definitive Treaty of San Stefano which is not affected by the decisions of the Congress." The *Times* correspondent who telegraphs this piece of information says he has reason to believe that the Russian AMBASSADOR'S aim is simply to get the definitive treaty signed as speedily as possible. This coincides exactly with the view we expressed yesterday, for there cannot be much doubt that the "definitive treaty" spoken of is the same as the project for a Russo-Turkish treaty which lately went the round of Europe as a feeler of opinion. There is, however, one difference, and a rather important one too, between this morning's news and that which we commented on yesterday. Prince LOBANOFF is now represented as warning the Porte that the Muscovite forces will not retire beyond Adrianople, whereas the previous statement was that General TODLEBEN had halted south of that city for the purpose of affording protection to the panic-stricken Christian population. This latter pretext seems to have been dropped by the Russian AMBASSADOR, who takes his stand on those parts of the San Stefano Treaty which were not set aside by the Berlin Congress. Preferable as this new frankness is to the previous subterfuge, Europe will see with grave misgiving another convincing proof that the CZAR does not intend to quit his hold on Turkey. Since the Congress broke up events have happened which have altered the situation of affairs greatly to the advantage of Russia. Only two Powers, Austria and England, showed themselves really determined to resort to arms sooner than accept the San Stefano arrangement in its entirety as a part of the public law of Europe. At that time, both countries had their hands free and the whole of their resources available to counteract Russian aggression. But while, in the one case, the occupation of Bosnia has proved a far different matter from that military promenade which was confidently expected in some quarters, in the other the conduct of SHERE ALI has raised a difficulty for England in the far East which seems nearly certain to lead to immediate warfare. Thus, Russia's two stoutest opponents are more or less embarrassed by unforeseen complications, and the St. Petersburg Cabinet accordingly takes advantage of the opportunity to force the SULTAN to sign a treaty which, as we have previously shown, would afford Russia chronic grounds for interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the main object of the Berlin compact, namely, the future freedom of Turkey from the domination of her aggressive neighbour, will remain almost as unaccomplished as if the Congress had never met.

Of course Russia has every right to endeavour to secure what she considers her necessary objects, but it is equally within the province and the duty of other Powers to counteract these designs whenever their own interests are threatened. It can scarcely be doubted that the St. Petersburg Cabinet is now carrying out a well matured policy, conceived, perhaps, at the very time when Russia had to accept the outward appearance of humiliation by being compelled to submit her arrangement with Turkey to the opinion of united Europe. According to the most trustworthy authorities, it was Prince GORTSCHAKOFF and his able colleagues who chiefly influenced Count ANDRASSY to undertake the occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina. The Russian Plenipotentiaries well knew that even if this measure did not meet with strenuous resistance on the part of the Mahomedan population it would be certain to breed internal dissensions in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. There was also the chance that the SULTAN would refuse to consent to this arbitrary alienation

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of Ottoman territory; or even if he outwardly submitted, that it would be with a secret determination to render the occupation as difficult as possible for Austria. There was thus very cogent reason why the St. Petersburg Cabinet should urge on the Viennese Government to appropriate these outlying provinces of its neighbour, and Count ANDRASSY unfortunately suffered himself to be beguiled into a proceeding which made Austria a *particeps criminis* in the partition of European Turkey. Not less clever is the way in which Muscovite diplomacy has brought about the embarrassment of Great Britain. A comparison of dates will show that General ABRAMOFF was not sent to Cabul, as has been alleged by the St. Petersburg Government, at the moment when England and Russia were on the eve of war. That danger had passed some time before the Mission set out from Turkestan, although it is likely enough that a secret arrangement had been come to with SHERE ALI some months before. But, arrangement or no arrangement, it is a fact that friendly relations were supposed to exist between the Russian and English Governments when the Envoy started on his errand of mischief. What justification, then, can be pleaded for the flagrant breach of the understanding, constantly reiterated by our great Asiatic rival, "that Afghanistan lay beyond the sphere of Russian politics"? To pretend that the Mission had no political object is an insult to common sense, for if its purpose had been merely an ordinary exchange of courtesies, the CZAR would not have appointed as Envoy the most consummate diplomatist in Asiatic affairs in his service. Without question, General ABRAMOFF went to Cabul for the express purpose of bringing the AMEER under Russian influence. Success crowned the attempt, and England now has to face the prospect of a troublesome war on her Indian frontier, which cannot possibly bring her any profit, and may result in inconvenient complications.

Even assuming that our arms meet with no check during the advance into Afghanistan, and that we take possession of the northern exits from the passes without much trouble, this success will not be obtained for nothing. We may safely count on a certain loss of life, for the Afghans know how to fight in their own country. It also seems inevitable that the cost of the invasion will amount to a larger sum than was first expected, as the number of troops to be employed is now set down at double the figure originally estimated as sufficient. Some losses in blood and treasure are certain, but Russia has wrought us even worse mischief by compelling the Indian Government to enter into a war which, be its results what it may, will inevitably embitter the whole Afghan nation against England. These people are ardent patriots, and when it comes to the invasion of their land, they do not enter into the rights and wrongs of the matter, but unite as one man in deadly hostility to the intruder. Unless SHERE ALI should give in at the last moment, which is extremely improbable, this will be the legacy left to England by the astute General ABRAMOFF, and at some future time we shall have Russia advancing into Afghanistan as the champion of her people against the hated English. Thus, whatever comes of it, as matters stand at present, Russia wins, England loses. We do not wonder, therefore, at the feeling which is slowly growing up in this country, that it will be very pusillanimous policy to confine our punishment to that half demented despot, SHERE ALI, while allowing the Power who really worked us all the mischief to attain her ends without let or hindrance.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

AFFAIRS IN THE EAST.

The *Times* says:—"If there are still elements of disquiet and disorder in Eastern Europe, we may be satisfied to believe that the difficulties are not insurmountable. Nothing, it may be said, has happened, or appears likely to happen, of which the germs could not be discovered in the conclusions of the Berlin Congress. The Berlin Treaty could not pretend to be an instant settlement of the Eastern Question. There were two ways open on which an agreement might have been arrived at. It was possible for the assembled statesmen to have drawn up a far more elaborate document than the Berlin Treaty. Every point might have been arranged beforehand, every difficulty might have been foreseen and expressly provided against. Contingencies, likely and unlikely, might all have been duly written down, and the entire problem and the answer might have been stated together and settled out of hand. It is, we know, in this sort of way that lawyers love to proceed when they are spinning out deeds of partnership or assisting at the birth of a joint-stock company. It is well enough suited to a case where the parties are in agreement beforehand, and have come together by their own choice. It was scarcely as well suited to the kind of work that had to be done at Berlin. The problem there was, not to arrange agreements, but to put an end to existing quarrels. The parties to be brought to terms had been forced into relations, not of their own choosing, but created for them by the uncontrollable force of circumstances. There were few definite ends proposed as to which all were alike agreed. That the European peace should not be broken was the one thing for which each State was obliged to work. But the terms on which it was to be maintained were the subject of controversy, and as to these it was hard enough to come to a conclusion that could be accepted as even tolerable. The thing, nevertheless, was done, and in the only way in which it could have been done at all. The settlement was made in outline, and the filling in was left to follow. The task with which Europe is now busy is the completion of the imperfect work. We must be patient if this appears sometimes to be proceeding less rapidly than we could wish—patient, yet watchful and determined. That it will be done in the end we see no reason to doubt. Done it must be, and therefore done it will be, were the difficulties in the way ten times greater than any that have yet shown themselves."

THE AFGHANISTAN QUESTION.

The *Saturday Review* considers "the Indian Government will be well advised in dealing as vigorously as circumstances may allow with the Ameer of Cabul, while he is still ostensibly isolated. The fable of the dwarf and the giant is a primitive anticipation of the doctrine of responsibility. The humbler offender is justly punished for acts which he may have committed at the instigation of a powerful patron in the background. There is reason to hope that the English Government has not been found unprepared. Its principal members must have long since considered all the questions which are now subjects of controversy. The distribution between England and India of the cost of the probable war ought to be arranged on due consideration both of the principle involved and of the respective abilities of the two Governments. An Indian quarrel is not rendered Imperial by the accident of its having been fomented by Russia. A neighbouring potentate has offered an affront and a threat to the Viceroy, who is compelled to accept the challenge without reference to its real or supposed motives or authors. It would not be at present politic to recognise any interest of Russia in a quarrel with which no European Power except England has legitimate concern. The former Afghan war, which originated in England much more distinctly than the present complication, was conducted at the expense of India. It is satisfactory to find that, with few exceptions, even Liberal politicians recognise the necessity of action."

The *Spectator* "cannot see why, if the general advance is postponed, as it ought to be, and apparently will be—unless the Indian Government, as is possible, is concealing its intentions—till spring, we should not postpone it altogether; why we should go forward with this isolated movement on Candahar, which, so far as appears, is to continue. It may be all mere talk, but we notice in all the accounts a reserve upon the expedition to Candahar. Let us reinforce Quetta, by all means. Let us conciliate Khelat, by all means. Let us by all means accumulate force at Sukkur, as we are said to be doing. But why should we press on to Candahar, in order that an isolated and small *corps d'armée* should remain there waiting through the long winter? Shere Ali would not feel the loss of Candahar, and his people will feel the intolerable provocation offered to their pride. We can take Candahar when we want it just as well as now, and can convince India that we are in earnest without running the risk involved in so half-hearted an invasion, and encamping a weak army in a valley so completely cut off from India during winter as if it were another planet."

The *Standard* will "not be persuaded but that it is the intention of the Indian Government, however reticent they may choose to appear of their designs, to make an attempt to force the Khyber Pass without waiting for the assemblage of the main army under Sir Frederick Haines. As for the reserve which is practised at head-quarters, it may be justifiable on the ground that there are others besides the Afghans who may benefit by the news of the contemplated operations; but it is after all a vain precaution in these days. Every movement of the troops must necessarily be known all over India, and therefore to all the world, within a few hours of its being ordered, and the utmost candour in this respect cannot be half so mischievous as delay."

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THE ATTITUDE OF RUSSIA.

The *Daily Telegraph* considers "that the 'peace with honour' which was brought back hither from Berlin had better lose its first than its last characteristic, and it were better that the 'state of war' with which Prince Lobanoff menaces the Sultan should be roundly recognised than that Great Britain should look on while the provisions enforced upon Russia at Berlin are openly set at naught. The intimate connection between Russia's breach of her pledge as regards Afghanistan, and her contempt for international faith as regards the evacuation of Turkish territory, is no longer matter of doubt. No temporising or tentative steps will therefore serve to uphold the security and credit of Great Britain, cajoled and defied, as she is, along the whole line of her Oriental interest from the Bosphorus to the Khyber Pass. The Czar's Government must be compelled to observe its contract to the letter in all dates and details of the evacuation of European Turkey, just as surely as his agents must be made to withdraw from Afghanistan, never again to re-enter it, except with British permission. In five years' time this programme of resolute right and wise insistance might indeed become difficult of execution, but the case is not so now, when Russia is labouring under financial embarrassment and internal disaffection, and carries on her two-fold plot in the trust that she may obtain by audacity what she has not strength enough left to snatch by force. To a firm front opposed by Turkey, with the support of England, Prince Gortschakoff will most probably at once yield. But the language employed by the Queen's Ministers must in any case be unmistakable, and the retreat of Russia from her aggression through Cabul and from her present attempt upon the validity of the Berlin Treaty ought to be made as public as her assault upon our peace in India and her machinations against our honour and interests at Constantinople."

The *Week* believes that "no timid patching-up will ever 'settle' the Eastern Question. What do we behold now? Russia has all at once countermanded the retreat of her troops towards Adrianople, and once more they are under the walls of Constantinople. This movement has been carefully timed with the blow aimed at us in Afghanistan. With contemptuous indifference to English opinion on the subject, the Russian Press is permitted to explain the whole position to our muddy understandings: 'England may, by an Afghan war, have her action diverted from Asia Minor and the Balkans to Cabul.' The same pretext under which Russia began the late war can be used again—alleged outrages upon Christians. Mr. Gladstone and his followers will take up the cry as they did in 1876. From Russia's point of view, why should she withdraw her armies? Why give up the prey when it is in her clutch? If we were Russians we should consider it little short of insanity for her to do so, considering how events are shaping out her course for her, and looking at the condition in which parties are at the present moment in England."

The *Morning Post* says:—"As information continues to accumulate upon the manner in which Russia understands her obligations under the Treaty of Berlin, it is not to be wondered at that the feeling of distrust goes on increasing among the observers of her crooked and menacing policy. Wherever we turn there is something to warn us of the work which is going on. It may be in Asia that we shall feel the first touch of that collision which has been so long and so often predicted. But it is in Europe, as we have so repeatedly insisted, that the present and immediate object of Russian greed is to be descried. As the *Golos* observes, the harassing of British interests in India may be expected to create a diversion on the Balkans and the Danube. We are forewarned, and we ought to be forearmed. If we can still mistake the drift of our rival's policy, then, indeed, history and contemporary fact will have alike preached their lesson in vain."

SPECTATOR. October 12, 1878.

THE *Standard* of Thursday published a telegram from Simla announcing that General Ross had passed Ali Musjeed, and marched on the Valley of Dakka, at the Afghan end of the Khyber Pass, being shown the way there by some Khyberees. The story was improbable, as General Ross would have to carry provisions and ammunition and powder on men's backs, and it is still unconfirmed. The more *vraisemblant* account is that he is still at Jumrood, that the Government is slowly accumulating force opposite the Bolan, the Koorum, and the Khyber Passes, and that the decision as to a winter campaign, beginning on November 11th, or a spring campaign, beginning in April, is not yet finally made. It is asserted on good authority that the Ameer has sent 6,000 regulars and a hill clan, the Momunds, to defend the Khyber, that he has advanced 15,000 men to guard the Koorum, and that he has sent a force, possibly in command of his son, Yakoob, to threaten Quettah. What is certain is that we are preparing for a campaign, that the Bengal Army is being slowly pushed northward, and that orders have been issued to all officers employed north of Delhi to join their posts forthwith. No reinforcements are under orders, but every regiment is being brought up by drafts to its full strength. The weak place will probably be found to be European cavalry.

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THE WAR WITH AFGHANISTAN.

TWO facts, at all events, come out very clearly in the week's telegrams from Northern India. The Ameer of Afghanistan is ready, and Lord Lytton is not. So far was Shere Ali from acting in ignorance, or believing that he could affront the British with impunity, that the moment he had repulsed the Mission he summoned the Chiefs of the Hill clans to council—thereby, among other objects, securing most important hostages—and despatched six thousand troops, with six guns, to protect Ali Musjeed, the little fort which, until it is taken, bars all passage through the Khyber, and a powerful force to defend the Koorum. He at the same time called on the Momunds, a fighting clan occupying hills on both sides of the Khyber, who have given us in times past endless trouble, to assist his troops, and punish the Khyberees for having agreed to protect the British Mission into Afghanistan. The Momunds, who can turn out 15,000 daring brigands, obeyed his summons, and we suspect that the rumours of an "Afghan" attack on the Khyberees are true, and that the Momunds are punishing their treason to Islam with fire and sword. This daring move, which is virtually a declaration of war, and renders negotiation almost hopeless, has for the moment checkmated the Government of India. It had been decided, apparently, to seize Ali Musjeed, and a force of 5,000 men, under General Ross, had arrived at Jumrood, where it was ordered by telegraph to stand fast, news having been received of the arrival of Afghan reinforcements, and of the necessity for protecting the Trans-Indus plain. So complete had been the confidence of the authorities in this "dash," that the Indian papers, which would not expect a check if we were moving on Tobolsk, announced that Ali Musjeed had fallen. It is not probable that the Afghans themselves will make any advance beyond Ali Musjeed, as once outside the Pass, without artillery or transport, they would, unless Peshawur, which is Afghan in sentiment, rose in insurrection, be speedily destroyed; but some of the Hillmen may descend, and the Government of India cannot forget—and never does forget—its duty to secure its subjects against raids. How far Shere Ali can follow up this bold attempt to protect his frontier, can threaten Quettah, or protect the Pass which intervenes between that fortress and Candahar, we are quite unable to decide. We should imagine from his previous history that, having had time to call in his garrisons, and being exempt by the war itself from the danger of insurrection, he would have the disposal of 40,000 troops, equal to Indian Irregulars, and very formidable behind cover, though quite unable to face European fire, and liable to be panic-struck by the rockets, which, as Theodore himself acknowledged, took the heart out of the Abyssinian King. Behind these troops, again, would stand double their number of hardy ruffians from Central Asia, half armed, hardly intelligible to each other, and scarcely disciplined, but useful to fill up vacant places among the soldiers, and daring enough when plunder is to be obtained. The Staff itself admits, however, its lack of information on the force at the Ameer's disposal, and we confess to profound distrust of all estimates, our own included, knowing well that a success, however momentary, would double the Ameer's numbers, while a reverse, however slight, would be followed by endless desertions to the Hills.

Lord Lytton has, no doubt, been checked by despatches from home, where the Cabinet is not eager for an expensive war, and where the effect of a disaster is thoroughly understood; but it is clear, from all the accounts, that if he is acting, as we presume, on a matured policy, and not on any sudden whim, he either underestimates his enemy to a dangerous degree, or he is not nearly so ready as he ought to have been. In the rush to Jumrood there were not 1,000 Europeans. In the dangerous cantonment of Peshawur, where more than in any place in India we are "holding the wolf by the ears," where 50,000 inhabitants dislike us because they were once Afghan, and where every riot is an *émeute*, we can trace only 2,500 Europeans, amid 8,000 native soldiers.—a proportion far too small for an Afghan war. The very able and moderate writer who, in the *Times*, follows the movements from day to day, stated on Thursday that "the total strength of our forces on the immediate frontier, from the sea to Abbottabad, including Kurrachee, Hyderabad, Jacobabad, Rajanpore, Dera Ghazee Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Bunnoo, Kohat, Peshawur, Hoti Mardan, Nowshera, Attock, Abbottabad, together with the reserves at Rawul Pindee, Sealkote, Jhelum, Lahore, Umritsir, Ferozepore, Mooltan, Jullunder, and the advanced post of Quettah, amounts to 800 British and 7,000 Native Cavalry, 12,000 British and 21,000 Native Infantry, with 102 guns; many of these being at stations which it is obviously impossible to denude of British troops." In other words, there has been no concentration of troops northwards, as there would have been if war had been expected, and no gradual pushing-up of the three armies towards the scene of expected hostilities. All this has still to be done, as well as the despatch of drafts from England; and the summons to all officers to give up furlough and repair to their places without delay, is only out this week. Nor was either the Transport or Commissariat ready. The inspired correspondent of the *Times* telegraphs that there are delays in the collection of provisions and of transport animals which cannot be overcome. This, we agree with the *Times*, is not the fault of the Departments, which are most efficient, but can do nothing without fair warning, but it increases our wonder at the loud fanfare with which Lord Lytton announced to earth and heaven that the suppression of the Ameer was at hand. There must have been a dozen men round the Viceroy who knew that Afghanistan could not be entered without camels and mules, and that neither had been purchased yet; while the Lieutenant-Governor, at all events, must have been well aware that the stock of pack-animals in the Punjab had been running low. It is difficult to avoid an impression that the Viceroy thought a demonstration by the Field Force, slightly reinforced, would suffice to frighten the Ameer, and induce him to allow the British a grand diplomatic triumph. If that is the case, Lord Lytton should produce his instructions, or the criticism when Parliament meets will be of the most galling kind.

It is evident that the Government look forward to a campaign in the spring, or preparations on this side would not be so active, and we cannot entirely agree with Earl Grey in the able letter of objections which he published in the *Times* of Thursday. It was most foolish, unless we wanted a quarrel, and with it an excuse for "rectifying our frontiers," and taking possession of both sides of the Suleiman, to ask the Ameer to receive a Resident. It was still more foolish to send forward a grand Mission, all fuss and feathers, with Indian Princes in it, and a huge escort, before it was known whether Shere Ali would consent to receive one or not. And it was most foolish of all to trumpet over Europe the intention of Britain either to reduce the Ameer to vassalage, or to annex Afghanistan. But we confess we shrink, as Earl Grey does not, from the consequences of retiring now. The loss of dignity may be unimportant, and the loss of prestige exaggerated, but the loss of confidence in our pledged word might be irreparable. Did we, or did we not, give that word to the Khyberee clan, if they would be on our side, and pass the Mission safely through the Hills? The bulletin-writers said we did, at all events, and have not been contradicted. If that was so, and we then give up the Khyberees to be punished as Shere Ali will punish them, and is indeed punishing them now, then we shall break faith publicly, and thoroughly deserve the distrust with which thenceforward every Hill clan will regard our promises. No such treachery is possible, and we regard an advance therefore of some kind as altogether unavoidable. Only we cannot see why, if the general advance is postponed, as it ought to be, and apparently will be—unless the Indian Government, as is possible, is concealing its intentions—till spring, we should not postpone it altogether; why we should go forward with this isolated movement on Candahar, which, so far as appears, is to continue. It may be all mere talk, but we notice in all the accounts a reserve upon the expedition to Candahar. Let us reinforce Quettah, by all means. Let us conciliate Khelat, by all means. Let us by all means accumulate force at Sukkur, as we are said to be doing. But why should we press on to Candahar, in order that an isolated and small *corps d'armée* should remain there waiting through the long winter? Shere Ali will not feel the loss of Candahar, and his people will feel the intolerable provocation offered to their pride. We can take Candahar when we want it just as well as now, and can convince India that we are in earnest without running the risk involved in so half-hearted an invasion, and encamping a weak army in a valley as completely cut off from India during winter as if it were in another planet. Of course, if the experienced soldiers consulted at Simla and in London say that it is necessary for military reasons, there is an end of the matter. We at least are not so ill-advised as to reject the opinion of strategists on a question of that kind, and though we cannot always be saying so, offer every criticism in perfect deference to the opinion of experts. But war is, after all, a business in which common-sense has some place, and there is no visible common-sense in occupying a position of that kind before we are ready even to defend it, much less to carry out the whole plan of which this particular movement is but an important detail. We are going to hold Candahar, and so paralyse the Ameer's hostility, even if he allies himself with Russia? Very well, but granting that plan to be wise—and it did not turn out so before—what compels us to carry it out in this red-hot hurry? Unless the possession of Candahar is essential to a spring campaign, where is the advantage of taking it and defending it under most disadvantageous conditions six months before the true campaign begins? It is just as if the Russians had crossed the Danube into the Dobrudscha six months before they were ready for the general invasion of Turkey, with no view except that of convincing the Sultan that a serious invasion was at hand. Can that be good policy, even if we are fighting for prestige?

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Pall Mall Gazette - Oct 13

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In the early part of the year 1876 an elaborate report, about ninety pages long, was compiled by Captain H. Trotter, R.E., on the journeys of three Indian native explorers named, respectively, "the Havildar," "the Moolah," and "the Pundit." These three men had each done during the years 1873-4-5 very important exploring work beyond the British-Indian frontiers. The first had crossed the Hindoo Koosh and the Oxus, and had surveyed several routes in Badakhshan, Kolab Darwaz, &c.; and the second had crossed the same great mountain range by a more easterly route, and had travelled through Wakhan to Kashgar. The most remarkable journey of the three, however, was that of "the Pundit," who is now better known to fame as Pundit Nain Singh. His route (over 1,200 miles long) lay through an unexplored portion of Tibet, and, taken with his previous feats of travel, very deservedly gained him the gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society. The three reports on these journeys were bound up together, and the edition printed was, we believe, one of about three hundred copies. But this work, which contained no more important political allusion than a casual remark that the ruler of Afghan Turkestan was detested for his cruelty and debaucheries, and that the Baroghil was the easiest known pass over the eastern Hindoo Koosh—two facts already perfectly notorious—this work, we say, was branded (in blood-red letters) "Secret and confidential," relegated to their *Index Expurgatorius*, and ruthlessly suppressed by the Calcutta Foreign Office. Some meagre abstracts, with or without authority, found their way into public print; but the copies were, we believe, consigned to an insect-haunted cupboard at Dehra Doon and the seal of the Foreign Secretary set on the door of the prison-house. By this time the geographers, whose desire for fresh information is exactly in inverse proportion to that of foreign and political officers, began to clamour. The abstracts were miserably insufficient; the detailed routes were not given; the height above the sea of a particular lake in Eastern Tibet had been omitted; and there was good reason to believe that a portion of the Havildar's route between Cabul and the Oxus was not exactly what it pretended to be. All these points, and many more of equally vital importance could be elucidated if the original reports were but made accessible to the panting votaries of science. The Calcutta Foreign Office, however, remained inexorable; and up to the present time, we believe, the mystic seal has remained undisturbed on the aforesaid cupboard-door. We would suggest that an excellent opportunity has now arrived for its removal.

At a time when information about Afghanistan is in demand, it may be useful to mention that a very graphic as well as accurate description of it is to be found in the notes of an itinerary through that country by the distinguished General Nott, and published as an appendix to his Life. General Nott, as is well known, was one of the few men in high places in Afghanistan who did not lose his head when the difficulties gathered round us in the fourth year of our occupation. Entering as a brigadier under Lord Keane's army, which advanced through the Bolan Pass, he was left behind in command of the station of Candahar when the army passed on. Nott was an outspoken man, and, expressing his mind freely about what he considered our mismanagement of affairs and the blunders of our incompetent envoy and his "boy politicals," and prophesying disasters to come, he was for some time in disfavour with the authorities in Calcutta. How truly his predictions were verified, and how gallantly the old General, now for the first time placed in a position of active responsibility, confirmed the reputation for ability and force of character which he had earned in a long peaceful career, is well known. Occupying Candahar with one European and four native battalions, he held the enemy at bay all the winter, and as soon as the weather permitted, sallied out and cleared the country of his would-be besiegers; and, while everywhere else the English were fugitives or beleaguered, the cantonments of Candahar henceforward remained in peaceful occupation. Then, reinforced by troops from the Indus, obtaining a reluctant consent from the Governor-General, he marched triumphantly forward, relieved the gallant garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzie, and effected a junction with Pollock before Cabul, which place he was quite prepared to recover without assistance, if need be. Nott persistently maintained the superiority of the Indian sepoy to the Afghan, and, repudiating the doctrine, then as now too much in fashion, that the former requires the support of European troops to lead the attack and show him the way, lost no opportunity of pitting the sepoy alone against the enemy. It must be added that the sepoy answered the call most satisfactorily; no troops could have behaved better than the garrison of Candahar. The "Notes" we have referred to were made first when Nott marched up to Candahar in 1838, for the route from Shikarpoor by the Bolan Pass to Candahar; and afterwards for the route from Candahar back to India, by way of Cabul and the Khyber Pass, when he marched that way with his avenging army in 1842. They are high evidence of the intelligence of the writer, and his clearness both of expression and observation. "The Life of General Nott" by Stocqueler is a poor affair, but yet interesting reading from being the record of a remarkable man.

THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN.

The *Standard* observes that the telegrams of to-day from India seem to confirm the impression that the Government intend to proceed with deliberation in their measures for bringing the Ameer of Afghanistan to reason. The determination to leave as little as possible to chance, and not to underrate the powers of the enemy, may be very commendable, but it is to be questioned whether more is not lost than gained by this elaborate preparation. Every day which passes without our striking a blow at the Afghans involves some diminution of our military credit, while it adds to the confidence of the enemy, increases his resources, and strengthens his position. It is impossible that Shere Ali could have ventured on such a step as the repulse of the British mission without having fully made up his mind to a war with England. However scrupulous may have been the conduct of the Russian agent—however nice his courtesies—it is impossible but that Shere Ali has come to the conclusion that the appearance of Russia on the scene means that in some way or other he is to participate in her strength. That he is likely to be disabused of this source of confidence before long we may well believe. In the meantime every day's delay is calculated to blind him to his danger and to confirm him in his delusion.

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ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Saturday Review* remarks that while the policy of the English and Indian Governments with regard to Afghanistan and the plan of campaign are still unknown, it is not the business of patriots to occupy themselves in proving that both are hopelessly in the wrong. From the fact that a Cabinet has been summoned, and that the Ministers have afterwards dispersed, some of them to distant parts of the country, it may be inferred that the questions discussed were few and simple, and that probably it was only necessary to obtain the sanction of the Government to measures already prepared by those who are most immediately responsible for the conduct of war or negotiation. The Ministers would scarcely have left town immediately after the meeting of the Cabinet if a rupture with a more formidable Power than Shere Ali had been imminent; yet, if the temper and policy of the Russian Government are indicated with even approximate accuracy by the journals of St. Petersburg and Moscow, it may become difficult to maintain the pretence of friendly relations. There is no dispute as to the hostile purpose of the Russian mission to Cabul. But the policy of menace and insult may be carried too far. Opportunities of molestation are not entirely one-sided. While the Russian agents in Roumelia and Bulgaria are becoming more exacting, the Turks also are on their part probably not indifferent to the prospect of renewing the struggle with the aid of a powerful ally. It will be well for both parties to avoid as long as possible a formidable collision. The Indian Government will be well advised in dealing as vigorously as circumstances may allow with the Ameer of Cabul, while he is still ostensibly isolated. The fable of the dwarf and the giant is a primitive anticipation of the doctrine of responsibility. The humbler offender is justly punished for acts which he may have committed at the instigation of a powerful patron in the background. There is reason to hope that the English Government has not been found unprepared. The distribution between England and India of the cost of the probable war ought to be arranged on due consideration both of the principle involved and of the respective abilities of the two Governments. An Indian quarrel is not rendered imperial by the accident of its having been fomented by Russia.

The *Economist* finds the contents of Earl Grey's letter to the *Times* on England and Afghanistan somewhat disappointing both as to what is said and what is omitted. The letter ignores the elementary consideration that, when we find ourselves where we ought not to have gone, it is very seldom open to us to go back the way we came. Earl Grey argues not only that an Afghan war would be impolitic, but that we have no just cause of war with the Ameer. It may be admitted that no nation has an absolute right to compel the ruler of another independent nation to receive an embassy. It is, however, at least doubtful whether a purely capricious refusal to receive an embassy from a particular State would now be thought tolerable among civilized nations; and one substantial reason for the doubt is that such a refusal would raise a vehement presumption of hostile designs. The state of facts we have before us is that a neighbour who can do us a certain amount of mischief, and help others to do us more, has entered into an exclusive alliance with the one Power likely to be our enemy in that part of the world, and has shown by his own conduct that he considers the alliance as directed against ourselves. If this be not a sufficient cause for taking arms in defence of our interests, no war can be justified in which the party aggrieved does not await an actual invasion. As for the Ameer himself, he now throws himself in with the fortunes of Russia, not because he loves Russians for their own sake, but because he fancies that he has more to gain and less to lose from the Russian alliance than from ours, and probably also because his observation of the late war has led him to believe that Russia is stronger than England. If we can convince him by practical proofs that he is mistaken, there is no reason to suppose that he will not have worldly wisdom enough to govern himself accordingly.

The *Spectator* says two facts, at all events, come out very clearly in the week's telegrams from Northern India. The Ameer of Aghanistan is ready, and Lord Lytton is not. Lord Lytton has, no doubt, been checked by despatches from home, where the Cabinet is not eager for an expensive war, and where the effect of a disaster is thoroughly understood; but it is clear, from all the accounts, that if he is acting on a matured policy, and not on any sudden whim, he either underestimates his enemy to a dangerous degree, or he is not nearly so ready as he ought to have been. It is difficult to avoid an impression that the Viceroy thought a demonstration by the field force, slightly reinforced, would suffice to frighten the Ameer, and induce him to allow the British a grand diplomatic triumph. It is evident that the Government look forward to a campaign in the spring, or preparations on this side would not be so active. But the *Spectator* cannot entirely agree with Earl Grey in his able letter of objections in the *Times*. It shrinks, as Earl Grey does not, from the consequences of retiring now. The loss of dignity may be unimportant and the loss of prestige exaggerated, but the loss of confidence in our pledged word might be irreparable. If we pledged our word to the Khyberees, and we then give up the Khyberees to be punished as Shere Ali will punish them, and is indeed punishing them now, then we shall break faith publicly, and thoroughly deserve the distrust with which thenceforward every hill clan will regard our promises. No such treachery is possible, and an advance therefore of some kind is altogether unavoidable.

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The *Morning Post* says that as information continues to accumulate upon the manner in which Russia understands her obligations under the Treaty of Berlin it is not to be wondered at that the feeling of distrust goes on increasing among the observers of her crooked and menacing policy. Wherever we turn there is something to warn us of the work which is going on. Prince Dondoukoff throws difficulties in the way of the European Commission appointed to administer Eastern Roumelia. General Todleben marches back his troops into the lines of Tchekmedje. Speculations on the fidelity of our native Indian Princes go hand in hand in the columns of the *Golos* and similar organs with ferocious attacks upon Austria, enthusiastic estimates of the resisting power of the Ameer of Afghanistan, and thinly-disguised or wholly undisguised pledges of assistance to the new enemy of England. Above all, perhaps, the phenomenon of Russian journals chanting the praises of the Turk and predicting a future alliance between the Russian and Ottoman Empires makes its appearance with suggestive effect at the present moment and in the existing posture of Eastern affairs. Whatever credit we may grant or refuse to the servants and agents of Russian policy, it cannot at any rate be denied that they understand and are ready to practise every means by which the progress of their national intrigue can be facilitated. It is to be feared that if Russia is to be obliged to carry out the provisions and conditions of the Treaty of Berlin this can only be compassed in some manner analogous to that adopted by Lord Palmerston to assure the fulfilment of the Treaty of Paris.

The *Statist* does not doubt that the Czar and Prince Gortschakoff now recognise that they made a grave mistake in forcing English attention to the weakest point in our Indian defences. They have no wish to see that weak point strengthened. Still less do they wish Afghanistan an English dependency. Least of all would they relish a British army in occupation of that country. Yet they must feel that they are powerless to prevent any one of these contingencies if the British Government resolves upon carrying them through. If proper judgment is displayed in the selection of officers, and if the commissariat is made to do its duty, there will be little serious difficulty in subduing Afghanistan, in spite of all Russian volunteers may be able to do. The real danger will begin when the subjugation is effected. The people of Central Asia know as well as Europeans that the struggle has been provoked by Russia. If she does not dare to interfere for the protection of her dupe, Bokhara, and Khiva, and Khokand will learn where the real strength in Asia resides. One can understand the effect of this upon the Russian army. The danger is that a desperate resolution may be suddenly taken.

Times - Oct 14.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

(By Indo-European Telegraph *viâ* Teheran.)

(from our correspondent.)

DARJEELING, Oct. 13.

The frontier news still continues to pre-occupy public interest to the exclusion of all other topics. The intensity of the interest increases as the conviction becomes more confirmed that we are about to enter upon a military campaign which is calculated to impose a very considerable strain upon the resources of the Indian Government, unless it be conducted with the greatest possible amount of wariness and circumspection. The faintest mistake at the commencement would infinitely increase the difficulties which have to be encountered, as it would in all probability act as an immediate inducement to the numerous border tribes, who are at present engaged in watching the outturn of events with eager expectancy, to at once throw in their lot with the Ameer. The military authorities and the Government are keenly alive to the position of affairs, and are adopting all possible measures of precaution to guard against even a temporary check or the slightest misadventure. It was in contemplation at one time to make a rapid advance against the fort of Ali Musjid and to endeavour to seize it by a *coup de main*. In consequence of this intention, which has since been abandoned, exciting telegrams have been circulated, stating that the fort had been captured. Various reasons have prevailed with the Government in favour of delay. In the first place, Ali Musjid has been greatly strengthened by reinforcements of troops, accompanied by artillery. It is said that there are some 6,000 Regular troops occupying the Khyber Pass, so that even if the fort, which is situated about nine miles from the entrance of the pass, were captured, it would be very difficult to hold it until all our preparations for a further advance were completed. The second principal reason in favour of delay is the fact that our Envoy is still in the power of the Ameer; and it is generally believed that the first shot fired by our troops would serve with the Ameer as an immediate signal for his death warrant. A further strong argument, although, taken by itself, of subsidiary importance, consists in the possibility, however remote, of the Ameer still despatching by the hands of our Envoy letters to the Viceroy of submission and conciliation. The Government are still most anxious to adopt peaceable measures for carrying out the frontier scheme of defensive policy rendered by recent events now absolutely indispensable if the conduct of the Ameer will permit them. An Afghan war is a phase of policy the Government is most anxious to avoid, and will be only accepted in the last resort if forced upon them by the insensate obduracy of the Ameer. In the meanwhile war preparations are being pushed forward rapidly and extensively. The whole of India is reverberating with the din of military movements towards the frontier. The great hindrances in the way of the advance of troops are the defective commissariat arrangements and the deficiency in the means of transport. It is estimated that nearly 6,000 camels alone are required, without taking into account other various and numerous means of transport, indispensable before anything like a strong advance along the frontier can be attempted. It is no light task to have to make arrangements for supplying an army of 30,000 men, exclusive of camp followers, with all the necessaries of life while making a hostile march into an enemy's country which is almost completely barren. The Commissariat Department, maintained during peace from economical reasons on a very reduced scale, has found itself suddenly called upon to make immediate and hurried preparations for the military movement of a large army, under circumstances of exceptional difficulty even for war, and it is not surprising, therefore, that the department has been unable to respond in the fullest and most satisfactory manner to the enormous and abnormal strain suddenly imposed upon its resources. All its officers are, however, working most energetically and unsparingly, and it is confidently hoped that before long all necessary preparations, both for transport and provisioning, will have been completed.

The latest authentic telegram from Simla states that the Maharajah of Alwar has volunteered to equip and maintain at his own expense a corps of camels and camel-drivers for service on the frontier. The most important news, equally authentic, is also reported—that a letter has been received at Peshawur from Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, C.S.I., the Viceroy's Envoy, dated Cabul, the 6th of

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October, stating that he had that day received permission from the Ameer to return, and that he had obtained the Ameer's reply to the Viceroy's letters. All is now expectancy as to the contents of the letter.

Further particulars of an interesting character have been recently published of the now historical interview between Major Cavagnari and the Ameer's Commandant at Ali Musjid. On the memorable 21st of September, 1878, the Mission started at 1 o'clock a.m. from Peshawur for Jumrood, a picturesque fort lying just within British territory and held for us by the chief of a village in the neighbouring plain. Our camp was pitched to the east of the fort. The total number accompanying the Mission amounted to not quite 1,000, of whom 11 were British officers, four Native gentlemen, and 234 fighting men. The rest were camp followers. The carriage consisted of 315 camels, 250 mules, and 40 horses. The whole formed a *cortége* considerably over a mile in length. Conflicting reports had reached Peshawur as to the intentions of the Ameer. It was known that the Mir Akhor, or Master of the Horse of the Ameer, was present at Ali Musjid, and as he was known to be possessed with a fanatical hatred of the English, it was deemed unwise to send the whole convoy into the pass until accurate information should have been obtained as to the intentions of the Commandant. Major Cavagnari was, therefore, directed to ride forward, taking with him a small escort of the Guides and the head man of our own frontier villages and of the friendly Khyberees. Directly they were perceived, the fort walls were manned, and shortly afterwards a number of troops lined the opposite ridge. After considerable delay a messenger arrived and announced that the Commandant would come out to meet Major Cavagnari and three others at a spot indicated by the side of the stream, half way between the two ridges.

Shortly afterwards he was seen approaching, and Major Cavagnari, taking with him the Commandant of the Guides and two of his escort, and accompanied by the head man of the tribes, went forward to meet Faiz Mahomed, the rest of the escort remaining on the ridge. On his way, the chief of one of the other Khyber tribes friendly to the Ameer attempted to stop him, on the plea that he was accompanied by more than the stipulated number. Major Cavagnari, however, put him aside, saying that he had come to talk not with him but with the Ameer's officers. On meeting Faiz Mahomed, Major Cavagnari shook hands with him, and the two parties sat down, surrounded by a couple of hundred of Faiz Mahomed's soldiers. The conversation, after the usual friendly greetings, was opened by Major Cavagnari, who said that both he and the Commandant were equally servants of their respective Governments, and, therefore, only carrying out their orders. There was, therefore, no necessity for the discussion being carried on in any but a friendly spirit; that he, Faiz Mahomed, must be aware of the intended advance of the Mission, and that Sir Neville Chamberlain had sent him on to ascertain from his own lips whether he had received orders relative to the reception of the Mission. If there were any latitude in the terms of his orders, he felt sure that the commandant would be aware of the heavy responsibility he would incur by preventing the advance of the Mission, as his act would be accepted as the act of the Ameer. Faiz Mahomed replied that he himself was actuated by friendly feelings towards Major Cavagnari, in proof of which he pointed out that, instead of coming down to meet him, he might have ordered his men to fire on his party when it appeared. He proceeded to say that he had already been severely reprimanded for allowing the Viceroy's Envoy, Nawab Gholam Hussein, to pass, and that, therefore, he could not permit the advance of the Mission. He begged that Sir Neville Chamberlain would halt, till he could communicate with Cabul. This, Major Cavagnari replied, was not only impossible but unnecessary, as the Cabul authorities had long been aware of the approach of the Mission. The conversation continued in this strain for some little time, Major Cavagnari urging the weight of the responsibility Faiz Mahomed would incur, and the latter repeating his inability to allow the Mission to pass without a permit from Cabul. At last, on Major Cavagnari again pointing out the friendly nature of the Mission, the Afghan, showing for the first time some warmth, said the object of this friendship was merely to stir up dissension in the Ameer's dominions by bribing his subjects to disobey his orders —"by bribing you and others" (here alluding to the negotiations with the Khyberees for the safe conduct of the Mission). At this an ambiguous murmur was heard from the soldiers, and Major Cavagnari replied that that was not a subject for subordinates to discuss, and that if the Ameer had any complaint to make, no doubt the Government would give him a satisfactory reply. He then asked for a final answer, whether he was distinctly to understand that the Mission would be resisted by force. Faiz Mahomed replied that he had no alternative if the Mission were pressed. On this Major Cavagnari asked the chiefs with him whether they considered this a sufficiently clear answer, to which they replied that it was perfectly clear. He then thanked Faiz Mahomed for his courtesy, and expressed a hope that they might again meet in more agreeable circumstances. He again shook hands with him and departed. It was then perceived that the Ameer had no possible intention of receiving the Mission, and it was accordingly dissolved.

The following are some of the principal Press telegrams which have been circulating during the week, but which have not been authenticated. The Ameer has summoned the heads of the Border tribes, who have agreed to obey his summonses. The Momunds are marching to join the Ameer's forces. Yakoob Khan has been released and has been appointed in command of the Ameer's Kuram force. There is a strong hostile feeling existing between the Khyberees and the Ameer's troops. Firing has been heard in the Khyber Pass, and it is stated that the Khyberees have been attacked and their villages harassed by order of the Ameer.

It is reported in Lahore that Yarkand is in possession of the Russians, and that they have offered one crore of Bokhara tilas for a footing in Herat, and are said to be purchasing grain for troops in large quantities.

The following news is authentic:—The Mhairwarra battalion has volunteered for frontier service, and their offer has been accepted by the Government.

The following is the gazetted detail of the troops for the frontier operations:—Kuram Column, Major-General F. S. Roberts, V.C., C.B., commanding.—Three batteries artillery, a squadron of 10th Hussars, 12th Bengal Cavalry, the 17th Foot, six regiments Native Infantry. Mooltan Division, Lieutenant-General Donald Stewart, C.B., commanding.—Eight batteries with siege train, 15th Hussars, two regiments of Bengal Cavalry, 59th and 60th Foot, and five Native regiments. The Quettah Column, Major-General A. S. Biddulph, C.B., commanding.—Two mountain and one field batteries, three regiments of native cavalry, the 18th Foot, and six regiments native infantry. Sappers and engineers are attached to each column.

The Maharajah of Cashmere has proposed to the British authorities to arrange measures in view of the famine in Cashmere for the more speedy importation of grain, and also to facilitate the emigration of those distressed Cashmiries who may be unable to obtain support.

BURMAH.

DARJEELING, Oct. 13.

All is quiet in Burmah. The obsequies of the king have been solemnized. Europeans were allowed to view the body lying in State.

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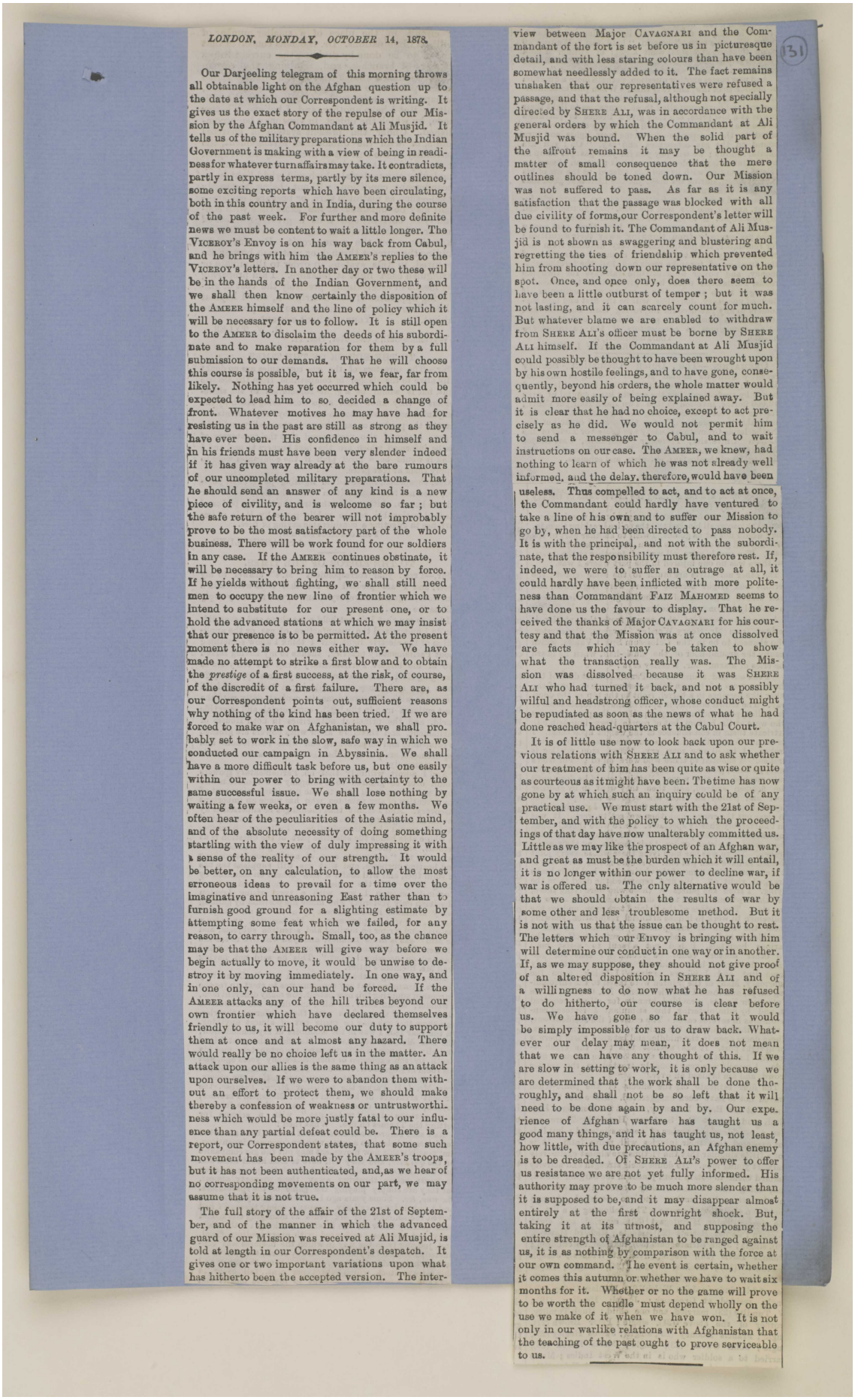

LONDON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1878.

Our Darjeeling telegram of this morning throws all obtainable light on the Afghan question up to the date at which our Correspondent is writing. It gives us the exact story of the repulse of our Mission by the Afghan Commandant at Ali Musjid. It tells us of the military preparations which the Indian Government is making with a view of being in readiness for whatever turn affairs may take. It contradicts, partly in express terms, partly by its mere silence, some exciting reports which have been circulating, both in this country and in India, during the course of the past week. For further and more definite news we must be content to wait a little longer. The VICEROY'S Envoy is on his way back from Cabul, and he brings with him the AMEER'S replies to the VICEROY'S letters. In another day or two these will be in the hands of the Indian Government, and we shall then know certainly the disposition of the AMEER himself and the line of policy which it will be necessary for us to follow. It is still open to the AMEER to disclaim the deeds of his subordinate and to make reparation for them by a full submission to our demands. That he will choose this course is possible, but it is, we fear, far from likely. Nothing has yet occurred which could be expected to lead him to so decided a change of front. Whatever motives he may have had for resisting us in the past are still as strong as they have ever been. His confidence in himself and in his friends must have been very slender indeed if it has given way already at the bare rumours of our uncompleted military preparations. That he should send an answer of any kind is a new piece of civility, and is welcome so far; but the safe return of the bearer will not improbably prove to be the most satisfactory part of the whole business. There will be work found for our soldiers in any case. If the AMEER continues obstinate, it will be necessary to bring him to reason by force. If he yields without fighting, we shall still need men to occupy the new line of frontier which we intend to substitute for our present one, or to hold the advanced stations at which we may insist that our presence is to be permitted. At the present moment there is no news either way. We have made no attempt to strike a first blow and to obtain the *prestige* of a first success, at the risk, of course, of the discredit of a first failure. There are, as our Correspondent points out, sufficient reasons why nothing of the kind has been tried. If we are forced to make war on Afghanistan, we shall probably set to work in the slow, safe way in which we conducted our campaign in Abyssinia. We shall have a more difficult task before us, but one easily within our power to bring with certainty to the same successful issue. We shall lose nothing by waiting a few weeks, or even a few months. We often hear of the peculiarities of the Asiatic mind, and of the absolute necessity of doing something startling with the view of duly impressing it with a sense of the reality of our strength. It would be better, on any calculation, to allow the most erroneous ideas to prevail for a time over the imaginative and unreasoning East rather than to furnish good ground for a slighting estimate by attempting some feat which we failed, for any reason, to carry through. Small, too, as the chance may be that the AMEER will give way before we begin actually to move, it would be unwise to destroy it by moving immediately. In one way, and in one only, can our hand be forced. If the AMEER attacks any of the hill tribes beyond our own frontier which have declared themselves friendly to us, it will become our duty to support them at once and at almost any hazard. There would really be no choice left us in the matter. An attack upon our allies is the same thing as an attack upon ourselves. If we were to abandon them without an effort to protect them, we should make thereby a confession of weakness or untrustworthiness which would be more justly fatal to our influence than any partial defeat could be. There is a report, our Correspondent states, that some such movement has been made by the AMEER'S troops, but it has not been authenticated, and, as we hear of no corresponding movements on our part, we may assume that it is not true.

The full story of the affair of the 21st of September, and of the manner in which the advanced guard of our Mission was received at Ali Musjid, is told at length in our Correspondent's despatch. It gives one or two important variations upon what has hitherto been the accepted version. The interview between Major CAVAGNARI and the Commandant of the fort is set before us in picturesque detail, and with less staring colours than have been somewhat needlessly added to it. The fact remains unshaken that our representatives were refused a passage, and that the refusal, although not specially directed by SHERE ALI, was in accordance with the general orders by which the Commandant at Ali Musjid was bound. When the solid part of the affront remains it may be thought a matter of small consequence that the mere outlines should be toned down. Our Mission was not suffered to pass. As far as it is any satisfaction that the passage was blocked with all due civility of forms, our Correspondent's letter will be found to furnish it. The Commandant of Ali Musjid is not shown as swaggering and blustering and regretting the ties of friendship which prevented him from shooting down our representative on the spot. Once, and once only, does there seem to have been a little outburst of temper; but it was not lasting, and it can scarcely count for much. But whatever blame we are enabled to withdraw from SHERE ALI'S officer must be borne by SHERE ALI himself. If the Commandant at Ali Musjid could possibly be thought to have been wrought upon by his own hostile feelings, and to have gone, consequently, beyond his orders, the whole matter would admit more easily of being explained away. But it is clear that he had no choice, except to act precisely as he did. We would not permit him to send a messenger to Cabul, and to wait instructions on our case. The AMEER, we knew, had nothing to learn of which he was not already well informed, and the delay, therefore, would have been useless. Thus compelled to act, and to act at once, the Commandant could hardly have ventured to take a line of his own and to suffer our Mission to go by, when he had been directed to pass nobody. It is with the principal, and not with the subordinate, that the responsibility must therefore rest. If, indeed, we were to suffer an outrage at all, it could hardly have been inflicted with more politeness than Commandant FAIZ MAHOMED seems to have done us the favour to display. That he received the thanks of Major CAVAGNARI for his courtesy and that the Mission was at once dissolved are facts which may be taken to show what the transaction really was. The Mission was dissolved because it was SHERE ALI who had turned it back, and not a possibly wilful and headstrong officer, whose conduct might be repudiated as soon as the news of what he had done reached head-quarters at the Cabul Court.

It is of little use now to look back upon our previous relations with SHERE ALI and to ask whether our treatment of him has been quite as wise or quite as courteous as it might have been. The time has now gone by at which such an inquiry could be of any practical use. We must start with the 21st of September, and with the policy to which the proceedings of that day have now unalterably committed us. Little as we may like the prospect of an Afghan war, and great as must be the burden which it will entail, it is no longer within our power to decline war, if war is offered us. The only alternative would be that we should obtain the results of war by some other and less troublesome method. But it is not with us that the issue can be thought to rest. The letters which our ENVOY is bringing with him will determine our conduct in one way or in another. If, as we may suppose, they should not give proof of an altered disposition in SHERE ALI and of a willingness to do now what he has refused to do hitherto, our course is clear before us. We have gone so far that it would be simply impossible for us to draw back. Whatever our delay may mean, it does not mean that we can have any thought of this. If we are slow in setting to work, it is only because we are determined that the work shall be done thoroughly, and shall not be so left that it will need to be done again by and by. Our experience of Afghan warfare has taught us a good many things, and it has taught us, not least, how little, with due precautions, an Afghan enemy is to be dreaded. Of SHERE ALI'S power to offer us resistance we are not yet fully informed. His authority may prove to be much more slender than it is supposed to be, and it may disappear almost entirely at the first downright shock. But, taking it at its utmost, and supposing the entire strength of Afghanistan to be ranged against us, it is as nothing by comparison with the force at our own command. The event is certain, whether it comes this autumn or whether we have to wait six months for it. Whether or no the game will prove to be worth the candle must depend wholly on the use we make of it when we have won. It is not only in our warlike relations with Afghanistan that the teaching of the past ought to prove serviceable to us.

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AFGHANISTAN.

The news we publish this morning from our Indian Correspondent confirms the view we have hitherto adopted as to the actual state of affairs on the frontier. No immediate move is to be attempted, for two principal reasons—the first being the insufficiency of transport, the second that our Envoy, the gallant old Nawab Gholam Hussein, still remains in the Ameer's hands, and that it is extremely probable any forward movement on our part would be his death warrant. Our own experience of Oriental potentates and the memory of Conolly, Stoddart, Burnes, and Macnaghten, go far to prove that the persons of Envoys are not invested with any halo of sentimental security; it is wise, therefore, and but just to as good and brave a man as ever served Her Majesty, that every effort should be made to insure his safety before we attempt to coerce the Ameer. If our Correspondent is correctly informed, Nawab Gholam Hussein received permission to leave Cabul on the 6th of October, and had obtained replies to the Viceroy's letters; we may, therefore, hear of the Envoy's safe arrival in Peshawur at any moment, and doubtless Lord Lytton will not be long before he makes public Shere Ali's opinions on the steps we proposed to undertake. There is little hope that these missives will tend in any way to clear up the approaching difficulty, and that this is fully recognized in India may be judged from the fact that war preparations are being carried on most energetically.

The particulars given of the interview between Major P. L. N. Cavagnari and Faiz Mahomed, Shere Ali's Master of the Horse, do not confirm the very extravagant reports at first circulated—namely, that the Ameer's official had stated that it was only his personal friendship towards the Deputy-Commissioner of Peshawur which induced him to refrain from shooting him; indeed, beyond the usual Pathan bluster and arrogance, a trait equally discernable among all Eastern races, there appears to have been a fairly cordial tone maintained throughout the conversation. It was very evident, however, that the Mir Akhor was acting under explicit instructions from headquarters and that any attempt on the part of Sir Neville Chamberlain to push on would have been met by force.

The Government of India seem to be fully aware of the fact, which we ourselves have so constantly insisted on, namely, that every precaution must be taken to avoid the slightest mistake at the commencement of operations; a check of the faintest description experienced by any one of the columns would increase the subsequent difficulties a thousandfold, and would most assuredly be the signal for all the lukewarm border tribes to throw in their lot with Shere Ali. We had ample illustration of the danger to be incurred in a slight check in hill warfare in 1863 during the Umbeyla expedition. It is not to be wondered at, then, that Sir Neville Chamberlain, mindful of the serious losses sustained by his troops in that campaign, should be foremost in urging on the Indian Government the absolute necessity of taking such precautions that failure will be out of the question.

It appears that at one time it was in contemplation to make a rapid advance on Ali Musjid, and seize it by a *coup de main*; this was abandoned, and most wisely too. Popular as such a scheme would have been among the officers and men of the Peshawur Brigade, it could have had but one result even if successful, and that the one most to be guarded against in mountain warfare—namely, a long halt in hills inhabited by doubtful friends, before the object of the expedition has been attained. Prior to any advance on Ali Musjid it would have been necessary for General Ross to have considerably strengthened not only the garrisons of the Peshawur forts, but also to have thrown more troops into Forts Mackeson, Abazae, Michni, Mardan, and the other posts along the Yusufzae border, in order to hold in check any attempts at incursion on the part of the Afridis, Momunds, or Swatis, and assuming that the Peshawur Brigade had been strengthened by the regiments from Rawul Pindi and Nowshera, it is not probable that more than 6,000 men with 30 guns would have been available for the advance on Ali Musjid, a force by no means calculated to insure success.

Defective commissariat arrangements and deficient means of transport appear to be the great hindrance to the prompt advance of troops, but, as we have before pointed out, the blame does not lie with departmental officers so much as with the system that maintains during peace an insufficient number of beasts of burden to meet the requirements of war. Of late years, however, in India as well as in England, steps have been taken to organize a permanent Transport Corps; for this purpose Lord Napier of Magdala instituted powerful mule trains at various points near the frontier, but these, though equal to the strain of petty border expeditions, are quite inadequate to the calls of an army of invasion. Indeed, it would be most inadvisable for financial reasons, however desirable from a military point of view, to maintain carriage on a war footing for all the troops in India. Much might be done, however, to prevent a recurrence of the strain now felt in the Punjab, by accurate registers being kept in every Tahsil and Thanna throughout the country of the number of elephants, camels, mules, ponies, oxen, and hackeries in the district, together with the names of the owners. Thus by simply setting in motion the machinery of the magistrate's office, all available transport could be readily collected under police supervision at given points.

The conduct of the Maharajah of Alwar deserves especial mention. Instead of sending up an indifferently armed, badly disciplined body of men, of very doubtful worth in actual war, he has volunteered to equip and maintain at his own expense a corps of camels and camel drivers for service on the frontier. Whether by this is meant a transport train or a camel corps similar to the one raised by Sir Charles Napier in Scinde, or Colonel Ross in Central India, we are not informed. In any case the offer shows that the suspicion directed against some of our feudatories in this instance is most undeserved.

Both the Scinde and Ross' Camel Corps did such excellent service in their time that it is a matter of much regret that they were ever disbanded; the value of Shutar Sowars or camel troopers is recognized by the Indian Government, inasmuch as every troop of the Frontier cavalry regiments has one or more of these men attached to it, who are simply invaluable for orderly duties in a body; they admit of a detachment of trained soldiers being transported 60 or 70 miles in the 24 hours without fatigue to man or beast. Some of the marches performed by the two corps we have here alluded to are the most surprising on record, though unfortunately little known even by military men. It is to be hoped the Maharajah of Alwar's example will be followed by other princes.

The summary of the Indian press telegrams given by our Correspondent is worthy of notice. It appears by it that the report of the Momunds having thrown in their lot with the Ameer has not been authenticated; their relations with us have ever been on such an unsatisfactory footing that there is good foundation for such a rumour; even if they do remain neutral, it will be incumbent on us to maintain a strong force to watch their borders during any operations that may be undertaken in Cabul. Yakoob Khan's movements seem attended with much uncertainty; At one time we hear that he has been released and is on the way to Quetta, and to-day it is reported that he is to command the Ameer's forces in the Kuram district; Yakoob has shown himself not only a personally brave man, but a very skilled soldier, and it is certain that wherever he may be posted he will succeed in giving us some trouble. A well-planned system of shelter trenches or breastworks such as the Pathan knows so well how to throw up would render the Shutergardan Pass well-nigh impregnable, and there are one or more points between it and the Peiwar Kotal, which without much trouble might be converted into veritable Plevnas. There is no mention of any immediate advance on the part of General Roberts's column on Kuram, although a few days ago it was confidently stated that the force would be pushed up at once. The badness of the road between Rawul Pindi and Kohat, the absence of a bridge over the Indus at Kushalgarh, and the necessity of maintaining an adequate force between the Ghubbar mountain and the Tirah hills in order to overawe the Vaziris, Orakzaes, and Afridis, were all obstacles in the way of an immediate advance.

The report that the Russians are in Yarkand may be dismissed as unworthy of belief; nevertheless the advisability of securing the Baroghil and Kamarband Passes, which lead from Kashgar to Cabul or Kashmir, is beyond all question.

The fact that the Mhairwarra Battalion has volunteered for service on the frontier is authenticated; we gather from this that Government will utilize it in replacing some of the Punjab battalions now under orders to form part of the Expeditionary Force, and not that it will itself join the army of invasion. Seven officers per infantry corps are generally considered insufficient for the exigencies of warfare; it would then be simple madness to send forward the Mhairwarra Regiment, which bears on its rolls but two—a colonel and an adjutant—indeed, we are at a loss to conceive how it can be expected to perform any but the poorest police duties.

The rumour of a strong hostile feeling between the Khyberis and the Ameer's troops, coupled with the fact that firing had been heard in the pass (probably practice from the guns of Ali Musjid), evidently gave rise to the report that a British force was on the march to Daka. It is most satisfactory to learn that more sober counsels have prevailed at Simla, and that no immediate movement is contemplated. Reports as to dissensions among the tribes must be received with extreme caution, and such general statements as that the Khyberis have been attacked and their villages harassed by order of the Ameer are utterly unreliable. Shere Ali will do nothing to alienate tribes whose assistance would be of such paramount importance to his cause.

The term "Khyberi," which is so generally

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applied to the inhabitants of the land in the vicinity of the Peshawur, is misleading, inasmuch as the Pass is held by various sections of various tribes, many of whom are at enmity with each other, and who consequently can be played one against the other. The term is never or very seldom used by Pathans themselves; indeed, the different clans are easily distinguishable, often by their features, more often by their dress, always by their pagaris or turbans. The chief tribes who dwell in the vicinity of the Khyber are the Afridis, the Shinwaris, and the Momunds. But the claims of the two former to be real Pass-men were officially recognized by the Durani Kings of Cabul, who paid allowance to the following Afridi clans—the Zaka Khel, Sipahs, Kuki Khel, Malikdin Khel, and Kambar Khel; also to the Loargi and Sangu Khel Shinwaris. These latter tribes dwell chiefly on the northern side, the Afridis on the south side of the Pass. When we held the road during the last Afghan war, we freely subsidized these men; strong bodies of them were enlisted and employed in garrisoning Lala-China, Ali Musjid, and Daka. This was mainly on account of the extreme unhealthiness of the Pass and of the great mortality among our troops when cantoned in the above-named posts. The levies were not very trustworthy, and were strongly suspected of receiving pay from us with one hand and of robbing us with the other. Now, however, we are much more intimately acquainted with the character of the Pathan than we were then. We have a large number of officers in the Bengal Army who have not only served in regiments composed to a large extent of these very men, but who also speak the language fluently. In the last war the want of interpreters was a serious difficulty. To-day, thanks to the very liberal rewards offered by the Indian Government to induce officers to master the numerous dialects throughout the country, fully qualified Pushtoo interpreters may be counted by the score. The services of these officers will be invaluable, not only as reconnoitrers, but as organizers of irregular levies from among those Pathan clans who throw in their lot with us, while the services of the Persian scholars will be of equal assistance to the Commander-in-Chief when once the Army is in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN.

(32)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The letters from Earl Grey and Sir C. Trevelyan which you did me the honour to place in juxtaposition to my own in your article of the 10th inst. ably argue Shere Ali's case, and are, I think, exhaustive of the arguments which can adduced in his favour against the policy of the Indian Government. I trust you will permit me to trespass to a small extent on your valuable space to point out briefly the false grounds on which those arugments are based, as it is possible a section of the public may be carried away by their apparent plausibility.

In the first place, Shere Ali's champions commit the mistake so common in most whose political experience is confined to European affairs. They discuss the question as if Shere Ali were the ruler of one of the European States. To show how far Shere Ali's position is removed from such an international *status* it is only necessary to point to his treatment at the hands of the Indian Government, which he has hitherto courted and which he is anxious should continue. Up to a recent date he has been receiving subsidies and gifts of arms from the Viceroy's Government to enable him to preserve his throne and the tranquillity of his country. He is angry with us because we ask for a slight return for those presents in the shape of more intimate political intercourse. That, in a few words, is the cause of the present difficulty. Shere Ali is powerless to prevent raids into India by the border tribes whose lands form a portion of Afghanistan, and we coerce those tribes without any reference to the Ameer. He is, besides, a barbarian, and ignorant of the common amenities which govern the political relations between two independent States. To treat such a chief on the same principles as we should Italy or Spain would be to enact a political farce for the amusement of the world and our own humiliation. What, in a few words, is asked for Shere Ali by his friends is that he should be accorded the international privileges and consideration due to an European State without any of its responsibilities being demanded from him. So much for the moral arguments.

The practical ones which urge the dangers we run in vindicating our dignity are equally fallacious. Where the honour of the country is at stake, to be blind to all but the dangers of upholding it may be questionable patriotism. Shere Ali is held up as the popular leader of an united nation. He is pictured as retiring to fastnesses outside Afghanistan, whence he will, after a short exercise of patience, swoop down on us and expel us "bag and baggage;" his devoted subjects in the meantime keeping their weapons sharp to rise and flock to his standard as one man.

This is a pretty picture; but, unfortunately, is not true to nature, as any one who has watched Afghan politics must know. Where are the hospitable fastnesses in which Shere Ali and his followers will be welcomed and maintained? Shere Ali's own position is a very precarious one. His son Yakoob Khan, the idol of the military leaders, may at any time be placed on the throne in his father's place. We have, therefore, not only a number of tribes, acting independently and jealously, opposed to us, instead of a combined nation, but also dissension among the leaders.

Lord Grey himself admits we shall not have much difficulty in conquering the country, but predicts that we shall be driven out after a short occupation, though all the fortresses of Afghanistan may be ours. I will not pretend to see further than other people and draw a picture of the future; but, as a military man, I find it difficult to realize how we are to be turned out of Cabul so easily, if to keep us from getting in is impossible.

I am, &c.,

London, Oct. 11. POLITICAL.

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Daily Telegraph - Oct 14

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

RETURN OF THE ENVOY.

REPORTED RUSSIAN CAPTURE OF YARKAND.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN CABLE.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

SIMLA, OCT. 12 (5.32 P.M.)

The Native Envoy at Cabul received, on Oct. 6, the Ameer's permission to return to India. He was to be the bearer of Shere Ali's replies to the Viceroy's letters.

His route homeward was through the Kurram Valley, and it is expected that he will reach Kohat about the 18th instant.

The Maharaja of Ulwar has offered the Government 250 camels and fifty men, to be fitted out and maintained at his expense during the operations.

A report has reached Kashgar that the Russians have taken possession of Yarkand.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

PARIS, OCT. 13.

The *Golos*, returning to the question of the neutrality of Russia in case of an Anglo-Afghan war, on which it maintains that its views have been travestied by one of your contemporaries, re-states its opinion as follows: It declares that the same obligations which were imposed upon English subjects by the Royal decree relative to neutrality would be equally imposed upon Russian subjects in case of a war breaking out between England and Afghanistan, of course, with the reserve that the Russian Government would not display more zeal than the English Cabinet thought proper to exhibit during the Russo-Turkish conflict. Its principal instances are the Stafford House Committee, the *rôle* played by General Kemball, and the engagement of English half-pay officers under the Turkish flag. The argument of the *Golos* is intended to show that neither the English Government nor the Press ought to be astonished if a similar occasion calls forth similar conduct on the part of Russia.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

VIENNA, OCT. 13.

According to a telegram from Bucharest, published by the *Presse*, a large number of Bulgarian volunteers are preparing to leave for Afghanistan to take part in the war against England.

OUR telegraphic despatch from Simla published this morning tends to remove the apprehension which had existed as to the safety of the native Envoy who preceded Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN. The Sirdar GHOLAB HOUSSEIN Khan, a Mohammedan officer of much distinction in the British Army and honorary Colonel of his regiment, was sent up to Cabul bearing the Viceroy's letter to the Ameer. He passed the mountains in safety and was well received by SHERE ALI, but was none the less detained in the Afghan capital until long after the time when an answer might and should have been forwarded. Meanwhile, as all know, a practically hostile and defiant reply came back through the hills in the form of an order to the garrison at Ali Musjid that a passage should be refused to the British Mission; yet the Sirdar was still kept at Cabul, under restrictions which appear to have prevented his communicating with the Indian Government. At all events, his continued absence caused much surprise and some anxiety, nor need it be pointed out how inexpiable an offence any ill-treatment of him must have been considered. Even semi-barbarous Muslim Princes acknowledge the authority of that verse in the Koran, lately quoted by our distinguished correspondent, M. ARMINIUS VÁMBERY, which says, "Do no harm to an Ambassador, he is a sacred guest." Yet Ambassadors and Envoys have been murdered before now in Afghanistan, and the fact that this gallant officer's safety has been in decided jeopardy may possibly have had something to do with the cautious procedure of Lord LYTTON. It seems now, however, from the intelligence transmitted by our Special Correspondent at Simla that, although detained by the Ameer down to as late a date as the 6th instant, Sir GHOLAB HOUSSEIN has obtained what may be called his "passports" at last, and is on his way back, bringing with him replies to the Viceroy's letters. He will return not by the Khyber, but by the Kurram pass, a route marked out for him probably by motives of precaution, as it might be inconvenient to disclose the number and position of the Afghan troops in the Khyber. Our native Envoy is expected at Kohat about Friday next, and much speculation must naturally arise as to the character of the tardy rejoinders which he will bring from SHERE ALI. It is not, of course, impossible that they may be couched in a tone of excuse and conciliation, though nothing could be more improbable, looking to the action taken already by the Ameer in repulsing the Mission, arming his fortresses, and summoning his chiefs into the field; nor would a merely polite letter of regrets be of the slightest utility at this stage of events. The Ameer may very likely have been instigated to say that he objected to the escort accompanying Sir NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, rather than to the visit of that gallant officer, and that if his answer had been more patiently awaited, he might perhaps have himself invited the English Envoy. SHERE ALI, however, cannot but be aware that it is no longer simply a question of the right to send a representative to Cabul, or of the prompt respect due to communications from the QUEEN'S Viceregent. Certain large and serious guarantees must henceforward be taken against the misuse of the geographical position of the Ameer's country, and the full surrender of these must either accompany any attempt at explanation, or must be speedily appended to it. The armies of the frontier have not been arrayed, and all these costly military preparations completed, to obtain a few phrases of ironical apology in Persian, while the affront to the British name remains unatoned. The *amende* of the Afghan ruler, if it be made at all at the eleventh hour, will need to be complete and substantial; but we think it far more probable that nothing at all like an *amende* is coming, and that the desperate policy of the morose chief will be sustained in his reply to the Viceroy. Whether it be so or not, a very brief interval of time will soon enlighten both India and England.

Another statement of much importance is contained in our Simla despatch, in the shape of a report that the Russians have taken possession of Yarkand. At first sight it might appear strange that this piece of news should reach the Indian headquarters by way of Kashgar, but it is a better road by that principality than by Khotan and the Kuen-Lun range, and there is no impossibility in the assertion that the Russians have finished their frequent attempts on the independence of Yarkand in the old way. This city is the largest in Eastern Turkistan. It is computed to possess one hundred thousand inhabitants, and a direct road runs to it from Jhelum and Chaitral in Cashmere. This route crosses the vast mountain masses of the Hindoo Koosh and Karakorum, and the significance of the tidings now received is therefore that Russia has in one point at least arrived at the outer face of our natural rampart in the East. It will be said that the nature of that rocky rampart forbids the idea of any large military expeditions ever being despatched through its wild and elevated northern and eastern passes. The gateways of India on this side are no doubt of surpassing ruggedness, and most of the routes pursued by merchants wind over heights where the breath of man is drawn with difficulty and pain, and where no beast of burden can exist except the yak and the hardy Himalayan sheep, used for this purpose. But, in truth, the transit is not everywhere as hard as is commonly believed. Mr. DAVIES, in his official report, published by Mr. FORSYTH, observes of one road between Yarkand and Cashmere: "This route *viâ* Jhelum, Kashmir, and Leh to Yarkand is, in Captain MONTGOMERY'S opinion, 'not only the shortest, but the best and cheapest route for the traffic from the sea to Eastern Turkistan.' From Jhelum to Leh (Ladak) the route through the mountains is better than any other that traverses the Himalayas; the road between the

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plains and Leh crosses the Himalayan range by a very remarkable depression of only eleven thousand three hundred feet, and none of the passes on it exceed one thousand three hundred feet in height, and they are, moreover, open for at least seven or eight months in the year, and could be crossed at any season in fine weather." It should, however, be remembered that no army has yet ever invaded India from Eastern Turkestan—at least no record or tradition of any such movement exists. We are perfectly aware that no Power more strongly organised than China has ever held sway in the vast tracts beyond the Himalayas; and Russia, for the first time in history, brings European science into near neighbourhood to a highland barrier still deemed impregnable.

Nevertheless, with regard to the inaccessibility of these vast mountain-masses, Mr. FORSYTH wrote, in reference to commerce, "A word, too, may be said on the subject of the great barrier which a mountain, seventeen thousand feet high, is supposed to offer to trade. Such a remark can only be made by a person wholly unacquainted with the Himalayas. All who have travelled in these regions know that, with the exception of the Rotang, the lowest pass of all, the other passes are approached by long, easy inclines; over the Rotang a mule road has, been made, and may be still further improved as the increase of traffic shall demand it." Where trade can pass, it is argued, ambition or hostility might find a way, and it may be a mistaken notion, therefore, to regard this mountain wall, at the foot of which Russia appears at last to have arrived, as unscalable. Moreover, we had a trade, and China had political interests, in these regions, which are both thrust aside by the present advance, the confirmation of which will throw not a little light upon the order recently conveyed to guard the passes leading into Cashmere. In the project for a band of neutral or semi-independent States, discussed between Lord CLARENDON and Prince GORTSCHAKOFF at Heidelberg, in 1869, Afghanistan, Khelat, and Yarkand were named as regions where English influence should naturally be paramount. Now we see a Russian agent at Cabul, and a Russian army, apparently, at Yarkand; for this invasion of the Indian frontiers steals along like an incoming tide, and its creeping waters have already washed in two places the feet of the hills hanging over India. It is the rumour of it inside, however, which must be looked upon as the chief danger, for, justly says an historian of our Indian Empire, "imbecile or traitorous would be that Government which slumbers when Russia is approaching the border of any of its provinces, even though the approach be slow, and the distance between the invader and the object of his desire as yet be great." It is now forty years since Sir JOHN MCNEILL gave warning of an advance which has, during the interval, achieved more extensive designs than he anticipated; and nothing save the most hardened incredulity can remain proof against the serried array of facts which mark each stage of Russia's movements towards India.

Daily News. Oct 14

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

DEPARTURE OF THE VICEROY'S EMISSARY.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)
(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)
SIMLA, SUNDAY.

A letter from the Viceroy's emissary, dated the 6th, has been received.

He was permitted to depart on that day. He brings replies to the Viceroy's letters.

The Ameer treated him with consideration and regard.

OUR Correspondent at Simla, whose information has hitherto been so important and so trustworthy, telegraphs to us that a letter from the VICEROY'S emissary to Cabul has been received, and that the emissary himself is on his way homeward. The letter from him was dated the 6th, and on that day he was to be permitted to depart. He is to bring to Simla replies to the VICEROY'S letters, and the AMEER appears to have treated him with consideration as regards his journey. It may be that the replies of the AMEER will afford the VICEROY some good ground for believing that SHERE ALI has no real desire to break with the English Government. The letters may be apologetic in substance or in tone, or they may show the temper of a man who, not seeking a quarrel, fancies a quarrel is to be forced upon him, who, not inclined to give offence, conceives that he has himself been offended. If it should appear that the AMEER'S conduct has arisen out of any misunderstanding of this kind, we trust that every opportunity may be given for the setting right of the misconception. There is not, on the part of the English public, the faintest inclination to force a quarrel on the AMEER. We should be glad to believe that no such inclination exists in the mind of any one here or in India. Any movement to be made against SHERE ALI ought to be made in reference solely to a feeling of duty and of necessity, as something which a due regard for our own credit, and for the stability of our influence in India, would not allow us to avoid. If the AMEER gives any evidence of an anxiety to save us from this necessity, we ought to be magnanimous enough to welcome it. To refuse to SHERE ALI any opportunity of explanation and arrangement now would only be to justify the suspicion which there is too much reason to believe occupied his mind from the first—the suspicion that his doom had been resolved upon. There is not, we presume, any longer a possibility that if the AMEER'S letters should prove to be uncompromising and defiant, that rapid and decisive movement forward could be made, which we lately showed to be then practicable and politic. Prompt action, we urged many days ago, would be desirable, because "in being immediate," it might be "limited in extent and duration." "It is," as we then wrote "to prevent a corrective measure "becoming a measure of occupation and annexa- "tion in Afghanistan, and giving occasion to "internal disturbance in our Indian dominions, "that we deprecate delay." Still later we cautioned the public that "the wish for delay which seems "to possess so many is probably, in some cases at "least, the result of a conviction that the longer "decisive measures are postponed the more com- "prehensive they must be in the end." Promptitude, we said then, and say now, would be the best guarantee against that policy of occupation and annexation which we fear has an almost irresistible attraction for the minds of some of our statesmen, and which many suspect to have been the secret inspiration of the recent movements made by the Indian Government.

Let the AMEER'S reply be what it will that rapidity of movement seems to be now out of the question. The telegram from our Simla Correspondent which we published on Saturday describes the policy resolved upon by our Indian authorities as one of delay, with a view to what is called completeness. It will be hard indeed to make the world in general believe that this completeness is not designed to be something much more serious than a mere punishment of the AMEER'S rudeness, should his letters to the VICEROY show that he meant to be rude, and that he continues in that temper. Lord LYTTON possibly has been contemplating all along some policy as thorough, and at the same time as theatric, as that which turned Algeria into a French possession because the Dey of ALGIERS flourished his fan offensively in the face of a French official. If any such purpose as this is in the mind of the VICEROY or any of his advisers, it certainly is not likely to find favour with the English public. It was CYRUS, if we remember rightly, who, becoming exasperated against a river which had swept away some of his horses, declared he would reduce it to such shallowness that women might walk across it without raising their skirts, and actually did set to work with draining, digging, and canal-making until he had run off the water from its original bed and fulfilled his vow of vengeance.

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There may be minds to which this sort of performance seems heroic and imperial, but such minds do not by any means represent the disposition of the English public. Most Englishmen regard SHERE ALI exactly as a plain and practical man would have regarded the river that offended CYRUS, and would have about as much anxiety for personal vengeance in the one case as in the other. Of course we may be told that there is a policy cherished by our rulers which has nothing to do with personal vengeance; that it is part of a great imperial plan conceived with far more comprehensive purpose than anything which the ephemeral good or bad humour of SHERE ALI could affect. The river is to be drained, we may be assured, not because we feel offended by anything it has done, but because we require for our own purposes to have as dry land the soil through which the stream now flows. We are quite prepared to believe that the plans of the Government really have some such inspiration. Nothing of the kind will be readily acknowledged at Simla or in Whitehall. It will be left to injudicious advocates of the Government to proclaim that there are such purposes in existence, and that the Imperial policy was not fired into action by any impulse so insignificant as the rudeness of SHERE ALI. It is likely enough that the injudicious supporters of the Government have hit upon the truth. If that be so, we must not build much hope on any apologetic or conciliatory disposition which may possibly be shown by the replies of SHERE ALI. Moreover, if the suspicions so commonly felt in London should be convictions in Cabul, it is not likely that the AMEER will be able to see any better course left open to him than that which sheer desperation may suggest. In the effect of the grand demonstration of our strength which appears to be so much relied upon we have, for ourselves, but little faith. It will probably seem to SHERE ALI not a demonstration of what we could do but of what we have all along been determined to do, and he may be driven to the conclusion that he might as well fight it out first as last.

Perhaps the most curious fact noticeable in the whole state of things is the absolute ignorance in which the English public are left with regard to the designs and the policy of the Government. Men look on with the same kind of curiosity as they might have felt some fifteen years ago about the next move to be made by the Emperor of the FRENCH. There was a time when the Poet Laureate described in language of unwonted emphasis the fact that although we had a faithful ally, none of us exactly knew what he meant. We are in much the same condition now as regards the policy of our own Government with relation to Afghanistan. That policy makes no part of any scheme disclosed to and sanctioned by Parliament. It has not been suggested by any movement, impulse, apprehension, or ambition on the part of the English people. There is no tradition even which could commend or explain it. The Government, of course, would not admit that it is simply a renewal of what we had all believed to be the dead and buried policy of mere annexation; and if it is not to be thus explained there is no traditional policy, living or dead, with which to connect it. We are therefore left to wait and see what little surprise the Viceroy of INDIA may yet have in store for the world. India is truly the land for marvellous feats of jugglery, and perhaps in certain minds the atmosphere of the place may engender a desire to create surprises worthy of the region. MARK ANTONY was said to have fallen into the style of Oriental hyperbole from his residence in the East, and NAPOLEON had serious ideas of palming himself off on the Mohammedans as a sort of Caliph. We cannot help fearing that the atmosphere of India has been somewhat too seductive to the imagination of the VICEROY, and that the sober and practical tone of English statesmanship is now too prosaic for the councils and the projects of Simla. Certainly since Lord LYTTON'S appointment we have had nothing but a succession of surprises. Theatric scenes, gorgeous Imperial progresses, marvellous displays of poetic eloquence—all these were, perhaps, only the ornamental preludes to some strokes of audacious policy which might bring the name of the VICEROY into the mouths of men everywhere. We have only to say that the public feeling and conscience of England have no manner of sympathy with any policy of mere show and surprise either in Europe or in Asia. The time will come when this will be made clear, but, unfortunately, it is left very much at the mercy of some of our statesmen to say whether great mischief may not be done before the public opinion of the country has any chance of making itself authoritatively known.

THE

INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN.

(FROM A MILITARY CORRESPONDENT.)

In the present lull of the affairs connected with Afghanistan it may be useful to consider the military aspect of an invasion of the country, for which preparation is being made. Of course its immediate purpose is to exact reparation for the insult offered to Major Cavagnari. Probably the advance will be made on Cabul from one direction and on Candahar from another. That both armies after more or less fighting will reach their destinations is, humanly speaking, certain. It may be that the Ameer will then submit to any terms we may choose to impose upon him; but it is at least as possible that he will escape to Afghan Turkestan, and from thence organize a guerilla war against us. It must be remembered that he is accustomed to a life of adventure, and to the most severe rebuffs of fortune. He is, moreover, a singularly resolute man, and will no doubt bear it in mind that his brother Akbar Khan avenged the defeat and surrender of his father by the destruction of a British brigade. On the whole, we think it more probable than not, that when beaten in the open field and driven from his capital, he will betake himself to the almost inaccessible country in the north of his dominions. If he should adopt such a course there can be no doubt that Russia directly but secretly, or indirectly, will give him aid to continue the struggle. Our position in such a case will be a very awkward one. For though the south and north-west of Afghanistan is comparatively well known and suitable for the operations of regular troops, the very reverse is the case with respect to the districts in the north and north-east. We could, no doubt, follow him into his fastnesses, for where Afghans can go British troops can follow; but from the difficulty of obtaining supplies and transporting sick and wounded, the columns which we might send would have to be small. In the last war it was found impossible to convey guns over the mountains to the north of the capital, but we are better provided now, having mountain batteries which can accompany infantry anywhere. Possessing, however, perfect knowledge of the country, dispensing with commissariat, transport, and ambulances, and having the inhabitants on their side, the Ameer would carry on a harassing war with many chances in his favour, and it would be very difficult to capture him or bring him to bay. Indeed, our necessarily small columns would run a great risk of being overwhelmed by a sudden combination of the Afghan forces. In fact, till roads had been cut in every direction, and strong garrisons established all over the country, it would be impossible to subdue, or even to hold in check, active hostility. The fact is it would not be a difficult task to defeat the main army of the Ameer and to capture his principal cities, but to hold the country would tax our resources to the utmost.

There is the alternative, having thus shown our power, of withdrawing our troops from the country. Such a proceeding would, however, hardly be satisfactory. We should, it is true, prove that we are not to be insulted with impunity, but a mere raid into Afghanistan would scarcely place our relations with that country on a more satisfactory footing than that which now exists. The Ameer and the Afghans would not certainly be better disposed to us. Far from securing him as an ally we should throw him into the arms of Russia, and it would be useless to repeat our request that an English envoy should be permitted to reside at Cabul. We should have spent much money without in any way repairing the blunders of our diplomatists. The Afghans would be sure to boast now, as they did in 1842, that, unable to subdue them, we were obliged to quit the country, and the belief that such was really the case would soon be current all over Asia. There is a third course, which is, that we should evacuate the country with the main body of our forces, merely establishing garrisons at certain important strategical points, such as Candahar and Jellalabad. Some loose-talking amateur statesmen speak of placing also a garrison in Herat; but the idea does not deserve being entertained for a moment, save on the condition that a strong ruler occupies the throne of Cabul, that he is our firm ally, and does not object to one of his most important fortresses being held by British troops. Herat is 400 miles from Candahar, and 300 from Jacobabad in Scinde. Before we could send a force to Herat we should have to establish ourselves strongly in Candahar to avoid our communications being cut off. Indeed, even if we were nominally a firm ally of the Sovereign of Afghanistan, it would be imprudent to leave a garrison at Herat without something more than a mere garrison at Candahar. The task of sending a force to Herat with the mission of capturing that town at the end of the march would present difficulties indeed—yet only difficulties which English energy could overcome. The point is that when the place was captured the British

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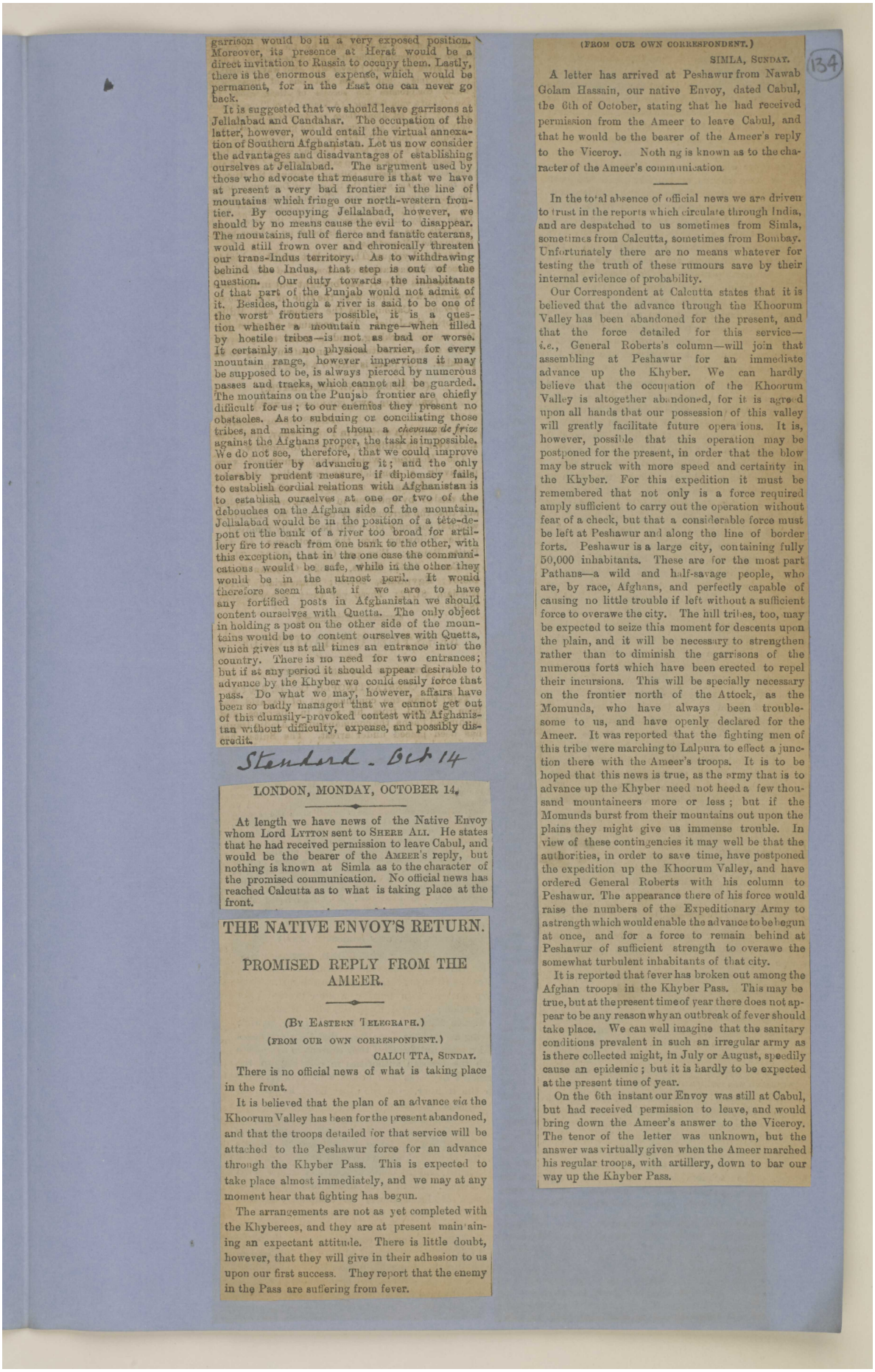

garrison would be in a very exposed position. Moreover, its presence at Herat would be a direct invitation to Russia to occupy them. Lastly, there is the enormous expense, which would be permanent, for in the East one can never go back.

It is suggested that we should leave garrisons at Jellalabad and Candahar. The occupation of the latter, however, would entail the virtual annexation of Southern Afghanistan. Let us now consider the advantages and disadvantages of establishing ourselves at Jellalabad. The argument used by those who advocate that measure is that we have at present a very bad frontier in the line of mountains which fringe our north-western frontier. By occupying Jellalabad, however, we should by no means cause the evil to disappear. The mountains, full of fierce and fanatic caterans, would still frown over and chronically threaten our trans-Indus territory. As to withdrawing behind the Indus, that step is out of the question. Our duty towards the inhabitants of that part of the Punjab would not admit of it. Besides, though a river is said to be one of the worst frontiers possible, it is a question whether a mountain range—when filled by hostile tribes—is not as bad or worse. It certainly is no physical barrier, for every mountain range, however impervious it may be supposed to be, is always pierced by numerous passes and tracks, which cannot all be guarded. The mountains on the Punjab frontier are chiefly difficult for us; to our enemies they present no obstacles. As to subduing or conciliating those tribes, and making of them a *chevaux de frize* against the Afghans proper, the task is impossible. We do not see, therefore, that we could improve our frontier by advancing it; and the only tolerably prudent measure, if diplomacy fails, to establish cordial relations with Afghanistan is to establish ourselves at one or two of the debouches on the Afghan side of the mountain. Jellalabad would be in the position of a tête-de-pont on the bank of a river too broad for artillery fire to reach from one bank to the other, with this exception, that in the one case the communications would be safe, while in the other they would be in the utmost peril. It would therefore seem that if we are to have any fortified posts in Afghanistan we should content ourselves with Quetta. The only object in holding a post on the other side of the mountains would be to content ourselves with Quetta, which gives us at all times an entrance into the country. There is no need for two entrances; but if at any period it should appear desirable to advance by the Khyber we could easily force that pass. Do what we may, however, affairs have been so badly managed that we cannot get out of this clumsily-provoked contest with Afghanistan without difficulty, expense, and possibly discredit.

Standard. Oct 14

LONDON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14.

At length we have news of the Native Envoy whom Lord LYTTON sent to SHERE ALI. He states that he had received permission to leave Cabul, and would be the bearer of the AMEER'S reply, but nothing is known at Simla as to the character of the promised communication. No official news has reached Calcutta as to what is taking place at the front.

THE NATIVE ENVOY'S RETURN.

PROMISED REPLY FROM THE AMEER.

(BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH.)

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

CALCUTTA, SUNDAY.

There is no official news of what is taking place in the front.

It is believed that the plan of an advance *via* the Khoorum Valley has been for the present abandoned, and that the troops detailed for that service will be attached to the Peshawur force for an advance through the Khyber Pass. This is expected to take place almost immediately, and we may at any moment hear that fighting has begun.

The arrangements are not as yet completed with the Khyberees, and they are at present maintaining an expectant attitude. There is little doubt, however, that they will give in their adhesion to us upon our first success. They report that the enemy in the Pass are suffering from fever.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, SUNDAY.

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A letter has arrived at Peshawur from Nawab Golam Hassain, our native Envoy, dated Cabul, the 6th of October, stating that he had received permission from the Ameer to leave Cabul, and that he would be the bearer of the Ameer's reply to the Viceroy. Nothing is known as to the character of the Ameer's communication.

In the total absence of official news we are driven to trust in the reports which circulate through India, and are despatched to us sometimes from Simla, sometimes from Calcutta, sometimes from Bombay. Unfortunately there are no means whatever for testing the truth of these rumours save by their internal evidence of probability.

Our Correspondent at Calcutta states that it is believed that the advance through the Khoorum Valley has been abandoned for the present, and that the force detailed for this service—*i.e.*, General Roberts's column—will join that assembling at Peshawur for an immediate advance up the Khyber. We can hardly believe that the occupation of the Khoorum Valley is altogether abandoned, for it is agreed upon all hands that our possession of this valley will greatly facilitate future operations. It is, however, possible that this operation may be postponed for the present, in order that the blow may be struck with more speed and certainty in the Khyber. For this expedition it must be remembered that not only is a force required amply sufficient to carry out the operation without fear of a check, but that a considerable force must be left at Peshawur and along the line of border forts. Peshawur is a large city, containing fully 50,000 inhabitants. These are for the most part Pathans—a wild and half-savage people, who are, by race, Afghans, and perfectly capable of causing no little trouble if left without a sufficient force to overawe the city. The hill tribes, too, may be expected to seize this moment for descents upon the plain, and it will be necessary to strengthen rather than to diminish the garrisons of the numerous forts which have been erected to repel their incursions. This will be specially necessary on the frontier north of the Attock, as the Momunds, who have always been troublesome to us, and have openly declared for the Ameer. It was reported that the fighting men of this tribe were marching to Lalpura to effect a junction there with the Ameer's troops. It is to be hoped that this news is true, as the army that is to advance up the Khyber need not heed a few thousand mountaineers more or less; but if the Momunds burst from their mountains out upon the plains they might give us immense trouble. In view of these contingencies it may well be that the authorities, in order to save time, have postponed the expedition up the Khoorum Valley, and have ordered General Roberts with his column to Peshawur. The appearance there of his force would raise the numbers of the Expeditionary Army to a strength which would enable the advance to be begun at once, and for a force to remain behind at Peshawur of sufficient strength to overawe the somewhat turbulent inhabitants of that city.

It is reported that fever has broken out among the Afghan troops in the Khyber Pass. This may be true, but at the present time of year there does not appear to be any reason why an outbreak of fever should take place. We can well imagine that the sanitary conditions prevalent in such an irregular army as is there collected might, in July or August, speedily cause an epidemic; but it is hardly to be expected at the present time of year.

On the 6th instant our Envoy was still at Cabul, but had received permission to leave, and would bring down the Ameer's answer to the Viceroy. The tenor of the letter was unknown, but the answer was virtually given when the Ameer marched his regular troops, with artillery, down to bar our way up the Khyber Pass.

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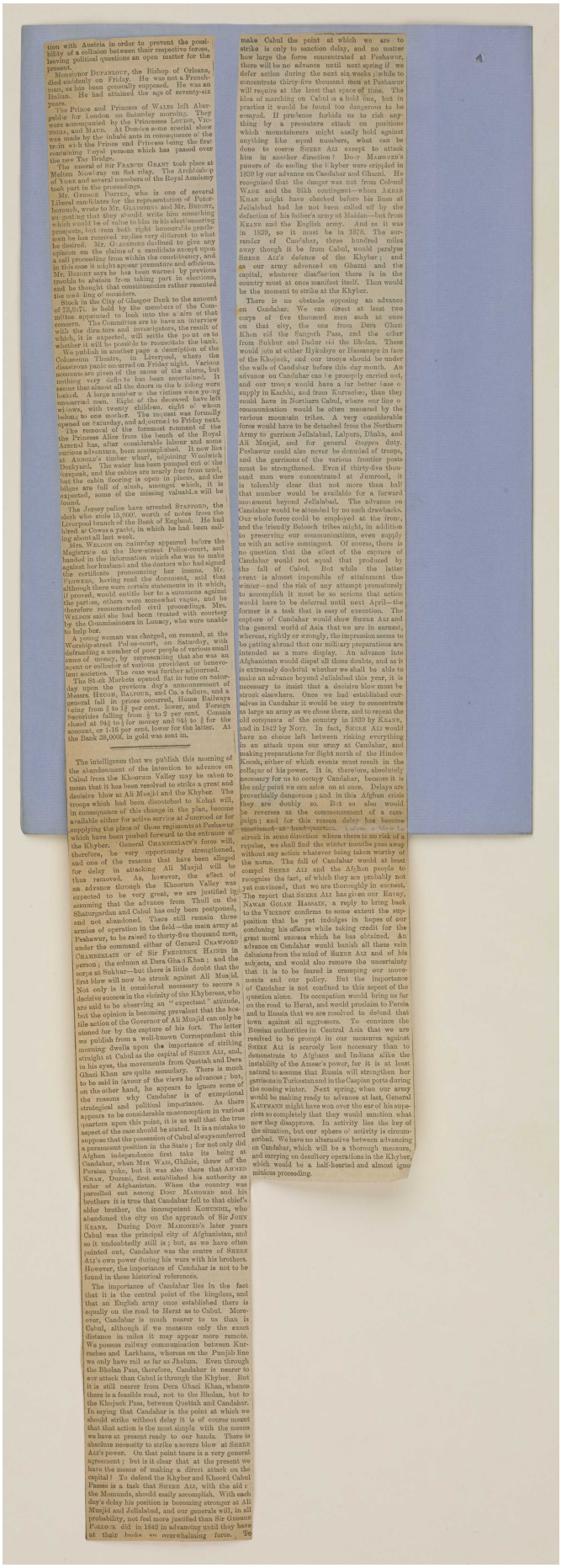

tion with Austria in order to prevent the possibility of a collision between their respective forces, leaving political questions an open matter for the present.

Monsignor Dupanloup, the Bishop of Orleans, died suddenly on Friday. He was not a Frenchman, as has been generally supposed. He was an Italian. He had attained the age of seventy-six years.

The Prince and Princess of Wales left Aberdeen for London on Saturday morning. They were accompanied by the Princesses Louise, Victoria, and Maud. At Dundee some special show was made by the inhabitants in consequence of the train with the Prince and Princess being the first containing Royal persons which has passed over the new Tay Bridge.

The funeral of Sir Francis Grant took place at Melton Mowbray on Saturday. The Archbishop of York and several members of the Royal Academy took part in the proceedings.

Mr. George Potter, who is one of several Liberal candidates for the representation of Peterborough, wrote to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, suggesting that they should write him something which would be of value to him in his electioneering prospects, but from both right honourable gentlemen he has received replies very different to what he desired. Mr. Gladstone declined to give any opinion on the claims of a candidate except upon a call proceeding from within the constituency, and in this case it might appear premature and officious. Mr. Bright says he has been warned by previous trouble to abstain from taking part in elections, and he thought that constituencies rather resented the meddling of outsiders.

Stock in the City of Glasgow Bank to the amount of 72,0/7£. is held by the members of the Committee appointed to look into the affairs of that concern. The Committee are to have an interview with the directors and investigators, the result of which, it is expected, will settle the point as to whether it will be possible to reconstitute the bank.

We publish in another page a description of the Colosseum Theatre, in Liverpool, where the disastrous panic occurred on Friday night. Various accounts are given of the cause of the alarm, but nothing very definite has been ascertained. It seems that almost all the doors in the building were locked. A large number of the victims were young unmarried men. Eight of the deceased have left widows, with twenty children, eight of whom belong to one mother. The inquest was formally opened on Saturday, and adjourned to Friday next.

The removal of the foremost remnant of the Princess Alice from the beach of the Royal Arsenal has, after considerable labour and some curious adventure, been accomplished. It now lies at Arnold's timber wharf, adjoining Woolwich Dockyard. The water has been pumped out of the forepeak, and the cabins are nearly free from mud, but the cabin flooring is open in places, and the bilges are full of slush, amongst which, it is expected, some of the missing valuables will be found.

The Jersey police have arrested Stafford, the clerk who stole 13,000/. worth of notes from the Liverpool branch of the Bank of England. He had hired a Cowes yacht, in which he had been sailing about all last week.

Mrs. Wellock on Saturday appeared before the Magistrate at the Bow-street Police-court, and handed in the information which she was to make against her husband and the doctors who had signed the certificate pronouncing her insane. Mr. Flowers, having read the document, said that although there were certain statements in it which, if proved, would entitle her to a summons against the parties, others were somewhat vague, and he therefore recommended civil proceedings. Mrs. Wellock said she had been treated with courtesy by the Commissioners in Lunacy, who were unable to help her.

A young woman was charged, on remand, at the Worship-street Police-court, on Saturday, with defrauding a number of poor people of various small sums of money, by representing that she was an agent or collector of various provident or benevolent societies. The case was further adjourned.

The Stock Markets opened flat in tone on Saturday upon the previous day's announcement of Messrs. Heugh, Balfour, and Co.'s failure, and a general fall in prices occurred, Home Railways figure from ¼ to 1¼ per cent. lower, and Foreign Securities falling from ¼ to 2 per cent. Consols closed at 94¼ to ⅞ for money and 94⅛ to ¾ for the account, or 1-16 per cent. lower for the latter. At the Bank 38,000/. in gold was sent in.

The intelligence that we publish this morning of the abandonment of the intention to advance on Cabul from the Khoorum Valley may be taken to mean that it has been resolved to strike a great and decisive blow at Ali Musjid and the Khyber. The troops which had been dispatched to Kohat will, in consequence of this change in the plan, become available either for active service at Jumrood or for supplying the place of those regiments at Peshawur which have been pushed forward to the entrance of the Khyber. General Chamberlain's force will, therefore, be very opportunely strengthened, and one of the reasons that have been alleged for delay in attacking Ali Musjid will be thus removed. As, however, the effect of an advance through the Khoorum Valley was expected to be very great, we are justified in assuming that the advance from Thull on the Shaturgardan and Cabul has only been postponed, and not abandoned. There still remain three armies of operation in the field—the main army at Peshawur, to be raised to thirty-five thousand men, under the command either of General Crawford Chamberlain or of Sir Frederick Haines in person; the column at Dera Ghazi Khan; and the corps at Sukkur—but there is little doubt that the first blow will now be struck against Ali Musjid. Not only is it considered necessary to secure a decisive success in the vicinity of the Khyberees, who are said to be observing an "expectant" attitude, but the opinion is becoming prevalent that the hostile action of the Governor of Ali Musjid can only be atoned for by the capture of his fort. The letter we publish from a well-known Correspondent this morning dwells upon the importance of striking straight at Cabul as the capital of Sheer Ali, and, in his eyes, the movements from Quetah and Dera Ghazi Khan are quite secondary. There is much to be said in favour of the views he advances; but, on the other hand, he appears to ignore some of the reasons why Candahar is of exceptional strategical and political importance. As there appears to be considerable misconception in various quarters upon this point, it is as well that the true aspect of the case should be stated. It is a mistake to suppose that the possession of Cabul always conferred a paramount position in the State; for not only did Afghan independence first take its being at Candahar, when Mir Wais, Ghilzie, threw off the Persian yoke, but it was also there that Ahmed Khan, Durani, first established his authority as ruler of Afghanistan. When the country was parcelled out among Dost Mahomed and his brothers it is true that Candahar fell to that chief's elder brother, the incompetent Kohundil, who abandoned the city on the approach of Sir John Keane. During Dost Mahomed's later years Cabul was the principal city of Afghanistan, and so it undoubtedly still is; but, as we have often pointed out, Candahar was the centre of Sheer Ali's own power during his wars with his brothers. However, the importance of Candahar is not to be found in these historical references.

The importance of Candahar lies in the fact that it is the central point of the kingdom, and that an English army once established there is equally on the road to Herat as to Cabul. Moreover, Candahar is much nearer to us than is Cabul, although if we measure only the exact distance in miles it may appear more remote. We possess railway communication between Kurrachee and Larkhana, whereas on the Punjab line we only have rail as far as Jhelum. Even through the Bholan Pass, therefore, Candahar is nearer to our attack than Cabul is through the Khyber. But it is still nearer from Dera Ghazi Khan, whence there is a feasible road, not to the Bholan, but to the Khojuck Pass, between Quetah and Candahar. In saying that Candahar is the point at which we should strike without delay it is of course meant that that action is the most simple with the means we have at present ready to our hands. There is absolute necessity to strike a severe blow at Sheer Ali's power. On that point there is a very general agreement; but is it clear that at the present we have the means of making a direct attack on the capital? To defend the Khyber and Khoord Cabul Passes is a task that Sheer Ali, with the aid of the Momunds, should easily accomplish. With each day's delay his position is becoming stronger at Ali Musjid and Jellalabad, and our generals will, in all probability, not feel more justified than Sir George Pollock did in 1842 in advancing until they have at their backs an overwhelming force. To make Cabul the point at which we are to strike is only to sanction delay, and no matter how large the force concentrated at Peshawur, there will be no advance until next spring if we defer action during the next six weeks; while to concentrate thirty-five thousand men at Peshawur will require at the least that space of time. The idea of marching on Cabul is a bold one, but in practice it would be found too dangerous to be essayed. If prudence forbids us to risk anything by a premature attack on positions which mountaineers might easily hold against anything like equal numbers, what can be done to coerce Sheer Ali except to attack him in another direction? Dost Mahomed's powers of defending the Khyber were crippled in 1839 by our advance on Candahar and Ghazni. He recognised that the danger was not from Colonel Wade and the Sikh contingent—whom Akbar Khan might have checked before his lines at Jellalabad had he not been called off by the defection of his father's army at Maidan—but from Keane and the English army. And as it was in 1839, so it must be in 1878. The surrender of Candahar, three hundred miles away though it be from Cabul, would paralyse Sheer Ali's defence of the Khyber; and as our army advanced on Ghazni and the capital, whatever disaffection there is in the country must at once manifest itself. Then would be the moment to strike at the Khyber.

There is no obstacle opposing an advance on Candahar. We can direct at least two corps of five thousand men each at once on that city, the one from Dera Ghazi Khan and the Sangeh Pass, and the other from Sukkur and Dadur and the Bholan. These would join at either Hykulzye or Hassanzye in face of the Khojuck, and our troops should be under the walls of Candahar before this day month. An advance on Candahar can be promptly carried out, and our troops would have a far better base of supply in Kachhi, and from Kurrachee, than they could have in Northern Cabul, where our line of communication would be often menaced by the various mountain tribes. A very considerable force would have to be detached from the Northern Army to garrison Jellalabad, Lalpura, Dhaka, and Ali Musjid, and for general flanking duty. Peshawur could also never be denuded of troops, and the garrisons of the various frontier posts must be strengthened. Even if thirty-five thousand men were concentrated at Jumrood, it is tolerably clear that not more than half that number would be available for a forward movement beyond Jellalabad. The advance on Candahar would be attended by no such drawbacks. Our whole force could be employed at the front, and the friendly Beloochi tribes might, in addition to preserving our communications, even supply us with an active contingent. Of course, there is no question that the effect of the capture of Candahar would not equal that produced by the fall of Cabul. But while the latter event is almost impossible of attainment this winter—and the risk of any attempt prematurely to accomplish it must be so serious that action would have to be deferred until next April—the former is a task that is easy of execution. The capture of Candahar would show Sheer Ali and the general world of Asia that we are in earnest, whereas, rightly or wrongly, the impression seems to be getting abroad that our military preparations are intended as a mere display. An advance into Afghanistan would dispel all these doubts, and as it is extremely doubtful whether we shall be able to make an advance beyond Jellalabad this year, it is necessary to insist that a decisive blow must be struck elsewhere. Once we had established ourselves in Candahar it would be easy to concentrate as large an army as we chose there, and to repeat the old conquests of the country in 1839 by Keane, and in 1842 by Nott. In fact, Sheer Ali would have no choice left between risking everything in an attack upon our army at Candahar, and making preparations for flight north of the Hindoo Koosh, either of which events must result in the collapse of his power. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary for us to occupy Candahar, because it is the only point we can seize on at once. Delays are proverbially dangerous; and in this Afghan crisis they are doubly so. But so also would be reverses at the commencement of a campaign; and for this reason delay has become sanctioned as a principle. Unless a blow is struck in some direction where there is no risk of a repulse, we shall find the winter months pass away without any action whatever being taken worthy of the name. The fall of Candahar would at least compel Sheer Ali and the Afghan people to recognise the fact, of which they are probably not yet convinced, that we are thoroughly in earnest. The report that Sheer Ali has given our Envoy, Nawab Golam Hasan, a reply to bring back to the Viceroy confirms to some extent the supposition that he yet indulges in hopes of our condoning his offence while taking credit for the great moral success which he has obtained. An advance on Candahar would banish all these vain delusions from the mind of Sheer Ali and of his subjects, and would also remove the uncertainty that it is to be feared is cramping our movements and our policy. But the importance of Candahar is not confined to this aspect of the question alone. Its occupation would bring us far on the road to Herat, and would proclaim to Persia and to Russia that we are resolved to defend that town against all aggressors. To convince the Russian authorities in Central Asia that we are resolved to be prompt in our measures against Sheer Ali is scarcely less necessary than to demonstrate to Afghans and Indians alike the instability of the Ameer's power, for it is at least natural to assume that Russia will strengthen her garrisons in Turkestan and in the Caspian ports during the coming winter. Next spring, when our army would be making ready to advance at last, General Kaufmann might have won over the ear of his superiors so completely that they would sanction what now they disapprove. In activity lies the key of the situation, but our sphere of activity is circumscribed. We have no alternative between advancing on Candahar, which will be a thorough measure, and carrying on desultory operations in the Khyber, which would be a half-hearted and almost ignominious proceeding.

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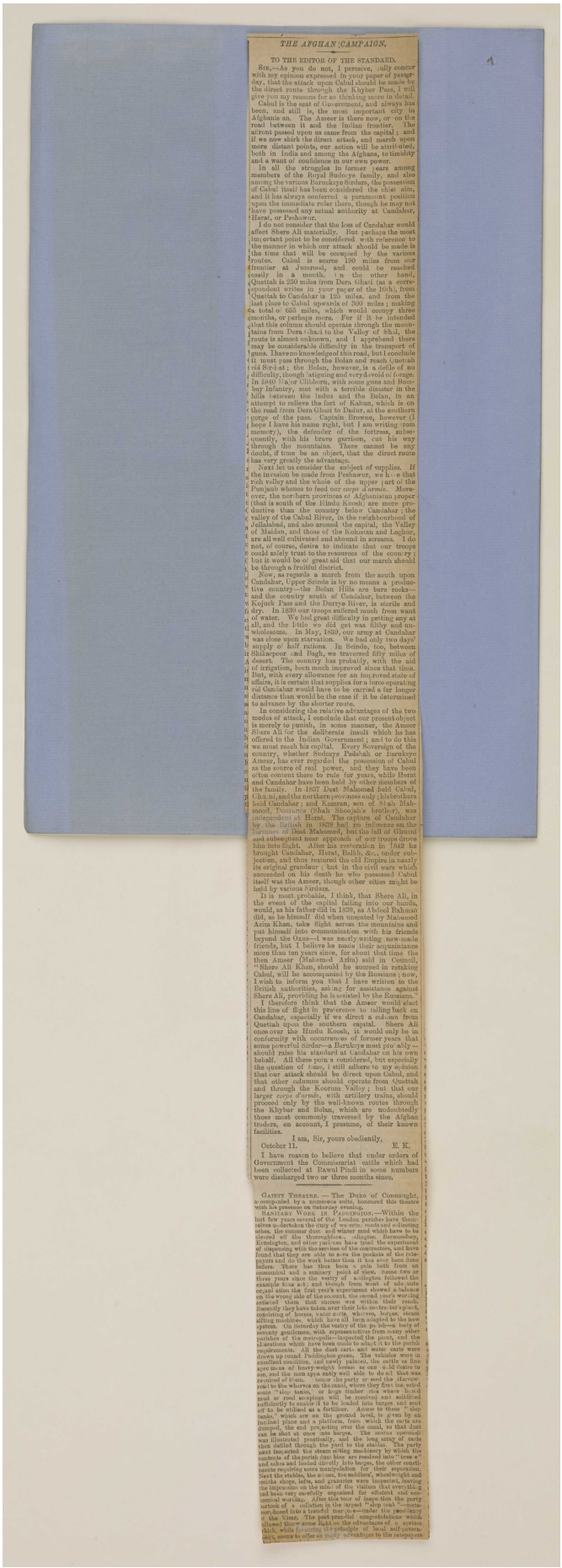

THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

SIR,—As you do not, I perceive, fully concur with my opinion expressed in your paper of yesterday, that the attack upon Cabul should be made by the direct route through the Khyber Pass, I will give you my reasons for so thinking more in detail.

Cabul is the seat of Government, and always has been, and still is, the most important city in Afghanistan. The Ameer is there now, or on the road between it and the Indian frontier. The affront passed upon us came from the capital; and if we now shirk the direct attack, and march upon more distant points, our action will be attributed, both in India and among the Afghans, to timidity and a want of confidence in our own power.

In all the struggles in former years among members of the Royal Sudozye family, and also among the various Barukzye Sirdars, the possession of Cabul itself has been considered the chief aim, and it has always conferred a paramount position upon the immediate ruler there, though he may not have possessed any actual authority at Candahar, Herat, or Peshawur.

I do not consider that the loss of Candahar would affect Shere Ali materially. But perhaps the most important point to be considered with reference to the manner in which our attack should be made is the time that will be occupied by the various routes. Cabul is scarce 120 miles from our frontier at Jumrood, and could be reached easily in a month. On the other hand, Quettah is 250 miles from Dera Ghazi (as a correspondent writes in your paper of the 10th), from Quettah to Candahar is 120 miles, and from the last place to Cabul upwards of 300 miles; making a total of 650 miles, which would occupy three months, or perhaps more. For if it be intended that this column should operate through the mountains from Dera Ghazi to the Valley of Shal, the route is almost unknown, and I apprehend there may be considerable difficulty in the transport of guns. I have no knowledge of this road, but I conclude it must pass through the Bolan and reach Quettah via Sirdab; the Bolan, however, is a defile of no difficulty, though fatiguing and very devoid of forage. In 1840 Major Clibborn, with some guns and Bombay Infantry, met with a terrible disaster in the hills between the Indus and the Bolan, in an attempt to relieve the fort of Kahun, which is on the road from Dera Ghazi to Dadur, at the southern corpe of the pass. Captain Bevans, however (I hope I have his name right, but I am writing from memory), the defender of the fortress, subsequently, with his brave garrison, cut his way through the mountains. There cannot be any doubt, if time be an object, that the direct route has very greatly the advantage.

Next let us consider the subject of supplies. If the invasion be made from Peshawur, we have that rich valley and the whole of the upper part of the Punjaub whence to feed our corps d'armée. Moreover, the northern provinces of Afghanistan proper (that is south of the Hindu Koosh) are more productive than the country below Candahar; the valley of the Cabul River, in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad, and also around the capital, the Valley of Maidan, and those of the Kohistan and Logher, are all well cultivated and abound in streams. I do not, of course, desire to indicate that our troops could safely trust to the resources of the country; but it would be of great aid that our march should be through a fruitful district.

Now, as regards a march from the south upon Candahar, Upper Scinde is by no means a productive country—the Bolan Hills are bare rocks—and the country south of Candahar, between the Kojuck Pass and the Durrye River, is sterile and dry. In 1839 our troops suffered much from want of water. We had great difficulty in getting any at all, and the little we did get was filthy and unwholesome. In May, 1839, our army at Candahar was close upon starvation. We had only two days' supply of half rations. In Scinde, too, between Shikarpoor and Bagh, we traversed fifty miles of desert. The country has probably, with the aid of irrigation, been much improved since that time. But, with every allowance for an improved state of affairs, it is certain that supplies for a force operating via Candahar would have to be carried a far longer distance than would be the case if it be determined to advance by the shorter route.

In considering the relative advantages of the two modes of attack, I conclude that our present object is merely to punish, in some manner, the Ameer Shere Ali for the deliberate insult which he has offered to the Indian Government; and to do this we must reach his capital. Every Sovereign of the country, whether Sidozye Padshah or Barukzye Ameer, has ever regarded the possession of Cabul as the source of real power, and they have been often content there to rule for years, while Herat and Candahar have been held by other members of the family. In 1837 Dost Mahomed held Cabul, Ghazni, and the northern provinces only; his brothers held Candahar; and Kamran, son of Shah Mahmood, Douranee (Shah Shoojah's brother), was independent at Herat. The capture of Candahar by the British in 1839 had no influence on the fortunes of Dost Mahomed, but the fall of Ghazni and subsequent near approach of our troops drove him into flight. After his restoration in 1842 he brought Candahar, Herat, Balkh, &c., under subjection, and thus restored the old Empire in nearly its original grandeur; but in the civil wars which succeeded on his death he who possessed Cabul itself was the Ameer, though other cities might be held by various Sirdars.

It is most probable, I think, that Shere Ali, in the event of the capital falling into our hands, would, as his father did in 1839, as Aboul Rahman did, as he himself did when unseated by Mahomed Azim Khan, take flight across the mountains and put himself into communication with his friends beyond the Oxus—I was nearly writing new-made friends, but I believe he made their acquaintance more than ten years since, for about that time the then Ameer (Mahomed Azim) said in Council, "Shere Ali Khan, should he succeed in retaking Cabul, will be accompanied by the Russians; now, I wish to inform you that I have written to the British authorities, asking for assistance against Shere Ali, providing he is assisted by the Russians."

I therefore think that the Ameer would elect this line of flight in preference to falling back on Candahar, especially if we direct a column from Quettah upon the southern capital. Shere Ali once over the Hindu Koosh, it would only be in conformity with occurrences of former years that some powerful Sirdar—a Barukzye most probably—should raise his standard at Candahar on his own behalf. All these points considered, but especially the question of time, I still adhere to my opinion that our attack should be direct upon Cabul, and that other columns should operate from Quettah and through the Koorum Valley; but that our larger corps d'armée, with artillery trains, should proceed only by the well-known routes through the Khyber and Bolan, which are undoubtedly those most commonly traversed by the Afghan traders, on account, I presume, of their known facilities.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

October 11. E. K.

I have reason to believe that under orders of Government the Commissariat cattle which had been collected at Rawul Pindi in some numbers were discharged two or three months since.

GAIETY THEATRE.—The Duke of Connaught, accompanied by a numerous suite, honoured this theatre with his presence on Saturday evening.

SANITARY WORK IN PADDINGTON.—Within the last few years several of the London parishes have themselves undertaken the duty of watering roads and collecting ashes, the summer dust and winter mud which have to be cleared off the thoroughfares. Islington, Bermondsey, Kensington, and other parishes have tried the experiment of dispensing with the services of the contractors, and have found that they are able to save the pockets of the ratepayers and do the work better than it has ever been done before. There has thus been a gain both from an economical and a sanitary point of view. Some two or three years since the vestry of Paddington followed the example thus set; and though from want of sufficient organisation the first year's experiment showed a balance on the wrong side of the account, the second year's working reduced them that success was within their reach. Recently they have taken over their late contractor's plant, consisting of horses, water carts, wheels, barges, steam sifting machines, which have all been adapted to the new system. On Saturday the vestry of the parish—a body of seventy gentlemen, with representatives from many other parishes of the metropolis—inspected the plant, and the alterations which have been made to adapt it to the parish requirements. All the dust carts and water carts were drawn up round Paddington green. The vehicles were in excellent condition, and newly painted, the cattle as fine specimens of heavy-weight horses as one could desire to see, and the men spick-and-span. Some of the dust was received at the wharves on the canal, where they first took away some "slop tanks," or huge timber cisks where liquid and soft road scrapings will be received and solidified sufficiently to enable it to be loaded into barges, and sent off to be utilised as a fertiliser. Access to these "slop tanks," which are on the ground level, is given by an inclined plane and a platform, from which the carts are dumped, the end projecting over the canal, so that dust can be shot at once into barges. The entire system was illustrated practically, and the long array of carts then defiled through the yard to the stables. The party next inspected the steam sifting machinery by which the contents of the parish dust bins are resolved into "breeze" and ashes and loaded directly into barges, the other constituents requiring some manipulation for their separation. Next the stables, the sheds, the saddlers', wheelers', and smiths' shops, lofts, and granaries were inspected, leaving the impression on the mind of the various that everything had been very carefully organised for efficient and economical working. After the tour of inspection the party partook of a collation in the largest "slop tank"—tastefully converted into a tasteful banqueting-room under the presidency of the Vicar. The post-prandial congratulations which followed threw some light on the advantages of a system which, while favouring the principle of local self-government, seems to offer an easy solution to the ratepayers

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THE MORNING POST, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1878.

LONDON, MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1878.

The necessity of basing precautions against the recurring evil of Indian famine upon the results of searching inquiry had been recognised by the Indian Government even before the menace of war came to darken the difficult financial situation, and the consciousness of an added strain upon Indian resources must still further excite the zeal with which our officials have set themselves to work upon the subject. The arduous task of making ends meet in Indian finance has been long admitted and deplored, but of late years that task has become more and more exacting, and the financial question is now fully perceived to be the one question which really overshadows all others. Our authority is supreme over the vast extent of the Indian Empire. With the exception of some suspected centres of hopeless intrigue, contentment with our rule is universal. Against a foreign enemy we can count upon the services of a literally inexhaustible supply of some of the best fighting material in the world. In India we can go anywhere and do anything, and but for one drawback there would not be a shadow to trouble our repose. India is poor, and the expenses of its administration weigh with terrible severity upon its population, in spite of the goodwill of hundreds of experienced officials bent upon saving the people every item of cost which can be spared without detriment to the Imperial Government. The state of agriculture, the danger of famine, now recognised to be a complication regularly likely to recur, forms the main preoccupation of Indian authorities, and it is felt that until we can successfully grapple with the problem here presented not only is progress impossible, but a steady worsening of the situation may be expected with only too much reason. Yet why should India be without a cure for its afflictions? Why should Indian difficulties be insuperable? If there be abuses affecting the development of Indian agriculture they must be as open to a remedy as in other countries. If famine is to be a recurring feature of the agricultural situation means must be forthcoming, on inquiry, by which the mischief of times of scarcity can be minimised and spread by a proper system of precaution and assurance over a sufficient space and period. It is under the influence of this conviction that the Indian Government has set on foot careful inquiries, and has especially addressed itself to the most experienced among the officials who have had to administer tracts of country in times of scarcity and famine. "Famine relief," in the widest sense of the words, forms the burthen of the questions and responses throughout the inquiries, and it is hard to suppose that a considerable accession to our information upon this all-important subject will not be the result of the collection and comparison of so vast a body of intelligent opinion.

Some of the most valuable results of these investigations must necessarily relate to three or four main points which force themselves upon the consideration of every one acquainted with the history of the recent famines in Bengal, the North-West Provinces, and Madras. How are we to ascertain the real amount of food in the country at a period of existing or threatened distress? Who are the persons most likely to conduct with efficiency and knowledge a system of famine relief? In what manner should famine relief be afforded so as to provide the most immediate assistance together with the minimum of resulting waste and pauperisation? What are the general circumstances existing in the permanent condition of a tract of country which make it better or worse calculated to endure and to recover from the strain of a period of distress? It is not on the spur of the moment that we can arrive at a knowledge of the area of food-crops actually existing in a time of distress. It is not every official taken firsthand who is competent to administer the resources of a district to the best advantage in an hour of terrible crisis. There are remedies almost worse than the disease, and ill-considered charity may perpetuate a famine while momentarily relieving it. Finally, an unintelligent system of tax collection, an unhealthy condition of agricultural relations, customs, and abuses which damp self-help, which discourage improvement, which depress industry, which foster poverty in ordinary times—all these things must infallibly aggravate, if they do not even cause very frequently, the calamities which embarrass Government while destroying the people.

Such being the obvious and necessary points of principal interest, it is satisfactory to know that clear and cogent observations have already been made upon all of them, and that the chances of a well-informed and systematic dealing with the great problem are proportionately increased. Indian administration is inevitably bureaucratic, and bureaucracies inevitably tend to routine, but the sense of responsibilities such as those imposed by the precarious nature of Indian finance must overcome the excessive influence of traditional ways of acting; and our zealous administrators at Calcutta will scarcely prove an exception. The absolute necessity of accurately estimating the crop areas from year to year cannot fail to be allowed. We can only effectually relieve famine when we have information, and we can only get information by collecting it. Nor is the difficulty of regularly collecting information on this point more serious than upon many others which have in no way affrighted the Administration. As a report from the district of Sewan expresses it—"With the "income tax, road cess, and license tax, we have "made a number of inquiries into the affairs of "individuals very much more irritating than the "demand from the zemindars, the village put-"warees, and headmen of returns of the area in "each village under each crop in each year. . . . "The expense would be infinitesimal compared "with the advantage of possessing such knowledge. "We have been very much too long working in "the dark." The necessity of "the establishment "of some serious system of statistics carried "on and continuously corrected from year to "year" must then be recognised as the very A B C of relief reform. This fundamental fact established, the question answers itself as to the persons who ought to manage famine relief on the actual outbreak of the dreaded emergency. Of course it is the men who have been conversant by long experience with the statistical condition of the districts in question, and we are thus led to acknowledge the parallel importance of that indispensable safeguard against errors in famine management, namely, the special training of officers in the agricultural facts of special districts. If we entrust an official from the Deccan with the famine management of Behar, there can only be one result. Again, we know the effects of that favourite plan of recent relief administrators, the establishing of so-called "relief works," at which entire populations are gathered at a distance from their homes and occupations, half fed to do worthless work at exorbitant rates, necessitating an immense outlay in supervision and superintendence of all kinds, and with no better result as a rule than to assure the permanent pauperisation of the handful of demoralised survivors. Who that has had personal experience of the "relief work" system in Behar and Madras will not recognise the sad accuracy of the description given by an ex-famine official? "Relief work afforded to "unskilled labourers, including women and "children, presents itself to me as a wild "phantasmagoria of laziness and wretched-"ness, of bad work and high wages, of ex-"pensive supervision in chief and dishonest "overseeing in ordinary, of smug inertness of high "caste men and ragged misery of low caste "women, with all the weary accessories of nominal "rolls and tickets, and checking payments, and "the distance test, and the wage test, "and classifying by physique, and classify-"ing by age, and classifying by sex, and "relief camps, and the cost of hutting per head, "and latrines, and discipline, and what not, in-"cluding daily and weekly 'returns and reports,' "and for all this what return do we get? In "1874 the district engineer of Sarun cal-"culated that the relief works were worth

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"one fourth of what they actually cost; and "I believe this estimate to have been fairly accurate for the whole of Bengal and Behar during "that period." Assuredly it will be strange if the completed inquiries do not suggest some better method of relieving famine than those disastrous failures, the so-called "relief works." Whatever may have been the shortcomings of the past, it is satisfactory to find that measures are now being adopted to solve the difficulty on the only sound basis of abundant and accurate information. If India is to be held, it has often been said, India must be economically governed, and government in the dark could not be economical government.

RUSSIA.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

ST. PETERSBURG, Oct. 10.

I have good reason to believe the British Government will not be so satisfied as is generally imagined here with the reply of this Cabinet to the note addressed with regard to the complications with Affghanistan. Although no positive demand is likely to be made by the Cabinet of St. James for a recall of Colonel Stoljetoff or any other Russian Minister from Cabul, the Czar will be distinctly told that the presence of his agent at the Court of the Ameer must, in case of war with the latter, be interpreted as a sign that he is secretly sympathising with, if not supporting, the arrogant chieftain. The British have learned from the ambiguous policy of Russia during the war with China to be well on their guard against hostile machination on the part of the Muscovites. Certainly no intention prevails of restricting the prerogatives of his Russian majesty, including the despatch or accreditation of Ministers abroad, but the right must be maintained of asking for explanations if these representatives are suspected of scheming and intriguing against the interests of a nation with which Russia pretends to live in peace. Great reticence is still observed by the leading papers in their comments on the war apparently imminent between Great Britain and Affghanistan. An exception to this reserve is, strange to say, made by the *Bourse Gazette*, which during the Turco-Russian campaign kept such an independent, anti-warlike course. In reading one of its last diatribes one could scarcely imagine that its columns, now filled with the bitterest denunciations, were only a few months ago remarkable for the sober tone of their utterances. "If we consider it possible," writes the *Gazette*, "to carry on war and exhaust our means merely for the purpose of obtaining this or that delimitation of the Balkan provinces without any chance of realising our aim, the question is far more important, who is to become possessor of the mountain passes forming the only connection between British India and our Central Asiatic provinces? Only in Affghanistan can a decision be arrived at as to the possibility of defending the East against the unscrupulous pretensions of England. We must maintain our supremacy over the mountain passes of the Hindoo Koosh, or the British will never cease in their meddlesome attempts at intervention in the affairs of Central Asia." The *Gazette* then continues to prove the easy practicability of withstanding a British invasion of Affghanistan:— "As General Stoljetoff's expedition to Cabul has opened the way between Tashkent and Cabul, let us march to the assistance of the Ameer with the 20 battalions of infantry and the cavalry and artillery stationed in Turkestan. With only the tenth part of the troops which England forces us to maintain in the Balkan Peninsula we could reinforce our army in Turkestan and render it invincible against the British. A pretence for war is not wanting, for every one knows that the stroke dealt against the Ameer is in fact aimed by the British at Russia. In its unbounded ambition the English Cabinet now already makes reconciliation with the Ameer dependent on the expulsion of the Russian Resident at Cabul. No passion for war, no vain Chauvinism, no lust for conquest, but merely sound judgment and common sense, dictate these expressions. We are no Don Quixotes, inciting the people for alleged religious motives or longing for national unity to wars of liberation; but the Affghan question so deeply concerns our interests that we must valiantly uphold the cause of the Ameer if we do not wish to be again humbugged by England, as was only so lately the case." I recommend this article, the furious language of which was in translation by no means augmented, but on the contrary moderated, to the earnest attention of the statesmen who have to direct British policy in this highly-important matter.

Government is still extremely annoyed at the proceedings of the International Commission sent to the Rhodope mountains for investigation into the causes of the insurrectionary rising, especially the British and the French delegates are severely attacked for their pretended one-sided and hostile opinions on the Russian army. The *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*, the organ of the Foreign-office, has in a very bitter article once more returned to the subject. The *résumé* drawn up by Mr. Challet, the French representative, is denounced as a network of lies and misinterpretations, utterly inadequate for the formation of some lasting work. With a significant hint England is reminded of the want of tact displayed by her delegate in his attacks on the discipline and proper behaviour of a victorious army still encamped in the territories of the late enemy, and so entirely in their power. I have good reason to assume that the backwardness of the Austrian and German commissioners in signing the final report was caused by a direct appeal of the Czar to the Emperors Wilhelm and Francis Joseph, whom he implored not to sanction such slanderous attacks on his troops as originally proposed by the commission. The German delegate, Consul Müller, who was harshly rebuffed for having put his name to the protocols so objectionable to the Czar, refused point blank to subscribe the report, whilst his Austrian colleague shuffled out of the duty on plea of ill health.

General Trepoff is expected to return on the 13th inst. Rumours assert that the Czar intends appointing him Governor of St. Petersburg, with the fullest authority to suppress the highly dangerous agitation of the Nihilists. In connection with these reports statements have been published to the effect that the whole third department of his Majesty's own Chancellery will be abolished and replaced by a regular Ministry of Police, as chief of which General Drenteln, just nominated to succeed the late General Mesentzoff, is principally named. A special commission is now at work defining the duties and prerogatives of the new Ministry.

Lieutenant-General Tschertkoff II., Governor of Kieff, Podolia, and Volhynia, has been also entrusted with the command of all the troops garrisoned in his district. Count Lewaschoff, until recently Prefect of Odessa, has retired from active service in consequence of the reprimand addressed to him by the Czar for his alleged too great leniency towards the Nihilists. His Majesty was so angry with the Count that he ordered him to go abroad for a certain time. Lewaschoff has been succeeded in his office as Prefect of Odessa by Major-General Heinz, formerly governor of Turgaisk, who has the reputation of being a very harsh and unbending official.

OUR FIRST INVASION OF AFFGHANISTAN.

"Anglo-Ind" writes in the *Observer* as follows:— "I have alluded in a former letter to the mischievous effects of the sensational style of writing history, especially when applied to the first Affghan war. Some of these effects are apparent in the attempts made by a certain class of writers to frighten the more timid amongst us by exaggerated accounts of the evil that befel a portion of our army 36 years ago in the defiles between Cabul and Gundamuck, and by perverted versions of the events and motives which led to our former interference in the affairs of Affghanistan. Exaggerations and errors, if not corrected, repeat themselves to all time as historical truths, and a tale, it is proverbially known, never loses by the telling. This is well exemplified in the reproduction of old blunders and the manufacture of new ones by careless or incompetent compilers of pamphlets on Affghanistan.

"Briefly put, the motives that drag us into the present war are the same as those which dragged us to Cabul in

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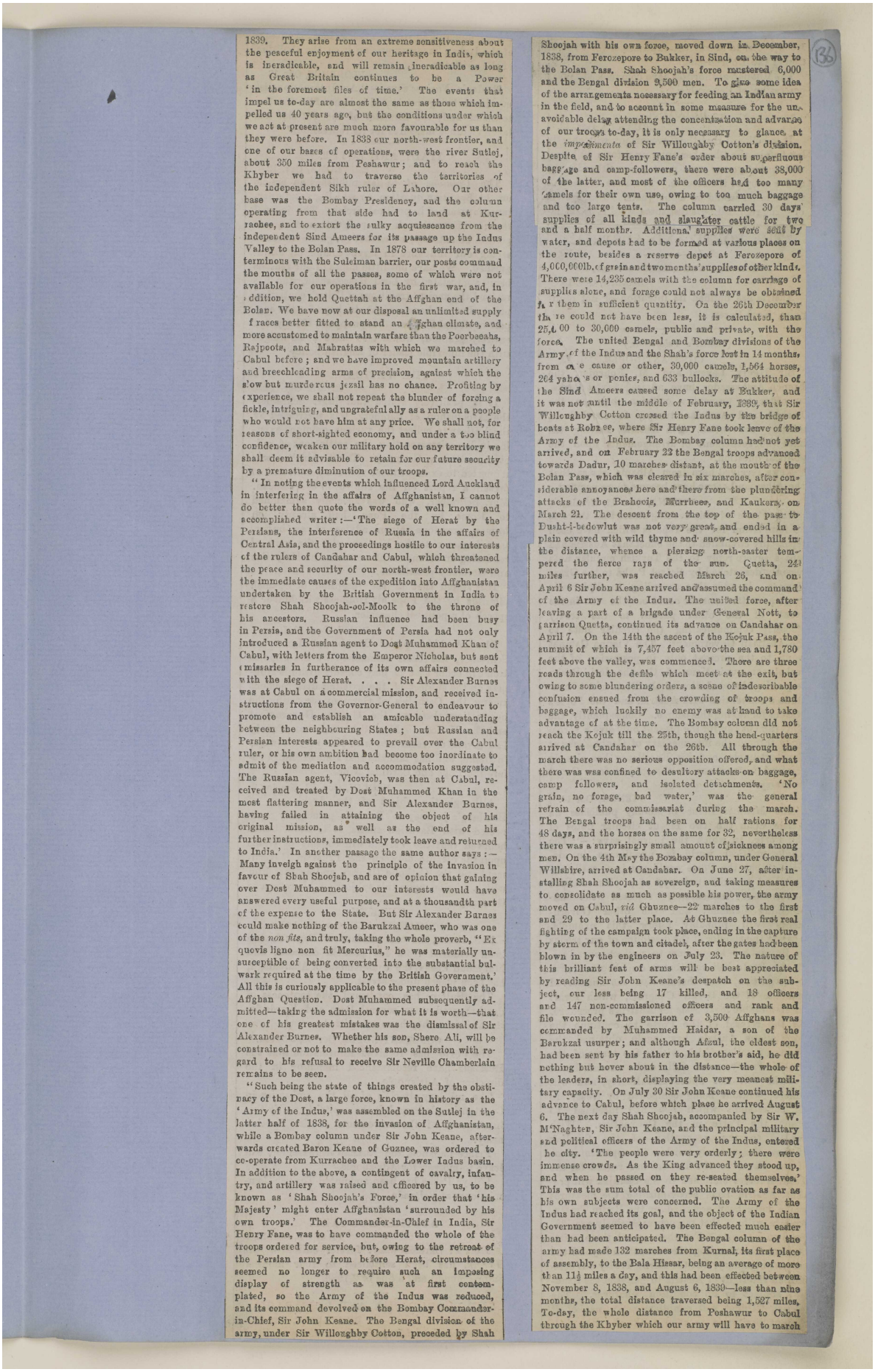

1839. They arise from an extreme sensitiveness about the peaceful enjoyment of our heritage in India, which is ineradicable, and will remain ineradicable as long as Great Britain continues to be a Power 'in the foremost files of time.' The events that impel us to-day are almost the same as those which impelled us 40 years ago, but the conditions under which we act at present are much more favourable for us than they were before. In 1838 our north-west frontier, and one of our bases of operations, were the river Sutlej, about 350 miles from Peshawur; and to reach the Khyber we had to traverse the territories of the independent Sikh ruler of Lahore. Our other base was the Bombay Presidency, and the column operating from that side had to land at Kurrachee, and to extort the sulky acquiescence from the independent Sind Ameers for its passage up the Indus Valley to the Bolan Pass. In 1878 our territory is conterminous with the Suleiman barrier, our posts command the mouths of all the passes, some of which were not available for our operations in the first war, and, in addition, we hold Quettah at the Affghan end of the Bolan. We have now at our disposal an unlimited supply of races better fitted to stand an Affghan climate, and more accustomed to maintain warfare than the Poorbeeahs, Rajpoots, and Mahrattas with which we marched to Cabul before; and we have improved mountain artillery and breechloading arms of precision, against which the slow but murderous jezail has no chance. Profiting by experience, we shall not repeat the blunder of forcing a fickle, intriguing, and ungrateful ally as a ruler on a people who would not have him at any price. We shall not, for reasons of short-sighted economy, and under a too blind confidence, weaken our military hold on any territory we shall deem it advisable to retain for our future security by a premature diminution of our troops.

"In noting the events which influenced Lord Auckland in interfering in the affairs of Affghanistan, I cannot do better than quote the words of a well known and accomplished writer:—'The siege of Herat by the Persians, the interference of Russia in the affairs of Central Asia, and the proceedings hostile to our interests of the rulers of Candahar and Cabul, which threatened the peace and security of our north-west frontier, were the immediate causes of the expedition into Affghanistan undertaken by the British Government in India to restore Shah Shoojah-ool-Moolk to the throne of his ancestors. Russian influence had been busy in Persia, and the Government of Persia had not only introduced a Russian agent to Dost Muhammed Khan of Cabul, with letters from the Emperor Nicholas, but sent emissaries in furtherance of its own affairs connected with the siege of Herat. . . . Sir Alexander Burnes was at Cabul on a commercial mission, and received instructions from the Governor-General to endeavour to promote and establish an amicable understanding between the neighbouring States; but Russian and Persian interests appeared to prevail over the Cabul ruler, or his own ambition had become too inordinate to admit of the mediation and accommodation suggested. The Russian agent, Vicovich, was then at Cabul, received and treated by Dost Muhammed Khan in the most flattering manner, and Sir Alexander Burnes, having failed in attaining the object of his original mission, as well as the end of his further instructions, immediately took leave and returned to India.' In another passage the same author says:—Many inveigh against the principle of the invasion in favour of Shah Shoojah, and are of opinion that gaining over Dost Muhammed to our interests would have answered every useful purpose, and at a thousandth part of the expense to the State. But Sir Alexander Burnes could make nothing of the Barukzai Ameer, who was one of the *non fits*, and truly, taking the whole proverb, "Ex quovis ligno non fit Mercurius," he was materially unsurceptible of being converted into the substantial bulwark required at the time by the British Government.' All this is curiously applicable to the present phase of the Affghan Question. Dost Muhammed subsequently admitted—taking the admission for what it is worth—that one of his greatest mistakes was the dismissal of Sir Alexander Burnes. Whether his son, Shere Ali, will be constrained or not to make the same admission with regard to his refusal to receive Sir Neville Chamberlain remains to be seen.

"Such being the state of things created by the obstinacy of the Dost, a large force, known in history as the 'Army of the Indus,' was assembled on the Sutlej in the latter half of 1838, for the invasion of Affghanistan, while a Bombay column under Sir John Keane, afterwards created Baron Keane of Guznee, was ordered to co-operate from Kurrachee and the Lower Indus basin. In addition to the above, a contingent of cavalry, infantry, and artillery was raised and officered by us, to be known as 'Shah Shoojah's Force,' in order that 'his Majesty' might enter Affghanistan 'surrounded by his own troops.' The Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Henry Fane, was to have commanded the whole of the troops ordered for service, but, owing to the retreat of the Persian army from before Herat, circumstances seemed no longer to require such an imposing display of strength as was at first contemplated, so the Army of the Indus was reduced, and its command devolved on the Bombay Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Keane. The Bengal division of the army, under Sir Willoughby Cotton, preceded by Shah Shoojah with his own force, moved down in December, 1838, from Ferozepore to Bukker, in Sind, on the way to the Bolan Pass. Shah Shoojah's force mustered 6,000 and the Bengal division 9,500 men. To give some idea of the arrangements necessary for feeding an Indian army in the field, and to account in some measure for the unavoidable delay attending the concentration and advance of our troops to-day, it is only necessary to glance at the *impedimenta* of Sir Willoughby Cotton's division. Despite of Sir Henry Fane's order about superfluous baggage and camp-followers, there were about 38,000 of the latter, and most of the officers had too many camels for their own use, owing to too much baggage and too large tents. The column carried 30 days' supplies of all kinds and slaughter cattle for two and a half months. Additional supplies were sent by water, and depots had to be formed at various places on the route, besides a reserve depot at Ferozepore of 4,000,000lb. of grain and two months' supplies of other kinds. There were 14,235 camels with the column for carriage of supplies alone, and forage could not always be obtained for them in sufficient quantity. On the 26th December there could not have been less, it is calculated, than 25,000 to 30,000 camels, public and private, with the force. The united Bengal and Bombay divisions of the Army of the Indus and the Shah's force lost in 14 months, from one cause or other, 30,000 camels, 1,564 horses, 264 yahoos or ponies, and 633 bullocks. The attitude of the Sind Ameers caused some delay at Bukker, and it was not until the middle of February, 1839, that Sir Willoughby Cotton crossed the Indus by the bridge of boats at Rohree, where Sir Henry Fane took leave of the Army of the Indus. The Bombay column had not yet arrived, and on February 22 the Bengal troops advanced towards Dadur, 10 marches distant, at the mouth of the Bolan Pass, which was cleared in six marches, after considerable annoyance here and there from the plundering attacks of the Brahoeis, Murrhees, and Kaukers, on March 21. The descent from the top of the pass to Dusht-i-bedowlut was not very great, and ended in a plain covered with wild thyme and snow-covered hills in the distance, whence a piercing north-easter tempered the fierce rays of the sun. Quetta, 24 miles further, was reached March 26, and on April 6 Sir John Keane arrived and assumed the command of the Army of the Indus. The united force, after leaving a part of a brigade under General Nott, to garrison Quetta, continued its advance on Candahar on April 7. On the 14th the ascent of the Kojuk Pass, the summit of which is 7,457 feet above the sea and 1,780 feet above the valley, was commenced. There are three roads through the defile which meet at the exit, but owing to some blundering orders, a scene of indescribable confusion ensued from the crowding of troops and baggage, which luckily no enemy was at hand to take advantage of at the time. The Bombay column did not reach the Kojuk till the 25th, though the head-quarters arrived at Candahar on the 26th. All through the march there was no serious opposition offered, and what there was was confined to desultory attacks on baggage, camp followers, and isolated detachments. 'No grain, no forage, bad water,' was the general refrain of the commissariat during the march. The Bengal troops had been on half rations for 48 days, and the horses on the same for 32, nevertheless there was a surprisingly small amount of sickness among men. On the 4th May the Bombay column, under General Willshire, arrived at Candahar. On June 27, after installing Shah Shoojah as sovereign, and taking measures to consolidate as much as possible his power, the army moved on Cabul, *vid* Ghuznee—22 marches to the first and 29 to the latter place. At Ghuznee the first real fighting of the campaign took place, ending in the capture by storm of the town and citadel, after the gates had been blown in by the engineers on July 23. The nature of this brilliant feat of arms will be best appreciated by reading Sir John Keane's despatch on the subject, our loss being 17 killed, and 18 officers and 147 non-commissioned officers and rank and file wounded. The garrison of 3,500 Affghans was commanded by Muhammed Haidar, a son of the Barukzai usurper; and although Afzul, the eldest son, had been sent by his father to his brother's aid, he did nothing but hover about in the distance—the whole of the leaders, in short, displaying the very meanest military capacity. On July 30 Sir John Keane continued his advance to Cabul, before which place he arrived August 6. The next day Shah Shoojah, accompanied by Sir W. M'Naghten, Sir John Keane, and the principal military and political officers of the Army of the Indus, entered the city. 'The people were very orderly; there were immense crowds. As the King advanced they stood up, and when he passed on they re-seated themselves.' This was the sum total of the public ovation as far as his own subjects were concerned. The Army of the Indus had reached its goal, and the object of the Indian Government seemed to have been effected much easier than had been anticipated. The Bengal column of the army had made 132 marches from Kurnal, its first place of assembly, to the Bala Hissar, being an average of more than 11½ miles a day, and this had been effected between November 8, 1838, and August 6, 1839—less than nine months, the total distance traversed being 1,527 miles. To-day, the whole distance from Peshawur to Cabul through the Khyber which our army will have to march

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is only 186 miles. Though Sir John Keane's troops had much to contend with owing to various changes of temperature, the necessity of living for a long time on half rations, and from the harassing hostility of the plundering tribes on the way, no troops probably ever showed a better spirit or a better appearance at the end of their long march, or committed so few acts calculated to prejudice the populace against them.

"While the army under Sir John Keane was moving with Shah Shoojah through the Bolan by Quetta and Candahar on the Affghan capital, a force composed entirely of natives, but officered by us, was directed to advance under Sir Claude Wade through the Khyber with the Shahzada Timoor, Shah Shoojah's heir-apparent. Two companies of British Sepoys formed part of Wade's force, which consisted of about 4,800 men and four guns. A Sikh contingent, 6,000 strong with 12 guns, was to cooperate with him, under General Ventura, one of Runjeet Singh's European officers; but eventually a Sikh Sirdar went in command of it, the political and military control of the united contingents being vested in Wade who left Lahore for Peshawur in December, 1838. A Sikh army of observation, under Koonwur Nao Nihal Singh, a grandson of Runjeet, was also assembled on the frontier at Peshawur. The Shahzada's contingent was organised by the middle of May, 1839, when Sir John Keane had reached Candahar; but as any advance on Cabul would have been premature before authentic news had reached Wade of the near proximity of the Army of the Indus to the capital, he did not break up from the Peshawur end of the Khyber till July 22. Besides the Affghan garrison in Ali Musjeed there were 2,500 men, with 14 guns, under the Dost's second son, Muhammed Akbar Khan, at Jellalabad. The action of all the Khyberees was uncertain, but those nearest the Peshawur end had been gained over to our side, and were employed in watching the two roads leading into the defile for us. The Khyber is about 28 miles in length, and Ali Musjeed is seven miles from the Peshawur end of the pass. Excepting the valley of Lalabeg, six miles long, and two miles beyond Ali Musjeed, the remaining 22 miles can be commanded by jingals (wall pieces), or even by the jezails of the enemy, and in many places by a common musket of the old pattern. For the first four miles the road is very contracted, and the hills on each side are nearly perpendicular; to the left, two miles up the pass, there is a road which leads to the top of the hills. At about five miles and a half is a tower or Jaghir on the right, which could fire on any enemy moving by either road. From this tower to Ali Musjeed is one mile and a half; on the left is the range of hills by which the fort is approached; on the right is the hill which runs parallel to, and which is commanded by the fort. The tower above mentioned was occupied by the enemy, and Ali Musjeed was strongly garrisoned. There were breastworks thrown up on the hills, so that it was necessary to move slowly, and at each halt to stockade the troops, and the left was the point which required the most exact vigilance. By cautious and skilfully-planned movements Wade drove the enemy from point to point, between the 22d and 26th of August, to Ali Musjeed, which was found evacuated on the morning of the 27th. Repeated attempts were made by the chiefs to induce Muhammed Akbar to join them in opposing Wade's advance, but without success. The total loss of killed and wounded on our side was 180. On September 3 Wade arrived at Cabul with no further opposition to speak of.

"The whole of the available troops for operations in Affghanistan numbered about 54,000 men, including 15,000 composing the Sikh army of observation at Peshawur. The Bengal column of the army of the Indus was 9,500 strong, the Bombay column 5,600, together about 15,000 men. Besides these there was a reserve division at Ferozepore under General Duncan, 4,850 strong, and another reserve division under Brigadier Valiant at Kurrachee, 3,000 strong. Shah Shoojah's force amounted to 6,000 men, and the Shahzada's to 4,850. The Sikh contingent co-operating with the last numbered 6,000. The actual number, however, of British-Indian troops that invaded Affghanistan by the Khyber and Bolan Passes did not exceed 23,000 men and about 66 guns."

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"Pall Mall Gazette" Oct 14th

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AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times*, remarking upon the announcement that the Viceroy's emissary to Cabul is returning with the Ameer's reply to the Viceroy's letter, observes that it is still open to the Ameer to disclaim the deeds of his subordinate and to make reparation for them by a full submission to our demands. That he will choose this course is possible, but it is far from likely. There will be work found for our soldiers in any case. If the Ameer continues obstinate, it will be necessary to bring him to reason by force. If he yields without fighting, we shall still need men to occupy the new line of frontier which we intend to substitute for our present one, or to hold the advanced stations at which we may insist that our presence is to be permitted. At the present moment there is no news either way. But if we are forced to make war on Afghanistan, we shall probably set to work in the slow, safe way in which we conducted our campaign in Abyssinia. We shall have a more difficult task before us, but one easily within our power to bring with certainty to the same successful issue. We shall lose nothing by waiting a few weeks, or even a few months. It would be better, on any calculation, to allow the most erroneous ideas to prevail for a time over the imaginative and unreasoning East rather than to furnish good ground for a slighting estimate by attempting some feat which we failed, for any reason, to carry through. Small, too, as the chance may be that the Ameer will give way before we begin actually to move, it would be unwise to destroy it by moving immediately. In one way, and in one only, can our hand be forced. If the Ameer attacks any of the hill tribes beyond our own frontier which have declared themselves friendly to us, it will become our duty to support them at once and at almost any hazard. There would really be no choice left us in the matter.

The *Daily News* says it may be that the replies of the Ameer will afford the Viceroy some good ground for believing that Shere Ali has no real desire to break with the English Government. If it should appear that the Ameer's conduct has arisen out of any misunderstanding of this kind, it is to be hoped that every opportunity may be given for the setting right of the misconception. There is not, on the part of the English public, the faintest inclination to force a quarrel on the Ameer; and if he gives any evidence of an anxiety to save us from this necessity, we ought to be magnanimous enough to welcome it. To refuse to Shere Ali any opportunity of explanation and arrangement now would only be to justify the suspicion which there is too much reason to believe occupied his mind from the first—the suspicion that his doom had been resolved upon.

The difficulty of providing transport for the army now being massed on the North West Frontier for the invasion of Afghanistan, reported this morning by the *Times* correspondent at Calcutta, reveals a want of foresight surely? The increasing difficulty of providing transport for a large army has been known in India for years. So long ago as 1873 the most important witness examined before the Committee of the House of Commons on East Indian Finance pointed out that to get together a number of bullocks and camels sufficient for the commissariat train of a large force was becoming a more and more serious task in India. Whereas formerly thousands of bullocks and camels could be had at short notice, nowadays long preparation is needed to this end. How much preparation has been made for this grave undertaking we can now see. And yet the rebuff administered at Ali Musjid was actually expected. It had been foreseen as probable, in one shape or another, for months. Whatever our stammering ministerial apologists may say here at home, in Asia it is seen clearly that the interests of our empire in the East—and of our trade with the East too—are being staked on the issue of this advance into Afghanistan. Blundering now may have to be remedied hereafter a cost most unpleasant to contemplate.

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and often spreads to the boldest and bravest as quickly as to the weak and timid; but it is necessary to provide that even the panic-stricken shall be duly protected. Not only should the outlets from a theatre or music-hall be easy of access and sufficient in number, but they should always be available at a minute's notice. Not a door should be needlessly locked when once the entertainment has begun; nor should any barricade like that which is said to have wrought such mischief at Liverpool be allowed to stay in its place when the audience are once seated. No partitions or other obstacles should be permitted to interrupt the way to any main exit; and each portal should be so constructed that it can be thrust open by any person without an instant's delay, and used by the crowd without difficulty or danger. Above all, the upper parts of the house, including the galleries and balconies, should be fully provided with staircases. There can be no reason for confining the public in any building so that in the event of an alarm, whether false or real, they are practically entrapped and rendered liable to the gravest of injuries. The terrible scene which has just been enacted in Liverpool should result in the adoption of such steps for the future as to render the recurrence of a similar spectacle as nearly impossible as can reasonably be expected.

The *Standard* says the lesson which the catastrophe teaches is as intelligible as the circumstances which led to the shocking result are simple. The whole loss of life was evidently due to the position between two swing doors of an upright beam or post upon which they closed. Had the post not been there, the doors would have swung open, or have been burst, leaving a channel of egress some five feet and a half in width. Under such circumstances it is doubtful whether, even had the panic been worse than it was, life need have been sacrificed. Let us be again warned in time, and insist in future that all places of public amusement shall have exits so wide than no crowd can block them. Meantime there is yet a further lesson which each member of the public cannot too strongly impress both upon himself and upon others. Under such circumstances as those at Liverpool, be we where we may, our one hope is to remain calm. Should we be in the direct path of the crowd itself escape is hopeless, and we must take our fate. Otherwise our sole chance consists in masterly inactivity. We have only to ask ourselves, supposing that the theatre in which we are sitting has taken fire, how long will it be before the flames reach us, and how long the theatre itself will take to empty, to see at once that, if we but remain for ten minutes where we are, we shall most probably be able to make our way safely out; while, if we allow ourselves to be swept into the crowd, our lives are at once in the most imminent peril.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA'S VIEWS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—The nonsense talked by ordinary members of Parliament about India may, while we still have an independent as well as free press, be safely treated with the contempt of silence; but Mr. Adam, the Opposition "whip," is a man of sound political training and special Indian experience, whose opinion has weight with members in a division; and therefore whatever he may say on this subject deserves attention. Now, he is reported to have said the other day that it was most dangerous "our venturing beyond that impregnable mountain barrier which bounded our Indian Empire." I would ask, What impregnable mountain barrier bounds our Eastern Empire against Afghanistan, that is, against Russia? The *Spectator* has, indeed, during the last three or four years repeatedly asserted that Afghanistan lies beyond the Himalayas; but now, in order to support its argument for throwing the cost of the present war on India, it states truly that it lies within the Indian mountain girdle of the Himalayas (the Hindoo Koosh section)—a fact which, however, does not bring it one whit within our Indian "frontiers." Afghanistan, the Cabul Valley, is but the upper dominating section of the Indus basin; and strategically and historically, as well as physically, part and parcel of India. Afghanistan is, in fact, the India of Alexander, who never, in an easterly direction, got very much beyond Afghanistan. It was always part and parcel of India in Buddhistic and early Hindoo times; and the first Mahommedan dynasties of India not only conquered but ruled India from Afghanistan. The Cabul Valley, in fact, so completely commands the lower valley of the Indus, the plains of the Punjaub and Scinde, that the very presence of a powerful and aggressive enemy in Afghanistan would compel us either to dislodge him or abandon Peshawur and fortify the line of the Indus—an impossible frontier, strategically, financially, and morally. A Berlin telegram lately informed us that this is the opinion of the highest military experts of Berlin and St. Petersburg. It is said to be their opinion that the mere presence of a Russian agent in Cabul will force us at length to fall back from Peshawur behind the Indus, a frontier which sumless millions could not convert into a military defence, and our retirement on which would be morally equivalent to an abandonment of all pretence of empire in India. Mr. Adam, referring to his residence in India, says: "I was brought up in ideas of Indian statesmanship of a greater age than the [present"—this age of the infatuated school of "Perish-India" politicians! Now I had the pleasure of being intimately cognizant, from January, 1855, to September, 1858, of Mr. Adam's surroundings as private secretary to Lord Elphinstone. He, moreover, was private secretary from 1853 to 1858. Well, the ideas of Indian foreign policy during that period were the ideas of John Jacob, Frere, and Rawlinson, on which the Government of India is now tardily acting—the ideas in which Mr. Adam was certainly brought up in Bombay, but which he now condemns. John Jacob and Sir Henry Rawlinson's views and opinions have since been collected in books, and can now be read by every one. Sir Bartle Frere's still remain scattered through unedited letters and official minutes; but they are known to be essentially the same. The only eminent authority on the other side is Lord Napier of Magdala. He was always opposed to the occupation of Quetta, for he never believed in the possibility of a Russian invasion of India. But his views have gradually been changed since then; and what they are at present I am fortunately able to state almost in his own words, spoken in 1876. He said:—"In the first place, instead of an army marched against India, we find *Russia itself advanced towards our empire*, not by an expedition, but by absorption of territory. Her bold advances have greatly alarmed our neighbours and tributaries, who regard our quiescence as timidity. By remaining shut within our border we leave all that is outside necessarily to fall within the views of a bold advancing Power, and our own people inside and our neighbours outside are losing confidence in us. I have therefore come to the conclusion that we have remained quiescent long enough. I am therefore of opinion now that there is less danger in advancing than sitting still. If all had been done that might have been done during the last ten years, India would have been much more secure; but the necessary measures have been neglected because the money was withheld. Our quiescence has actually led the Russian papers to ask what we mean by going to Khelat or Quetta—*that fact alone is sufficient to vindicate our right to be there.*"

It seems to me that this citation may be useful just now, in answer not only to Mr. Adam, but to some other authorities who agree with him.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October 12. IRAN.

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"Times" Dec 15th

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AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—It is, no doubt, desirable that in so important a matter as the Afghanistan *fiasco* there should be ample and unrestricted discussion, and the letters of such men as Earl Grey and Lord Lawrence should receive careful consideration.

So much, however, has already been said and written as regards the past that it would be presumptuous in me to offer any observations on what has ceased to be practically important, and it would, I venture to think, be the part of true wisdom to say, with Mrs. Malaprop, "No more anticipations of the past; let all our retrospections be to the future."

Whether, therefore, the "masterly inactivity" of bygone days was wise or unwise might, I apprehend, be left to the region of history, and not be suffered to interfere with the vital question now before the country; and on this point I would wish to say a few words.

Having had some opportunity of watching the movements of the Oriental world, and having, with many others, observed with pain the terrible evils which have been brought upon us by ignorance of the native character, I would desire to point out that prevalent and unfailing characteristic which invariably actuates them in their dealings with others—the natives of India can neve understand conciliation or compromise. Whether in a petty case before a Court of Justice, a social dispute, or a matter of peace or war, conciliation is regarded as fear, compromise as a confession of weakness.

For England, after the public and offensive insult offered by Shere Ali, to exhibit the slightest hesitation or to enter into any conciliatory negotiations would at once be regarded, not only by the Ameer himself, but by the people and Princes of India, as a mark of weakness, a fear of Russia, a distrust of her own power, and a confession of inferiority. This is our real danger, infinitely more serious than any difficulty or disaster which we may encounter in the struggle with Afghanistan; and if this is passed over, forgotten, or set aside under a sentimental and misplaced theory of maudlin conciliation, our *prestige* is gone and our ultimate defeat only a question of time.

I sincerely trust that the excellent spirit in which you have discussed this vital question will counteract the well-meaning, but unwise and inappropriate, suggestions made in other quarters. I am, yours obediently,

WILLIAM TAYLOR, late Commissioner of Patna.

AFGHANISTAN.

We published yesterday the details as far as they are yet gazetted of the Expeditionary Force destined for service in Afghanistan. They call for some comment, inasmuch as the traditional organization of an Indian field force has been entirely abandoned, and a new and as yet quite untried system supersedes that which for generations has won for us an unchecked career of victory throughout the length and breadth of Hindostan.

The Northern or Khyber column is evidently not alluded to in the details which have as yet reached us, and that one we may assume will be the most powerful of all the Divisions. Taking the other details we find that the Quettah and Kuram columns, together with General Donald Stewart's reserve, comprise 14 batteries with a siege train, five squadrons of British Cavalry, 18 squadrons of Native Cavalry, four battalions of British with 17 of Native Infantry, or, in round numbers, 84 field guns, 3,300 Cavalry, with 11,000 Infantry. Here we find that the usual proportion of Artillery to other branches, which in Europe varies from three to four guns per thousand, has been increased to six per thousand,—a change we are disposed to acquiesce in, for although the actual effect of artillery fire is absurdly small, and although its moral effect on European troops, when once seasoned to the fray, is absolutely *nil*, yet Orientals, more especially hill men, hold it in such dread that a few well pitched shells, even if no casualties occur, will clear a ridge as if by magic. The improved accuracy and increased range of guns has modified the principles of hill warfare. In former days it was necessary to crown the heights dominating a pass with skirmishers, and so by the aid of infantry clear a way for the guns toiling in the ravines below. That, however, was in the days when from 1,000 to 1,200 yards was the *maximum* range of field artillery. Now, however, when our rifled cannon throw with accuracy to a distance of from 3,000 to 4,000 yards, these conditions have been completely changed; a position can generally be found in the pass below whence the commanding heights can be thoroughly searched out by shell fire long before the infantry flanking parties arrive within rifle range. Their work then is much accelerated and the casualties consequently lessened. Our gunners will not find themselves (unless the rumours of unofficial warfare take a much more decided shape than we imagine) opposed to guns worthy of their steel, and we imagine that the principal *rôle* they will have to play will be clearing heights at long ranges and high elevations. Much as we are inclined to approve the preponderance of artillery in the expeditionary force, we cannot but regret the total disproportion of British to Native Infantry. Hitherto it has been accepted as an axiom in Indian warfare that an Infantry Brigade should consist of one British to two Native battalions, and this plan has received the sanction of usage and the stamp of success. Now, however, in defiance of past experience, and in obedience to no new principle that we can hear of, we learn that no less than 17 Native Infantry Corps are included in the forces detailed for service, and that there are but four British regiments to form the backbone of the army. This truly is carrying the principle that a little leaven leaveneth the whole to an extreme, and is so opposed to the hereditary custom of the Indian Government that we cannot but hope that the details of the army have not yet been gazetted *in extenso*. It is folly to ignore the fact that we hold India simply and solely by the aid of those 60,000 British soldiers cantoned there, that without them the 120,000 native troops would be as useless as a steam vessel without her engines. In case of any difficulty, any reverse, it is the thin red line which promptly puts matters on their proper basis. Even when matters are going on in a straightforward manner, however excellent our native troops may be, there is no gainsaying the fact that without British officers to lead them, British bayonets to support them, they would be valueless. Can it be denied that the heroic gallantry of our Line Corps at Chillianwallah saved the day? A perusal of the casualty rolls of that engagement shows on whom the brunt of the engagement fell, how the tide of Sikh success was stemmed. In like manner, in the Mutiny, gallantly as the loyal natives fought at Lucknow, was it not the 32d that really held the place? So again at Delhi; without the skeleton battalions of white faces which lined the ridge would it have been possible for the Punjabis to have stormed the city? We maintain not. There are men in India, now at Simla, who well remember the worth—the inestimable worth—of a handful of British soldiers in 1857. Let them not be deluded into the fact that things have changed since then, and that because in outward show our Native Army is smarter, more mobile, more advanced in the theory of war, therefore it is the more to be relied on in time of actual trouble than it was 20 years ago.

We are glad to note that the Line Regiments destined to join the Army of Invasion have been drawn from stations quite unconnected with the frontier. For instance, the 17th Foot was, at the time of receiving its order to move, at Kuldunah in the Murree Hills; the 18th were at Ferozepore; the 59th at Dugshae; and the 60th Rifles at Meerut. In moving these corps the Government are avoiding the error of weakening frontier stations in the vicinity of which hostilities are likely to occur, or those head-quarters of religious fanaticism which require especial watching. In like manner the Native Cavalry Regiments are drawn from Mian Meer, Mooltan, and Jhelum; the Native Infantry from Jullundur, Mooltan, Sialkot, Dhurmsala, Almora, Jhelum, and Tahagaon—all stations on the natural line of reserve. Doubtless the Khyber column will be chiefly composed of troops from Peshawur and its legitimate supports of Nowshera and Rawul Pindi, while troops from Umballa and even further south will be pushed up to fill their places; so that our border line will be amply defended after the advance of the 25,000 to 30,000 men destined to take part in the second Afghan war. Of the troops now under orders for Cabul there are some regiments which took part in the former campaign: the 17th Foot stormed Ghuznee, and wear the tiger on their caps in token of the gallant service they have performed in our Indian Empire. The 12th Bengal Native Infantry are still styled the Khelat-i-Ghilzae Regiment, and under that designation earned lasting fame in the last great war. We still are in hopes that when the complete details of the force are published we shall find the British element increased to the strength usually considered necessary in Indian campaigns. Sir Frederick Haines has had experience of Eastern warfare; he knows full well the value to be attached to the Line regiments in a mixed force. Lord Lytton, too is surrounded by men whose schooling has been of the sterner sort, men like Sir Sam Browne, Sir James Brind, and others, who can fully appreciate the difficulties even of a war with a paltry Oriental potentate, and we may rest assured that a full proportion of British corps will be made available for the forward move, even if extra troops have to be asked for from England.

The fact, however, of stopping the ordinary reliefs will increase the strength of our English troops in India by about 6,000 men, among whom will be four complete Line battalions. These, of course, will release an equal number from purely police duties, and so enable the Commander-in-Chief to strengthen the army in the field in a not inconsiderable manner. When we recollect that battalions from many places in Northern India can easily be spared for field duties, there is every reason to hope the organization of the Army of Invasion may be completed to the satisfaction of all who take a pride in the prompt success of our military movements. We are not overstating the case when in asserting that

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the Line Regiments at Rawul Pindi, Nowshera, Sialkot, Dugshae, Subathoo, Chukrata, Ranikhet, Mooltan, Meerut, and Ferozepore can easily be spared. These, together with the four now under orders in ordinary course of relief from England, would give a force of 15 British Infantry battalions; made up into brigades of the usual strength, this would give a total of 7,500 British, with 15,000 Native Infantry, which, together with a proper proportion of English and Native Cavalry, Sappers and Miners, and the Artillery already detailed, would provide a force large enough to carry all before it with the most consummate ease.

We must again caution the public against rumours baseless as they are absurd. We had ample proof last week of the ease with which war news is concocted. Firing in the Khyber was promptly converted into a march on Daka, an intended assault on Ali Musjid. Fortunately for the reputation of Indian Generals, the difficulties before them are thoroughly appreciated and will be well provided against. The Government of India are very unlikely to divulge their plans prematurely, and Sir F. Haines is not the stamp of General to run any chance of failure by sanctioning useless and impracticable enterprises, however much they may commend themselves to the few who seek their own honour and glory, and who do not consider the effects of every single action in its bearing on the whole campaign, but simply as it affects their own individual merits. There are some doubtless who advocated the bold idea of an assault on Ali Musjid only for the purpose of wiping out the fancied disgrace its commandant had inflicted on us. Fortunately more sober counsels than these prevailed at Simla, and now the fall of Ali Musjid will be but the immediate prelude to the downfall of Shere Ali's power, not a spasmodic act of revenge calculated to irritate the Afghans without being of any advantage to us.

"Standard" Oct 15th

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

(By Eastern Company's Cable.)
(From our special correspondent.)
BOMBAY, Monday.

It is reported that Yakoob Khan, while proceeding to Ali Musjid, stabbed a high officer who had been deputed to act, conjointly with others, as his escort. He was consequently taken back as a prisoner to Cabul.

The Nawab Ghoolam returns *viâ* Kurrum.

RUSSIA AND CABUL.

(From our own correspondent.)
ST. PETERSBURG, October 7.

The Afghan question, though extensively discussed of late by the Russian Press, has had comparatively little hold on Russian society. The Press, however, has taken up the question of Austrian and Afghan politics in good earnest, and hardly a day passes without every one of the chief Petersburg and Moscow papers devoting a leader to the result of military operations in Bosnia, or to Afghan affairs, or to the dull prospects of Russian finances, which, having of late fallen into a state of unintermittin's indisposition, have experienced the same sad fate that attends human sufferers under like circumstances, viz., a multitude of gratuitous counsellors. Of course, in saying that Indian politics have no interest for Russian society I by no means wish to assert that they are not discussed by Russians, only that the interest taken in them is simply passive. Educated Russians —uninfected by Slavophilism — who have no reason for concealing their feelings, will tell you that they are not displeased with the turn affairs have taken in Afghan. "We don't think," they say, "that it will come to an open rupture between us. It is simply that we have been able to put a spoke in England's wheel and to checkmate her, as it were. Thus we have the chance, in this affair, of making ourselves extremely disagreeable —negatively only, of course—to Britain, and at hardly any cost or outlay to ourselves. Your country," they observe, "cannot be more unfriendly to us than it has shown itself all along since the commencement of the Eastern Question, and, short of an actual declaration of war, you have done everything in your power to harm us. How can we but feel pleased at any misfortune that may befall you, or at any complications that may arise in your foreign affairs—in whatever part of the world—so long as they distract your attention from meddling in questions concerning South-eastern Europe? Of course we shall go through the comedy of strictly prohibiting Russian subjects from supplying the Afghans with munitions of war, and through the still greater farce of gravely warning Russians from entering the ranks of the Ameer's army and taking part against a country with which we are on friendly terms. But those who pay no heed to the exhortations of the Imperial Ukase also know full well that no punishment will overtake them. Even our Government, whilst thus hypocritically protesting against any violation of neutrality by its subjects, will, on the sly, probably assist the Ameer in money and arms—just as your Government did the Turks." (The most reasonable, enlightened, and well-informed Russian is firmly convinced that during the late war we sent money and arms to the Turks, and there is no arguing him out of it.) "We have no love for Shere Ali, and consider him in the light of a cruel, petty, Eastern tyrant; but we cannot help feeling grateful to him for having received our Mission (which came to Cabul humbly, quietly, secretly if you like, with no flourish of trumpets) most kindly and favourably. We cannot also but feel thankful to him for having refused admission to your pompous Embassy—the more so as we are well aware that you insisted upon ours being turned away. You desire to go to war with Afghan, and no doubt you will conquer in the end; but the conquest will bring you neither glory nor rest. If you keep the subdued country, it will greatly increase the expenses of your already overtaxed Indian Budget, and you will have to put down many a rising for many a year to come. If you leave Afghanistan after having punished the Ameer and his subjects, you will perhaps at no very distant date have to fight your battles over again, and you will probably have still greater difficulties to surmount. Now, if you had left the Ameer to himself, and if Russia—ever ready and willing as you think her, to pounce upon your Indian possessions—had thought of passing through his territory to attack you, he would have become your staunchest friend and ally, and would have done all in his power to help you to repulse us. Now, however, you have made him look to us for protection, and even if we do nothing for him he will only like us the less, but his hatred of England will be greater than ever. What was the object of Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission but to humble Russia? And if his Mission has failed you must not be astonished at us Russians feeling pleased."

Such are the opinions expressed—more or less fully—by many educated Russians regarding the Afghan difficulty. It must be confessed, however, that most of the St. Petersburg newspapers have viewed the matter more coolly and philosophically, and it is only here and there that the angularities of the past have not been forgotten. I have already telegraphed extracts from the Russian papers, giving their opinions regarding the attitude their country ought to assume in Afghan politics. The *Golos*, which would be nothing were it not prophetic, and which never forgets to say to its readers "Didn't I tell you so!" has suddenly discovered that England intentionally picked a quarrel with the Ameer, and that it was her fervent desire to see her Embassy snubbed, in order to find a pretext for occupying the chief strategic points on the Afghan frontier. The *Golos* has, however, all along considered that there will be no collision between Russia and England, and that the former will not take an active part in the Afghan war, should such take place. Not so the *Birjeviya Vyedomosti*, or *Exchange News*. This paper, which has always hitherto preached peace, and which energetically, consistently, and perseveringly expressed its disapproval of the late war between Russia and Turkey, has suddenly changed its views and become the hottest of fire-eaters, at any rate regarding the Afghan difficulty. And it is not in a single, accidental leader, as it were, that war is insisted upon, but in a long series of articles. "If our relations towards the East," says the *Exchange News*, "are of any value; if, by continued advances in Central Asia we have pursued any material aims; if we hope to obtain any benefit from our possessions in Central Asia, and not to let them remain like a leech sucking away at our Imperial budget, then we not only cannot remain indifferent, but are forced to insist that the settlement of the Afghan question should be none other than one which will be fully in keeping with Russian interests. If we considered it possible to carry on a war, and to sacrifice our money for the sake of certain demarcations of the Balkan Peninsula, and without any chance of our will being obeyed, how much more serious to us is the question as to who will occupy those mountain passes that constitute the only available means of communication between British India and our central Asiatic possessions?"

Of course, the *Exchange News* has been taken to task for its remarkably warlike tendencies by several Petersburg newspapers, but it has justified itself thus:—"However unwilling we may be to desire anything like war; however anxious to avoid a collision with England, we cannot allow the Ameer to be swallowed up under present circumstances—*i.e.*, simply because of his good relations towards Russia, and because of the presence of a Russian Resident in Cabul. This would be contrary to the simplest feelings of decency and justice. To help the Ameer does not mean a march to India —a march useless to us, and associated with enormous expenses and great risks. It does not mean a war for the sake of uniting several peoples, nor a war for purposes of civilisation (seen by us through a fog)—but is simply an act of self-defence in a daring attack directed against us through the medium of a suffering third party, whom we have ourselves placed in the position of victim and accused." Besides its being an affair concerning Russia's honour, the *Exchange News* considers that Russia should be impelled to assist the Ameer by "simple political calculation." "If," observes the paper in question, "for many years past we have continually been moving forwards in Central Asia, it can hardly be supposed that we did so simply for the the pleasure of vanquishing the Tashkentans and Khokanians; but for the purpose—once we are settled in our Central Asiatic dominions—of approaching the densely populated East, and opening up communications with it that might prove useful to ourselves. In this respect it is extremely important for us to win the friendship and respect of our new neighbours, and in particular of him who must always remain the intervener in all our relations with the East Indies." It then continues: "Such are the reasons for our daring to assert that the Ameer of Afghan has a 'right to calculate upon our assistance, although we still hold to our former opinions regarding union of races, the re-establishment of nationalities, the freeing of peoples from the heavy yoke of oppression, and the forcing upon them of civilising principles, which we have ourselves not as yet assimilated properly."

Such is the warlike tone of the most peace-loving of all the Russian papers. But for the last six days even the press seems to have grown tired of the Afghan question, and hardly a leader has appeared upon the subject in any of the Petersburg or Moscow newspapers. It will be interesting to read the opinions of the Russian monthlies for October, and to see whether they back up the "go-ahead" policy of the *Exchange News*, or take their stand upon the more moderate views expressed by the majority of the daily press.

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"Daily News" Oct 15th

WE expressed yesterday a conviction that whatever her MAJESTY'S Ministers may do or decline to do on their own account, "injudicious advo-"cates of the Government" would be soon heard to proclaim that there is an Imperial policy which is not to be satisfied by any conciliatory movement on the part of SHERE ALI. No prediction could well have met with a more rapid fulfilment. About the time that our words were printed an injudicious advocate of the Government was doing the very thing we had expected. A journal which has lately been content to make itself the officious speaking trumpet of what it understands to be the purposes of Ministers came out yesterday with a somewhat portentous announcement. Whatever SHERE ALI may do, we, according to this statement, shall have much the same policy to carry out. "There will be work "found for our soldiers in any case." "If the "AMEER continues obstinate, it will be necessary "to bring him to reason by force." Yes; but suppose he should not continue obstinate? What work would then, in the natural course of things, seem to be left for our soldiers to do in Afghanistan? That is very precisely set forth; and we invite attention to it. "If he yields without "fighting we shall still need men to occupy the "new line of frontier which we intend to substi-"tute for our present one, or to hold the "advanced stations at which we may insist that "our presence is to be permitted." If this statement of the intentions of the Government be an authoritative, or at least an accurate, representation, her MAJESTY'S Ministers have determined upon seizing a portion of SHERE ALI'S territory without any regard to his conduct towards us. We "intend" to have a "new line of frontier;" we intend to "substitute" it "for our present one." We shall need men, come war or peace, to occupy our new territory. The very same journal in which this extraordinary announcement appears explains that the whole story of the insults offered to our Envoy, and the threat of the AMEER'S Commandant to open fire upon the English party, was a mere rumour for which no foundation existed. It was a report as untrue as that famous story of the insult offered by the King of PRUSSIA to the French Ambassador, which had so much to do with the inflaming of the Paris population into the proper temper for war. We are now assured by this officious exponent of the Government's policy that we are to annex some of SHERE ALI'S territory in any case. No semi-official organ of the French Imperial Government when NAPOLEON III. was in his prime of power could have proclaimed a policy of plunder with more pompous disregard for the rules of morality, or the opinion of the civilized world. The principle simply is that SHERE ALI possesses some territory which our statesmen in office think it would be convenient for us to have, and they have therefore made up their minds that he shall yield it up to us. If he offends us he is to be punished by having the territory taken from him; if he does not offend us the territory is to be taken from him all the same.

The Government, it is true, may decline to accept any responsibility for such utterances as these; but if they are really not willing to bear the disgrace and the danger of having inspired such pernicious sentiments, they ought to contrive somehow to speak out at once, and disavow them by the mouth of some one in authority whose words can be trusted. Can it actually be, people will meantime ask, that Lord BEACONSFIELD has revived the odious policy of annexation by brute force—the policy which seizes on anything a weak neighbour may have, because we think we should like to possess it, and the neighbour is reluctant to give it up? Are we then about to put SHERE ALI into the position of the entrapped prodigal in the famous Restoration comedy, who finds himself compelled to make a present to his plunderers of his watch, his rings, and his purse, because he knows that if he refuses anything they will have that of him and more besides? One might have thought that if any policy of past and unprincipled days had been given up for ever, consigned to the brazen casket, sealed down with the seal of SOLOMON, and buried in the sea, it was just that policy of what was politely called annexation. We may fail, perhaps, to impress some minds with a recognition of the fact that there are morals and principles in public life as well as in private, in politics as in commercial affairs, in the dealings between States as well as in the dealings between individual men. There are persons who when they stand alone are models of modest propriety, but who are always ready to interrupt and shout and furiously gesticulate when they form part of a crowd. In the same way there are doubtless many men who, while utterly incapable of cheating or plundering SHERE ALI personally, would consider their private feelings of morality inappropriate if they were called upon to approve the Ministerial policy which robbed him of territory. For the benefit of such persons we shall only ask what they think the effect upon Asia, and indeed upon the world, would be of such a policy as that which has been promised? What will other Asiatic States think of it if they see that England is ready by virtue of her mere strength to seize whatever territory she desires to have? Will they not be forced to the conviction that whenever the occasion arises the same policy will be applied to them? Such a State as Persia, for instance, will naturally feel that if she is to be secured against partition she will have to seek protectors wherever she finds any plausible promise held out to her. The yet independent Princes in India are not likely to view without alarm the application of a policy which any day's change in events might invite our Government to bring to bear against them. We could hardly wonder if Afghanistan caballed and made alliances with any Power against us in the hope of one day obtaining restitution or revenge. The statesmen of Russia must surely smile with sardonic satisfaction when they hear of such purposes being entertained by an English Government. Russia's corn is ripening, to adopt the words of the old saying, while such plans are professed. It will be an easy task for her to parade herself as the protectress of the rights which we show ourselves resolved so contemptuously to disregard.

It would not be just, we fully admit, to hold the Government responsible as yet for such doctrines and such a policy as those against which we protest. We trust still to see them explicitly and authoritatively disavowed. There must surely be men in Lord BEACONSFIELD'S Cabinet to whom such principles are odious. But unfortunately many of the recent acts done by the Government are such as to render it impossible to regard with utter incredulity the sort of announcement which has just been made as if on their behalf. We may hope that it will prove to be a complete misrepresentation of their policy, but we cannot say that it sets out a policy which is in itself impossible. We owe it to the statesmen now in office that the principle of partition has been formally set up again in the politics of Europe as well as of Asia. We have heard it again and again proclaimed that the whole crisis in the East was to be viewed by English statesmen solely as it affected the interests of England, and that our policy in dealing with whatever amount of human suffering and oppression was to be guided entirely by the prospect of our getting any national advantage out of it. This, however, is a selfishness of which we could not hope to have a monopoly. Russia, too, would naturally look to its own advantage, and Austria would do the same, and Italy and France; nor could we be surprised if Turkey failed to see why she should be more self-sacrificing than her neighbours. The influence of such example is rapid and widespreading in its effect, and we do in all seriousness say that the present Government of this country are responsible for having at a crisis of the greatest importance in the affairs of the East given a turn to the plans of settlement which converted European arbitration into something unpleasantly like a selfish scramble. It would not, therefore, be very surprising if some of our statesmen had resolved that at least a portion of SHERE ALI'S territory shall pass into our hands. The principle on which they are acting, if this should unfortunately prove true, is that a strong State has a right to judge how much of a weak neighbour's territory it would be convenient for her to possess, and to seize upon it if it be not freely surrendered. We regret if it shall prove that there is an English Government in our day capable of acting on such a principle. But if there should be statesmen among us of such lax morality they can hardly be weak enough to suppose that England alone will have the temporary benefit of a policy of annexation. The law which we proclaim for ourselves we are of course, whether we will or no, proclaiming also as a law for our neighbours. It would be hard indeed to say how many phases of confusion the Eastern Question may not yet have to pass through as the consequence of the ambitious plans of an ill-advised hour.

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THE CABUL MASSACRE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—In a recent article in your columns, upon the Cabul Massacre the following passage appears, viz.: —"Sale's example establishes the truth that the calamity which has befallen our soldiers in Cabul might have been avoided if wiser counsels and a more resolute policy had been adopted." And again, "Who can reasonably doubt that what Sale had done at Jellalabad, Elphinstone, or some commander less enfeebled by ill health, could have accomplished at Cabul?" In justice to the memory of the late Colonel John Shelton, who was then commanding the 44th Regiment, and second in command in Cabul, I deem it right to mention what did occur at a Council of War held some short while previous to the evacuation. Colonel Shelton had a habit of cutting any bit of wood that was near him with a penknife, and whilst the conference was proceeding, sat silent, making no remark, but shaving off little slips from the table. This annoyed the envoy, Sir William MacNaghten, who sharply remarked, "I think at a time like this, Colonel Shelton, you might be doing something better than 'whittling sticks.' Pray, sir, will you give us your advice?" "My advice," replied Colonel Shelton, "is that General Elphinstone should at once place himself upon the sick list, for he is at this moment so ill that he is utterly unfit for duty, and ought to be in his bed, and having done so place me in command." "Well, sir," said the envoy, "and if in command what would you then do?" "I should at once," replied Colonel Shelton, "place the Balla Hissar in such a state of defence as to enable us to stand a siege. I should make sorties and bring in cattle and grain and wood, and send down to India for an army to come up and relieve us." "And you would withdraw all protection from Shah Soojah?" retorted the envoy. "No," said Shelton, "Let him stay in our midst, and we will protect him from all the Afghans, but I tell you that once you leave here you will not be able to protect yourselves." "I could sanction no such act," replied the envoy, "or consent to such a step." "Well, sir," said Colonel Shelton, "that is my opinion and advice; and if you put me in command that is what I shall do. As it is, give me whatever orders you and General Elphinstone think fit, and I will carry them out to the best of my ability." Alas, his advice was rejected, and all who left Cabul on the final retreat were massacred except Lieutenant Souter and seven soldiers of the 44th, and three European artillerymen, with one Company's officer whose name I now forget. Colonel John Shelton was not a pleasant man upon parade, or the most popular commanding officer in the army; but he was a gallant soldier, a brave and determined man. He had seen service and knew what war was, for he had fought at Rolica, Vimiera, Corunna, Flushing, Badajoz, Salamanca, Madrid, Burgos, Vittoria, St. Sebastian (where he lost an arm), Ava, and Arracan, and a host of minor battles. This is a slight record, due to the memory of Jack Shelton, from one who feels that he deserves it, and who had the honour of serving as an officer in the 44th in India when he was at its head.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

AN OLD 44TH.

"Morning Post", Oct 15"

Public opinion at home has demanded speedy and energetic measures against SHERE ALI for the insult to the British Envoy at Ali Musjid. The most recent telegrams from India throw considerable light upon the motives which have induced the VICEROY to act with more deliberation than many persons in England have deemed advisable. There was at one time a nervous fear in some quarters that certain members of the Cabinet were not only opposed to immediate action against the AMEER, but that a positive danger prevailed of the VICEROY being instructed to refrain from any action whatever until the spring. The object of that supposed restraint on the part of the Home Government was somewhat subtle, but it seemed not unreasonable, though there is now cause to consider it as absolutely groundless. In their delight at the prospect of seeing this country embroiled with Affghanistan the St. Petersburg press made no secret of the fact that an Anglo-Affghan war would be used as a lever to develop the projects which Russia entertained on her own account in European Turkey. This candeur on the part of the Russian papers aroused the fear that our own Cabinet would keep open the Affghan question as long as possible in order to prevent its playing any part in the Turkish settlement. It was also regarded as a greater danger that some bargain might be struck with Russia under which that Power should concede her more flagrant demands in Turkey, on obtaining compensations in Central Asia, as, for instance, a silent approval of the occupation of Merv, or the right to advance her frontier to the Hindoo Kush. A third fear was that Russia might be promised to do very largely as she liked in Turkey if a guarantee were given that the Turkestan Government would leave SHERE ALI in the lurch. These various considerations, or some of them, inspired alarm lest Lord LYTTON might be prevented from inflicting that summary and energetic punishment on SHERE ALI which his offence deserved, and which would at the same time strengthen our rule and prestige in India. It is doubtful whether the Cabinet as a whole ever entertained such intricate and far-reaching projects as those above described. The past few months have shown that a plain, honest, and outspoken policy is far more likely to bring credit to the Ministry than bartering with the least of British interests. After some of the episodes of the Berlin Congress, the country is in no mood for making bargains with a Power like Russia, and a hundred broken pledges warn us against ever again taking her word in regard to affairs in Central Asia.

But supposing any intention existed to enter upon another process of "arrangement" or "understanding" in regard to Affghanistan, the attitude of the AMEER might at any moment thwart the schemes of English and Russian statesmen. A few hours before the last Cabinet meeting there was such an obvious prospect of SHERE ALI forcing our hands and compelling us to make an advance before we were actually ready that any Minister who entered that day's council with the subtle design of settling the Affghan difficulty at St. Petersburg must have had little cause for encouragement of that proposal. There is every reason for believing that the Cabinet has left Lord LYTTON practically untrammelled. The VICEROY seems to have had as keen an appreciation as we at home of the necessity of summary action. He even sanctioned the attempted capture of Ali Musjid by a *coup de main*, and there are signs of a rapid advance up the Kurum having been also decided upon. But the same reasons which frustrated any proposed interference by the Home Government with the military action of the VICEROY also induced the latter to abandon the initial plan of campaign. SHERE ALI rapidly concentrated reinforcements at Kurum and Ali Musjid, and the temper of the hill tribes demanded the exercise of the greatest caution lest a disaster in the early stages of the campaign might turn the wavering clansmen into foes. However useful a brilliant initial success might have been to our arms, the state of the transport service would not permit of that success being followed up by a further advance. Lord LYTTON has therefore decided to make no movement whatever till his arrangements place all risk of failure beyond reasonable question. It is to be regretted that punishment could not immediately follow the insult, but the VICEROY'S military advisers at this moment are such pre-eminently well-qualified men that we are bound to respect their decisions. We believe, however, that though immediate action has been abandoned the forward movement into Affghanistan will not be delayed to so remote a period as next spring. Another three weeks will see an enormous improvement in the state of preparations, and, so far as can be judged in this country, there is no reason why the Quetta column should not open the campaign in three weeks from the present date. None of the telegrams recently to hand shake the opinion that the serious business of invasion will be undertaken from the base at Quetta, conjointly with the column along the Kurum. Unless rare facilities are offered for its advance, the work of the Khyber army is likely to be no more than a demonstration. In the campaign of 1833-9 the Quetta column opened the invasion, and it fought the battle of Ghuznee before the Peshawur column left its cantonments. Now that the attack on Ali Musjid has been abandoned, the probability increases that the first serious operations will be made in the direction of Candahar.

There are other reasons than the deficiencies of transport which caused the VICEROY to pause before hurling his forces against the AMEER. The native Envoy, Nawab GHOLAM HUSSEIN, is still in SHERE ALI'S hands. He has received permission to leave the country, and brings with him the AMEER'S answer to the VICEROY'S overtures. The commencement of operations before GHOLAM HUSSEIN'S return might endanger the old NAWAB'S life, but we confess to no great fear of the AMEER resorting to such an extremity, though the Envoy might be imprisoned. GHOLAM HUSSEIN is, we believe, a member of one of the branches of SHERE ALI'S family, and the AMEER and the Envoy are by no means unfriendly. The NAWAB has also always had influential friends at the Cabul Court. Apart

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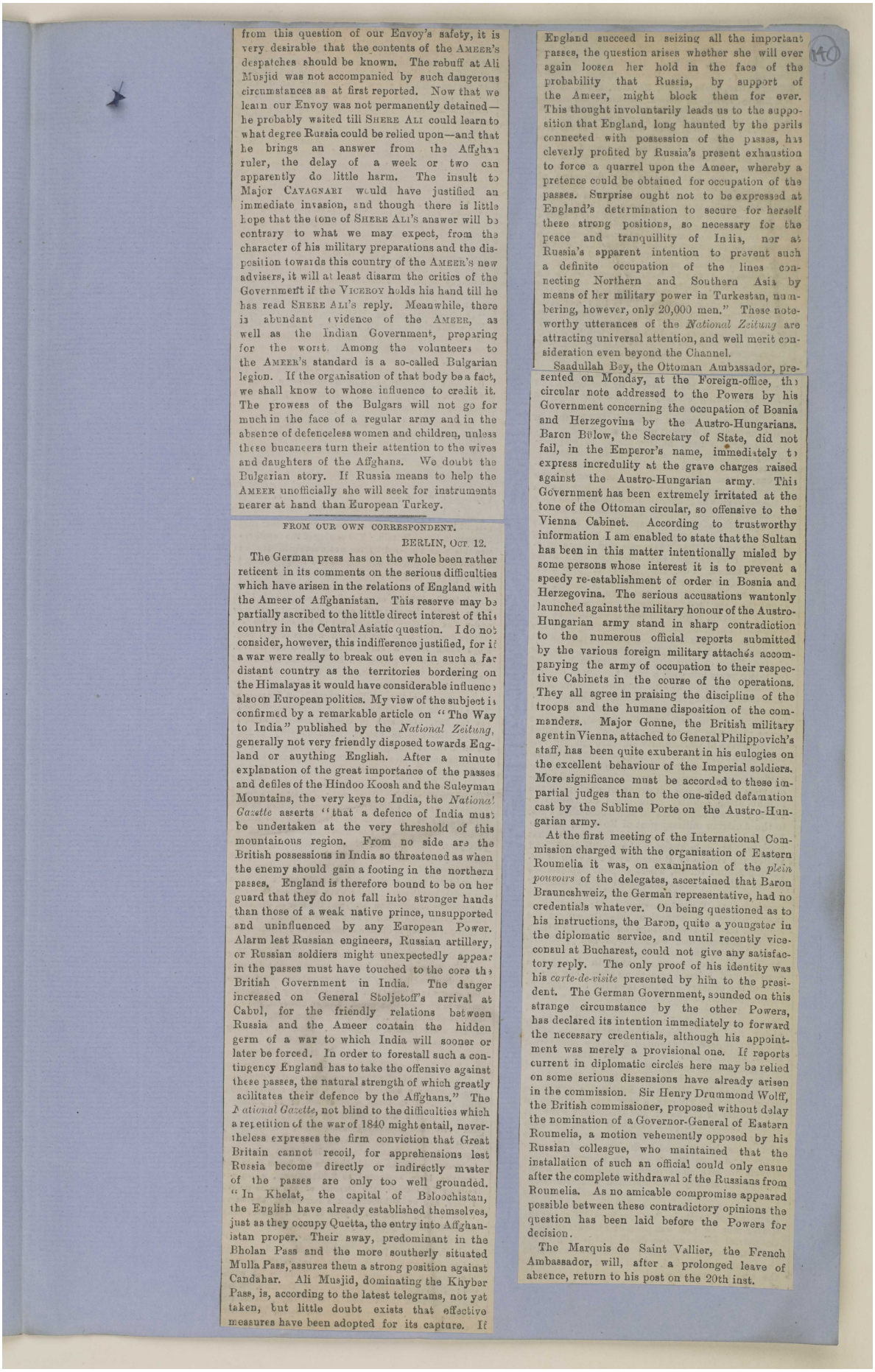

from this question of our Envoy's safety, it is very desirable that the contents of the AMEER'S despatches should be known. The rebuff at Ali Musjid was not accompanied by such dangerous circumstances as at first reported. Now that we learn our Envoy was not permanently detained—he probably waited till SHERE ALI could learn to what degree Russia could be relied upon—and that he brings an answer from the Affghan ruler, the delay of a week or two can apparently do little harm. The insult to Major CAVAGNARI would have justified an immediate invasion, and though there is little hope that the tone of SHERE ALI'S answer will be contrary to what we may expect, from the character of his military preparations and the disposition towards this country of the AMEER'S new advisers, it will at least disarm the critics of the Government if the VICEROY holds his hand till he has read SHERE ALI'S reply. Meanwhile, there is abundant evidence of the AMEER, as well as the Indian Government, preparing for the worst. Among the volunteers to the AMEER'S standard is a so-called Bulgarian legion. If the organisation of that body be a fact, we shall know to whose influence to credit it. The prowess of the Bulgars will not go for much in the face of a regular army and in the absence of defenceless women and children, unless these bucaneers turn their attention to the wives and daughters of the Affghans. We doubt the Bulgarian story. If Russia means to help the AMEER unofficially she will seek for instruments nearer at hand than European Turkey.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

BERLIN, OCT. 12.

The German press has on the whole been rather reticent in its comments on the serious difficulties which have arisen in the relations of England with the Ameer of Affghanistan. This reserve may be partially ascribed to the little direct interest of this country in the Central Asiatic question. I do not consider, however, this indifference justified, for if a war were really to break out even in such a far distant country as the territories bordering on the Himalayas it would have considerable influence also on European politics. My view of the subject is confirmed by a remarkable article on "The Way to India" published by the *National Zeitung*, generally not very friendly disposed towards England or anything English. After a minute explanation of the great importance of the passes and defiles of the Hindoo Koosh and the Suleyman Mountains, the very keys to India, the *National Gazette* asserts "that a defence of India must be undertaken at the very threshold of this mountainous region. From no side are the British possessions in India so threatened as when the enemy should gain a footing in the northern passes. England is therefore bound to be on her guard that they do not fall into stronger hands than those of a weak native prince, unsupported and uninfluenced by any European Power. Alarm lest Russian engineers, Russian artillery, or Russian soldiers might unexpectedly appear in the passes must have touched to the core the British Government in India. The danger increased on General Stoljetoff's arrival at Cabul, for the friendly relations between Russia and the Ameer contain the hidden germ of a war to which India will sooner or later be forced. In order to forestall such a contingency England has to take the offensive against these passes, the natural strength of which greatly facilitates their defence by the Affghans." The *National Gazette*, not blind to the difficulties which a repetition of the war of 1840 might entail, nevertheless expresses the firm conviction that Great Britain cannot recoil, for apprehensions lest Russia become directly or indirectly master of the passes are only too well grounded. "In Khelat, the capital of Beloochistan, the English have already established themselves, just as they occupy Quetta, the entry into Affghanistan proper. Their sway, predominant in the Bholan Pass and the more southerly situated Mulla Pass, assures them a strong position against Candahar. Ali Musjid, dominating the Khyber Pass, is, according to the latest telegrams, not yet taken, but little doubt exists that effective measures have been adopted for its capture. If England succeed in seizing all the important passes, the question arises whether she will ever again loosen her hold in the face of the probability that Russia, by support of the Ameer, might block them for ever. This thought involuntarily leads us to the supposition that England, long haunted by the perils connected with possession of the passes, has cleverly profited by Russia's present exhaustion to force a quarrel upon the Ameer, whereby a pretence could be obtained for occupation of the passes. Surprise ought not to be expressed at England's determination to secure for herself these strong positions, so necessary for the peace and tranquillity of India, nor at Russia's apparent intention to prevent such a definite occupation of the lines connecting Northern and Southern Asia by means of her military power in Turkestan, numbering, however, only 20,000 men." These noteworthy utterances of the *National Zeitung* are attracting universal attention, and well merit consideration even beyond the Channel.

Saadullah Bey, the Ottoman Ambassador, presented on Monday, at the Foreign-office, the circular note addressed to the Powers by his Government concerning the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarians. Baron Bülow, the Secretary of State, did not fail, in the Emperor's name, immediately to express incredulity at the grave charges raised against the Austro-Hungarian army. This Government has been extremely irritated at the tone of the Ottoman circular, so offensive to the Vienna Cabinet. According to trustworthy information I am enabled to state that the Sultan has been in this matter intentionally misled by some persons whose interest it is to prevent a speedy re-establishment of order in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The serious accusations wantonly launched against the military honour of the Austro-Hungarian army stand in sharp contradiction to the numerous official reports submitted by the various foreign military attachés accompanying the army of occupation to their respective Cabinets in the course of the operations. They all agree in praising the discipline of the troops and the humane disposition of the commanders. Major Gonne, the British military agent in Vienna, attached to General Philippovich's staff, has been quite exuberant in his eulogies on the excellent behaviour of the Imperial soldiers. More significance must be accorded to these impartial judges than to the one-sided defamation cast by the Sublime Porte on the Austro-Hungarian army.

At the first meeting of the International Commission charged with the organisation of Eastern Roumelia it was, on examination of the *plein pouvoirs* of the delegates, ascertained that Baron Braunschweiz, the German representative, had no credentials whatever. On being questioned as to his instructions, the Baron, quite a youngster in the diplomatic service, and until recently vice-consul at Bucharest, could not give any satisfactory reply. The only proof of his identity was his *carte-de-visite* presented by him to the president. The German Government, sounded on this strange circumstance by the other Powers, has declared its intention immediately to forward the necessary credentials, although his appointment was merely a provisional one. If reports current in diplomatic circles here may be relied on some serious dissensions have already arisen in the commission. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, the British commissioner, proposed without delay the nomination of a Governor-General of Eastern Roumelia, a motion vehemently opposed by his Russian colleague, who maintained that the installation of such an official could only ensue after the complete withdrawal of the Russians from Roumelia. As no amicable compromise appeared possible between these contradictory opinions the question has been laid before the Powers for decision.

The Marquis de Saint Vallier, the French Ambassador, will, after a prolonged leave of absence, return to his post on the 20th inst.

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Times Oct 16th

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—A sound state of public opinion upon such a subject as the present position of affairs on the North-West Frontier of India can, I think, best be formed by a separate consideration of the various questions involved in it. One question is, Whether the conduct pursued for some years past towards the Ameer of Cabul has or has not been judicious? A second question is, Whether he has or has not grossly insulted a British Agent? A third question is, Whether in dealing with an Asiatic ruler like Shere Ali the common rules of European international law have any application whatever? A fourth question is, Whether in any circumstances anything can be gained by an Afghan war? This suggests three other questions--thus, fifthly, Is it true that our present frontier is exceedingly weak? Sixthly, Is it true that it is possible to make it as strong as it is at present weak by occupying military positions north of the passes through the mountains and by establishing satisfactory relations with the mountain tribes? Seventhly and lastly, Is it true that, whatever may have been the case in former times, the advance of Russia and the probability of a Russian and Afghan alliance make the strengthening of our frontier (if it requires strengthening, and if it can be strengthened) a matter of pressing importance?

The last question does not arise unless the fifth and sixth are both answered in the affirmative, but all the others are entirely independent of each other. The first, second, third, and fourth of these questions I do not wish to discuss. The materials for a full discussion of the first are not yet before the public; the second requires no discussion; the third, though interesting, I shall pass over. The fourth question resolves itself into the fifth, sixth, and seventh. As to the fifth and sixth questions, I know that many persons eminently capable of forming an opinion would say "Yes" to each. My own opinion upon them is, of course, valueless; but, whatever it may be worth, I think that the arguments to show the weakness of our present frontier are very strong, and that the arguments to show the possibility of strengthening it by the occupation of advanced positions are also strong, subject however to the condition that some way of establishing satisfactory relations with the frontier tribes can be devised; for if they are hostile, any advanced posts occupied by us at the mouth of or beyond the passes would be in a critical position. However, in order to raise the question which I wish to discuss, I must assume that each of these questions is answered in the affirmative.

The question, then, to which I wish to address myself is, Whether the advance of Russia and the probability of a Russian and Afghan alliance make the strengthening of our frontier (if it requires strengthening and if it can be strengthened) a matter of pressing importance? The question thus stated and qualified I should answer decidedly and unequivocally in the affirmative. If I am right, it does not, of course, follow that we ought to go to war with the Ameer, or to refuse any offer of peace which he may make; but it does follow that we are in a position of danger, against which whatever precautions may be proper should be taken whenever an opportunity for taking them occurs. The danger which I apprehend is that the Russians may, partly by force and partly by persuasion, obtain an ascendency throughout Central Asia, including Persia and Afghanistan, which would enable them at any time to form an army resembling our Indian army in its composition, but composed, as far as the native troops go, of better materials than any part of our native army, except the Sikhs. Our very best soldiers would feel that Afghans or Pathans, officered and led by Russians, would be worthy antagonists. If such an army were formed and if our frontier then remained as it now is, India would be open at any moment to an invasion which would tax the strength of the Empire to the utmost, and which might easily prove its ruin. To guard against such a catastrophe it would, upon the formation of such an army—our present frontier being retained—become necessary to increase enormously our present army, and to spend immense sums on fortifications. This would not only grievously impoverish a very poor country, but it would lock up in India a large part of our necessarily small English army, and it would enable the Russians at any time to bring pressure to bear upon us in Europe by threatening to invade India. If we were known to lie under such a threat, our position in India would be scarcely tenable at all. Such fears are often treated as chimerical. The distance between the Russian and the Indian frontiers, and the nature of the obstacles to be traversed before a Russian army could invade India are enumerated as if the danger apprehended were the concentration of a great Russian army at Orenburg, or even at Tashkend, and their march upon Peshawur or Shikarpur. No reasonable person entertains such apprehensions. The danger lies not in a single march, but in a succession of conquests or alliances; such alliances as a great European Power can impose on native States, each of which would give Russia a new recruiting-ground and a new base of operations. Surely we may learn, if from nothing else yet from our own history, how possible this is. Who, when the Sikhs all but defeated Lord Hardinge at Ferozeshah in the beginning of 1846, would have imagined that in 1857 the Punjab would form the basis of our operations against the North-West Provinces, and that the great instrument of victory over the mutineers at Delhi and Lucknow would be an army marching from the north southwards, largely composed of Sikhs officered by Englishmen? Take, again, the conquest of the Punjab itself. How easily it might at one time have been proved to be utterly impossible that the English should ever take Lahore. It might have been demonstrated that India could not be conquered without a great army; that England never could or would collect a force greater than the one sent on the Walcheren Expedition for the invasion of India, land it at Bombay or Calcutta, and march it to Lahore, and that the attempt, if made, could only result in failure. The demonstration would have been correct, but irrelevant. England performed the operation in quite a different way.

A handful of Englishmen obtained political power in Bengal, and, by raising native armies and forming native alliances, gradually subdued the whole country. That is just what the Russians can do, and probably are doing, in Central Asia. It is perfectly true that General Kaufmann has a small Russian force under his orders. It was reported the other day that he proposed to collect 20,000 men on the Oxus. I should be surprised to hear that he could do so; but, however that may be, his force is probably as large as the European army which was in India in 1841. It is also perfectly true that the Russian head-quarters in Turkestan are still at a considerable distance from Afghanistan; but the British frontier was quite as far from the other side of Afghanistan when Afghanistan was occupied by British troops.

In short, the difference between Russian power in Central Asia and British power in India is, in my opinion, principally this. General Kaufmann is now at the stage at which Lord Wellesley was at the beginning of the century, though he has in the background an infinitely greater military power than ever Lord Wellesley had. Lord Wellesley's position in 1803 was in many ways anxious and insecure enough, but several comparatively old-established dynasties found him a terrible enemy.

Look, then, at the present position of the Russians, and see what light is thrown on their probable intentions and policy. Their position in Central Asia is much more anxious and precarious than ours in India. Their head-quarters in Turkestan are at Tashkend, which is separated from the Caspian by the Khivan and from Orenburg by the Kirghiz Steppe. They have no communication between Turkestan and the Caspian, but they are making great efforts to get one, as is shown by the fact—for a fact I believe it to be—that they retain an establishment at Krasnovodsk (on the eastern coast of the Caspian), although their attempt to communicate with Khiva from it was found too expensive for their purposes, and that they have advanced from Krasnovodsk to Kizyl Arvat, which is on the road to Merv, on the west, and from Turkestan to Charjoui on the Oxus, which is about 130 miles from Merv, on the east. These movements can have no other object than that of connecting the Caspian with Turkestan; and the result, if the plan is carried out, will be to establish a communication between the Caspian and Turkestan along the Afghan frontier, through populations either bitterly hostile or recently subjugated and desolate steppes. The distance from Tashkend by Merv to the Caspian is about 750 miles. It is about as far as from Calcutta to Delhi; rather further than from Dover to Cape Wrath. How then, it may be asked, can a small number of Russians, struggling with such difficulties as these and far distant from all reinforcements and from their base of operations, be objects of fear to such a Power as British India? I answer, for reasons exactly similar to those which ought to have led the successors of Akbar and Aurungzebe to look with dread upon Colonel Clive, his handful of Europeans and his wretched Bengalee allies. Great enterprises are undertaken by unsettled, anxious people with their fortunes to make, not by those who have made their fortunes; and the Russians in Turkestan fulfil these conditions. Whatever our objects may be, they beyond all doubt wish to gain a definite frontier. They have been in search of one for much more than 100 years. They have crossed the Kirghiz steppe, they have conquered or humiliated the Khanates, in search of it; they are now face to face with a country and a population which exercise their utmost vigilance, and they must feel that their only safety lies in an advance which will give them rest for the sole of their feet. Such a frontier they would find in the Hindoo Koosh and its passes. That is still at some distance; but if in the meantime they can arrange an alliance with Afghanistan, it will be a great step towards their object and a great security to them. It must be remembered that if it is reasonable for us to be afraid of them, it is not quite unreasonable for them to be afraid of us. Peshawur and Tashkend are about the same distance from the Oxus, but Peshawur is much nearer to the resources of England than Tashkend to the resources of Russia. The Turcomans do not love the Russians, and a defeat

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on the Oxus might mean expulsion from Central Asia. One of the many newspaper reports lately circulated said that General Skobeleff (I think) inquired whether it was true that an English division had been sent to raise Central Asia on the Russians. If such a step were taken, it might inflict awful calamities on the Russians, though I do not believe that it has ever been proposed. In such circumstances a prudent and courageous man commanding in Turkestan may well think that a forward, aggressive policy is the road to safety, and that the readiest way to obtain such a position as I have sketched is by an Afghan alliance. The inducements to such an alliance which the Russians can hold out to the Afghans are very great indeed. In the first place, the Afghans within living memory possessed a considerable part of the Punjab, which we afterwards conquered from the Sikhs. In the second place, from the earliest time the plunder of India has been the ideal, not unfrequently realized, of the northern tribes individually and collectively. In the first place, if the choice is to be made between a Russian and an English alliance, there is absolutely nothing to be got in the way of plunder by attacking the Russians, nor do the Russians, or, indeed, we or any one else, want anything from the Afghans except military positions. Are not these just the elements out of which an offensive alliance is likely to be formed? Is not such a contingency one against which we ought to take precautions, not dependent on the good faith or good will of either Russians or Afghans?

One more observation must be added in order to appreciate fully the position of affairs. When we speak of "the Russians" in Central Asia, what we really mean is the Russian Governor-General of Turkestan and his advisers for the time being. However little may be known of these gentlemen personally, some points in their position are both notorious and obvious. They are at an immense distance from head-quarters. They have no Parliament and no public opinion adverse to war and conquest to hamper them. It is highly improbable that either the Emperor or his Ministers exercise over them anything approaching to the same degree of control as the India Office exercises over the Viceroy. In the crisis through which Russia has lately passed they have, probably, been left very much to their own discretion, and is not this just the sort of position in which active, enterprising, courageous men, passionately anxious to distinguish themselves by war and conquest, undertake and carry out great enterprises? Clive and Lord Wellesley were similarly situated. We need not, however, look at historical parallels. We have notorious facts before our eyes. If the Embassy to Cabul was not a step to an alliance against England, what did it mean? If its object was purely commercial, why was our Embassy rejected? Even in judicial inquiries the absence of satisfactory explanation is sometimes equivalent to proof of guilt, and surely it would be pedantry to require in political affairs that a hostile intention should be proved more strictly than guilty knowledge is required to be proved in Courts of Justice.

I should be sorry to join in all that is said in the Press about Russia. I do not think that it is either dignified or just to find fault with others for looking after their own interests without regarding ours. If General Kaufmann sees his way to taking up a position and so making an alliance which will give him the upper hand over us, I do not see why he should abstain from doing so; but I do see many cogent reasons why, if we can, we should defeat his plans.

The more the matter is considered the more distinctly will it, I think, appear that the real question is this:—Inasmuch as England and Russia must meet in Central Asia, where is the frontier between them to be drawn? and how can we take security for its being so drawn that Russia shall not have the means of invading us at pleasure? Our past experience, both Russian and English appears to me to prove to demonstration that barbarism and civilization cannot be coterminous permanently. England, Russia, and China will, sooner or later, divide Central Asia between them, and Afghanistan, like many other countries, will, sooner or later, either form part of the dominions of England or Russia or else become practically dependent and subordinate.

Without the smallest feeling of hostility or ill-will to Russia, I think the English people ought to say, quite quietly, but also with unmistakable firmness, we do not mean to lie at the mercy of our neighbours. We have already more territory and wider responsibilities than we want. We should be sorry indeed to add to either, but we intend to retain our hold upon India, and to take, if necessary, by force of arms, whatever may be essential to the maintenance of our power there.

If a defensible frontier is required, and can and ought to be obtained, it is hardly likely that we shall have a better opportunity hereafter of getting such a frontier than we have at present. If everything now falls back into the drifting position in which it has been for a series of years, Russia and Afghanistan will at once be in alliance, and the difficulty of any advance on our part will increase by every year that passes. I do not doubt that whenever the enterprise of securing the frontier is undertaken, it will involve a very serious effort; but I do not see why we should expect to be stronger hereafter than we are now, and we are not now under any special difficulties. I do not think that, as matters stand, the Russians will interfere. They will do all they can to frighten us; they will give any amount of sympathy, and, perhaps, underhand, some arms, some money, and a certain number of officers to the Afghans; but it seems to me most unlikely that just at this moment they will go to war with England upon such a quarrel, unless, indeed, the Turkestan authorities manage to commit the Emperor to the step. As for the special threats of the Russians, they do not impress me very much. Their papers seem to dwell principally upon the native princes and their armies; the population "eager to throw off the British yoke;" and the disaffection of the native troops. These seem to me to be ignorant, conventional commonplaces. If British power were upset, no native prince in India would be sure of anything whatever, except that he would be plunged into a bottomless whirlpool of war and confusion, whereas under British rule his position is perfectly secure, though it may not be absolutely satisfactory. If any native prince tried to upset British power and failed, he would certainly be dethroned, and would in all probability be hanged. Every native prince in India knows all this perfectly well. These are plain and strong reasons for fidelity. As to the army, it is not during war that mercenary troops are untrustworthy. They are faithful enough in the face of the enemy. An enormous number of native levies, of one sort or another, were raised during the Mutiny, and the mutineers had no more relentless enemies than men of their own colour. As to the mass of the population, my belief is that if a Russian army crossed the Indus to-morrow, the first and last thought of the bulk of the people would be to hide their valuables safely and to wait to obey the winning side. In one word, I am far from wishing to see the English take up a position of hostility to the Russians. I believe that we are destined to be neighbours in Asia, and I see no reason why we should not be thoroughly friendly neighbours; but perfect independence is the condition upon which alone friendship and cordial good offices are possible, and if we meet upon terms which give them great military advantages over us, we shall not be independent.

I am Sir, your obedient Servant
J. F. Stephen

Ravensdale,
County Louth.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1878.

In another column we publish an interesting and able letter by Sir JAMES STEPHEN on England, Russia, and Afghanistan. It is on the question of the hour, and it is from the pen of a man who has a good right to be heard. He knows India from his experience as the legal member of the Council at Calcutta; and, what is equally important, his political and legal work has made him acquainted with England, a country which has still to be discovered by many Anglo Indians. His letter is eminently practical. It is so practical that the writer declines to discuss the question whether and how far the Indian Government is responsible for the awkward position in which it is now placed. Such a discussion would, in truth, be mischievous if it were intended to show that we ought now to hold our hands. SHERE ALI, who keeps himself informed of all that is said in England, would draw fatally false inferences from vague censures of past Viceroys. But, if we begin by admitting that what has been done cannot be undone, and that the north-western frontier of our Indian Empire must be made safe at all hazards, it is useful to prepare for the duties of the future by confessing the mistakes of the past. Let it be admitted, then, that our relations with SHERE ALI have not been a miracle of foresight. Quite naturally, he disliked England when he came to the Throne, because she had been the enemy of his father, DOST MAHOMED; and perhaps he had some reason to think that the policy of our Viceroys was equivocal. When he invited us to say whether we should guarantee his power against the Russians, we declined to give any pledge. The truth is that the English Government had not made up its mind whether the possession of Afghanistan was, in case of emergency, necessary for the defence of India. Nor would any Viceroy pledge himself to defend the AMEER'S Throne against the chieftains by whom

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it is periodically threatened. Lord MAYO, at the famous Umballa Conference, merely said that England would regard with extreme displeasure any attack on the AMEER's power. SHERE ALI inferred from that pledge that we should defend him. Giving it a strictly legal interpretation, we, on the contrary, held ourselves aloof from Afghan quarrels, and left the AMEER to fight his own battles. At the same time Sir JOHN LAWRENCE had begun the dangerous practice of granting him a subsidy, which the AMEER thought was to be a yearly subscription, while Lord MAYO had to explain that it was merely a donation. Still more perilous was the practice of giving him presents of English arms. On one occasion he received 5,000 Sniders, besides 10,000 Enfields. If the defiles of Afghanistan should be made formidable by the breechloader, we shall have to blame the trustfulness of our own Viceroys. But it is not one Viceroy or one Administration that must be held answerable. Sir JOHN LAWRENCE, Lord MAYO, and Lord LYTTON, Liberal Governments and Conservative, must plead guilty to the charge that their Afghan policy has been a thing of fits and starts, incoherent, incomprehensible by SHERE ALI, and mysterious to ourselves. If we had made it clear either that we had no interest in Afghanistan or that we were determined to prevent it from falling under the influence of Russia, we should have escaped many embarrassments. It is necessary at last to shape so clear a line of policy that he who runs may read. Sir JAMES STEPHEN's letter is valuable because it powerfully puts the plain and important question, whether it is necessary for this country to possess paramount influence in Afghanistan in order to insure the safety of our Indian Empire.

Sir JAMES STEPHEN gives an affirmative answer, for reasons which, we think, will commend themselves even to people who are free from any hysterical fear of Russia. He puts aside the idea that the CZAR's armies could at present invade India. Such a notion cannot survive a glance at the immense distances of desert which separate Orenburg, the frontier town of Russia, from Tashkend, the chief military station of Central Asia, and the equally formidable stretch of burning sand and mountain pass which intervenes between the outposts of Russia and those of England. NAPOLEON's march to Moscow would seem an example of prudence compared with a Russian advance from Orenburg or from the shores of the Caspian, to the Indus. So much is admitted by all competent men. But Sir JAMES STEPHEN urges that the real danger is very different. It is, he thinks, that Russia may gradually creep on towards our Indian frontier, that she may annex one State after another, and that she may render the natives as good soldiers as our Sepoys, or better. Even if she should not attack our Indian possessions, we should be obliged to keep up a very large army to escape from deadly risk, and the burden might be financially fatal. "General KAUFMANN," Sir JAMES STEPHEN contends, "is now at the stage "at which Lord WELLESLEY was at the beginning "of the century, though he has in the back-ground "an infinitely greater military power than ever "Lord WELLESLEY had." If that parallel is just, it is very instructive. It would be interesting to know how it strikes other Indian authorities, and what they would propose to meet the danger. One set of them would doubtless abide by Lord LAWRENCE's policy of "masterly inactivity." The Indus, with some outlying positions, is, they would say, one of the strongest lines in the world; let us keep that boundary, and we may defy all the armies that Russia can ever organize in Turkestan or Afghanistan. Let us wait, and she will be weakened by the length of her communications. Another set of authorities would contend that we cannot be safe unless we advance at the same rate as Russia. Let her remain, they would say, behind the belt of Central Asiatic deserts, and we can afford to keep all but our outlying stations behind the Indus. We should be glad to be saved from the necessity of advancing into so turbulent, so inclement, and so mountainous a country as Afghanistan. But we cannot afford to let Russia make Cabul a centre of intrigue, or Afghanistan a recruiting ground. If she sends an Envoy to the AMEER, we must send another, and we must be paramount.

Such is undoubtedly the favourite doctrine in India itself, and such is the view of so competent a witness as Sir JAMES STEPHEN. It is untouched by the question whether SHERE ALI has or has not the same kind of rights as an independent Western Sovereign. He clearly cannot have the right to menace the safety of a neighbour, and India must be allowed to protect itself. But again it would be interesting to learn from the greatest Indian authorities what they deem the best form of security. Some of them would contend that sooner or later England must annex the whole of Afghanistan, and that it would be better to make the change soon than late. Russia, they would urge, would then find herself face to face with a civilized Power, and have no further excuse for pushing on her frontiers. She would have either to fight with England or stop. But we do not understand Sir JAMES STEPHEN to propose so hazardous an enterprise. To convert Afghanistan into a British possession would not, of course, be an impossible task for an army and a Government which have built up the marvellous fabric of British India; but it would be so costly and troublesome that no responsible statesman would propose it except as a last resort. Sir JAMES STEPHEN is content to urge that we must warn the Russians off the ground. He does not, indeed, raise any outcry about their treachery, and he thinks that their generals are acting in much the same fashion as our own would behave if placed in a similar position. Shrill complaints of Muscovite encroachments will scarcely, in truth, commend themselves to any one who looks to the history of India. But if it does not become a great nation to waste time in fruitless accusations, it is the duty of such a nation to guard its own interests at all hazards. Hence we may insist that the task of ruling India shall not be made needlessly expensive either by the whims of SHERE ALI or the ambition of General KAUFMANN. Sir JAMES STEPHEN assumes that we shall never be secure so long as we retain our present frontier. It may be so. There are few questions which the military authorities could more profitably discuss. The public would be glad to hear all that can be said for and against the proposal to extend our boundary. Much will depend, no doubt, on the tone of the letter from SHERE ALI which is said to be on the way from Cabul. Much will depend, also, on the action of those Russian friends of his on whom we do not waste words of blame, but whom we watch. In any case, however, we must make the empire more secure than it has been since SHERE ALI came to the Throne and General KAUFMANN has been near enough to pay him political courtesies. The AMEER's pledges would not suffice, because, however honourable he may be, he has not the power to keep the Afghans in one definite way of action. His people are a set of warring clans rather than a compact nationality, and he himself is the foremost of many chieftains rather than an absolute monarch. Even the great ability of his father could not keep down fatal feuds, which ended in a too memorable war of intervention. SHERE ALI himself was once dethroned, and he had to fight in order to regain the supreme authority. It would be rash to say whether his power is even now secure, or how far he commands the support of the chiefs. It would be ridiculous, therefore, to stake the safety of the Indian Empire on the word of a ruler who may seem nearly absolute to-day and be an exile to-morrow. We must protect ourselves, and it is for the statesmen and the soldiers of India to say what form the new precautions should take. On the one hand, the civil rulers will urge that we have already more territory than we want, and that any needless addition of mountainous, barren land, peopled by turbulent tribes, would be specially unwelcome. That consideration will, no doubt, be very strongly urged by all who are responsible for the finances of India. Still, the question to be answered is mainly military, and the last word must be said by the soldiers. Although they will not be invited to give their final decision until SHERE ALI has given his, they cannot too soon begin to consider in what respect the North-Western frontier is weak, and how far they would push it towards the Oxus. They will have to look, of course, at much more than the best means of foiling immediate danger. They will have to bear in mind that if Cabul is in future to obey foreign influence, the source of that influence must be, not Taskkend, but Calcutta. Such a fact may be stated in no temper of hostility to any Power, but simply in a spirit of precaution. There is much wisdom in the closing words of Sir JAMES STEPHEN on that subject. Speaking of the Russians he says,—"I believe that we are destined to be "neighbours in Asia, and I see no reason why "we should not be thoroughly friendly neigh-"bours; but perfect independence is the condition "upon which alone friendship and cordial good "offices are possible, and if we meet upon "terms which give them great military advan-"tages over us, we should not be independent." Sir JAMES STEPHEN points out the safest as well as the most dignified course; but the first step towards it must be a reversal of the hesitating policy which has left SHERE ALI and General KAUFMANN uncertain how far we should go to guard Afghanistan from foreign authority.

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AFGHANISTAN.

Shere Ali is evidently determined to oppose to the uttermost the demands of the Indian Government; and, knowing full well that his country lies at the mercy of an invader, when once the defiles through the Suliman and Sufaid Koh ranges are forced, he is taking every step to harass our advance and entangle us in difficulties in the mountain passes. With this object in view he has summoned the Jhirgahs of the Pathan tribes, all of whom nominally owe him allegiance. It is extremely doubtful whether many will openly espouse his cause. That some will do so is evident from the news we have already published that the Momunds are marching to join his troops. Others will adopt a neutral course at first, taking every opportunity of profiting by our mishaps, of enriching themselves at the expense of our baggage and transport trains, finally turning round when they find our arms are triumphant and giving us their unqualified support. It may be assumed that of the border clans dwelling immediately on our frontier line the Momunds, Swatees, and Zaemukhts will throw in their lot with the Ameer, while the more discontented and restless spirits of all the other clans will also find their way to his standard, only to desert when the Afghan cause seems hopeless. The tactics of the hill tribes were recently discussed in these columns. Of any organized system of warfare they are profoundly ignorant, and, like all Oriental nations, consider a retreat inevitable directly a flanking movement is commenced against them. They are admirable light infantry soldiers, and work on a hillside to perfection, taking every possible advantage of cover, rarely exposing themselves to a shot, very careful of their ammunition—altogether foemen not to be despised. Unused to artillery themselves, they are very averse from being made the subjects of shell practice. In common with Circassians, Koords, and Zeibecks, they generally fall back when once the guns obtain their range. They are adepts in the science of hasty breastworks, but rarely if ever use intrenchments, probably from the fact that a spade is unknown in their country, digging being seldom if ever practised there. In offensive warfare they often show as much gallantry as they do stubborn obstinacy in defensive actions. The last Afghan war gave numerous instances of their dash; later still in many of our border fights we have had brilliant examples—notably, the charge of the Mahsood Vaziris on Butts Battery; at the action of the Barara Tungee, where a small body of these mountaineers, sword in hand, drove backskirmishers and supports, pushed right up to the mountain pieces, being finally cut down and bayoneted at the very muzzles of the guns by the 1st Punjab Infantry under Captain Keyes. The night attack on our camp at Paloseen in the same campaign was a bravely executed, though badly planned affair. At Umbeyla, a small band of Ghazis performed much the same feat as the Mahsoods at Burara, charging through the 23d Pioneers and being cut up to a man by that regiment when it had rallied after the first onslaught, the levelled bayonets of the Royal Fusiliers in rear of the Native Corps never even checking their ardour. We have had large experience of their tactics, ample proof of their gallantry, are well acquainted with their numbers, armament, and the various political causes that will be at work among them. Thus forewarned, the campaign should present no difficulties that we cannot surmount with care, prudence, and determination.

The summoning of the Jhirgahs, or tribal councils, by Shere Ali may mean much; it may amount to little; it is a step that he would necessarily take, one for which the Indian Government must have been fully prepared; but it may be well to look at its probable results, and for this reason it may be advisable to enumerate the various tribes who not only dwell in his immediate kingdom and pay him annual tribute, but also those who owe him nominal allegiance, and may therefore throw in their lot with his.

Taking those clans who dwell in Afghanistan proper we have three great divisions—the Afghans, or Pushtoo-speaking clans; the Tajaks, Hazara, and Kazalbashis, who speak Persian, and the Hindkis and Jats, whose language is a dialect of Hindostani. Of these the Afghans, or Pushtoo-speaking tribes, are the most numerous, and they again may be divided into the nomad and fixed clans; the former, generally speaking, dwell in Khorassan, the latter in Cabul. They belong to the Sunni sect of Mahomedans, observe all the fasts and other ceremonies pertaining to that religion, together with many that savour strongly of a Jewish origin. Although they profess to be very strict followers of the prophet, as a race they never scruple to act in opposition to its tenets if by so doing they can best serve their own interests. In some clans they have but a vague idea of the forms and customs of Islamism. For instance in the Dawas Valley, circumcision is unknown, while in most parts of the country it is incumbent on a man to marry his deceased brother's widow. This custom provokes many blood feuds, and it is no uncommon thing to find an Afghan serving in one of our regiments who declines to return to his home for fear of the fate that he knows will overtake him on arrival. The principal Afghan tribes are the Duranis, who inhabit the provinces of Candahar and Herat, the Ghilzais, Turis, Shinwaris, and Momunds, who dwell in Cabul proper. There are, again, numerous clans who inhabit the mountains between the outer circle of tribes who skirt our border and the more settled tribes of Afghanistan proper; of these the best known are the Bajawaris, Ningraharis, Kunars, Zaemuckts, Turis, Jajis, Mangals, Jadrans, Gurbuz, and Khostwals.

The Duranis are perhaps the most powerful of all the Afghan tribes. They inhabit a large tract between Herat and Candahar, and number upwards of three-quarter of a million souls. Their lands are held on a military tenure. The Ameer, being a Durani by birth, is considered their immediate chief, and is able to rule them more effectually than he can other tribes. Every plough in the Durani lands has to furnish one horseman for the King's service, a system that was regularly enforced up to the death of Dost Mahomed. The poorer people live in tents, which usually surround the walled residence of their chiefs. Each section is ruled over by a Sirdar, who is nominally and actually responsible to the Ameer for the conduct of his people. Although very observant of all religious performances, no camp being without its Moolah or priest, they are very tolerant of all other sects. As a rule they are peaceably disposed, and have no internecine feuds like the other Afghan races; the consequence is that the only opportunities they have for showing their military qualities are in national wars, and their reputation for soldierlike qualities has ever stood very high. All travellers in Afghanistan speak well of the Duranis, who are credited with more spirit, bravery, and civilization than the other tribes of the country; being of the ruling race, they comport themselves with more dignity, and are extremely devoted to their home. Candahar is invested with a halo of superstition; thither they carry the bodies of all their great men for interment, and it may readily be conjectured that an English occupation of that city would meet with strenuous opposition from its founders.

The Ghilzais muster from 300,000 to 400,000, and dwell in the south-eastern portion of Afghanistan. They are subdivided into many clans, some of whom have fixed habitations; others trade in large numbers with Hindostan and Central Asia. Their caravans at this season of the year are threading their way through the passes in the Suliman mountain. When once safe within the confines of British territory the old men, women, and children are left encamped in the Derajat, while the wealthier merchants find their way with their wares to the farthest corners of India to sell the produce of Afghanistan, which consists chiefly of wool, madder, asafœtida, fruit, and horses. In the spring they return, laden with English merchandise, firearms, gunpowder, tea, Manchester goods, quinine, and other articles of repute in the Cabul bazaars. As a race, they are fine, stalwart men, capable of undergoing great hardship and fatigue. They rarely, if ever, enlist into our service, but of their soldierlike qualities we have ample proof by the manner in which they force their way through the Vaziri country. No better guides than these Powindah clans could be found to accompany us into Afghanistan, while their camels, inured to the rough paths and scanty grazing of the Suliman passes, would form admirable material for a transport train. Of the fixed Ghilzae clans we know little; possibly Colonel Macgregor, in his recent visit to Khorassan, their home and birthplace, may have collected some information concerning them. Indeed, no man is better qualified to report upon the special characteristics of the Ghilzaes, and as Quartermaster-General of the Expeditionary Army his knowledge will be of peculiar value. The history of this tribe is most interesting, descended as they are from the illegitimate son of an exiled Persian prince, Shah Hussein, but it is beyond the scope of our present purpose.

The Turis dwell in the Kuram Valley, and can put, it is computed, about 6,000 fighting men into the field. Although much smaller men than the Ghilzaes, they nevertheless make fair soldiers, and as irregular cavalry of the Koord or Circassian stamp would be priceless. Whether they would face anything like heavy fire, or subject themselves to discipline, it is hard to say; but for plunder or, perhaps, foraging they are well qualified. They joined heartily with us in the Cabul Khel Vaziri Expedition, and succeeded in carrying off large quantities of grain and cattle. It is most probable that the Turis would throw in their lot with us, but their co-operation would be ineffective and their value as allies extremely questionable.

The Shinwaris form one of the three principal so called Khyberri clans dwelling on the northern slopes of the Sufaid Koh and in the Bajawar Mountains. We know very little concerning them, and that little is most unfavourable. They have ever shown marked aversion to us, and very few ever enlist into our service. It is an ascertained fact that they pay tribute to the Ameer, and that they receive from him a small subsidy in return for their

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share in keeping the Khyber Pass open for trade. In 1872 the Shinwaris earned some notoriety by harbouring the murderers of Major MacDonald, whom they resolutely declined to deliver up to us. In the last war General Monteath marched into their territory and summarily punished them for the unprovoked assault on the post of Pesh Bolak. It is estimated that this clan can put 7,000 men into the field.

The Momunds, we have already described in an article last week. They have openly avowed their intention of joining the Ameer, and it is believed that they can aid him with a contingent of about 18,000 men.

Bajawar lies to the north of the Momund territory, and its inhabitants have ever been most hostile to the British, but their enmity to their southern neighbours is even more marked. We have but small data by which we can arrive at any approximate knowledge of their fighting strength, which is generally computed at about 15,000 men. During the last Afghan war the Bajawaris were very active, a strong force of them being present at the siege of Jalalabad; and in 1863, at Umbeyla, they openly espoused the cause of the Hindostani fanatics. Some few of them enlist, and one if not more of the tribe holds a commission in Her Majesty's service; it may be assumed they will support the Ameer. Kunar could put perhaps 7,000 men into the field; the State pays revenue to Shere Ali with commendable regularity, and would in all probability aid him loyally.

The Jajis are a small clan who inhabit the mountain tracts between the Peiwar and the Shutar Garden Pass. They are Shiahs, and have a blood feud with their neighbours the Turis. Our knowledge of them is derived from the passage of Lumsden's Mission through their country, and certainly prompts the belief that they will oppose any force advancing up the Kuram route by every means in their power.

Of the Mangals we know equally little. They dwell on the southern slopes of the Peiwar Mountain, pay revenue to the Ameer, and are great fanatics in religious matters. It is said they can put 5,000 men into the field. The Jadrans own the country to the south of the Mangals and north of the Vaziris; they are Shiahs and notorious robbers. Khost is a large mountainous district, of which but little is known; it is peopled by Mahomedans of the Shiah persuasion, who, though they have been brought but little in contact with us, have ever contrived to show their animosity to all but true believers. They are divided into two great sections—the Tor and Spin Gundis—and can conjointly turn out about 3,000 men. Their country is bounded on the north by the Kuram district, on the west by the Mangals and Jadrans, on the south by Gurbuz and Dawar, and on the east by the Cabul Khel Vaziris. Revenue is collected by the Ameer's Viceroy, who dwells in the chief town, Sirkar ke Killa, so named by the inhabitants merely because it is a Government fort. The people are very fanatical, and are constantly engaged in religious disputes, which are much fomented by a disciple of the late Akhoond of Swat, who has settled in Lakan, one of the largest villages in the district. For some years he has busied himself in preaching a religious war against us; so that there is small reason to hope that the Khostwals will prove our allies.

We thus have briefly touched on the principal Pathan tribes of Cabul. Among these the Duranis, fixed Ghilzae clans, Shinwaris, Momunds, Bajawaris, Kunars, Jajis, Mangals, Jadrans, and Khostwals will in all probability throw in their lot with Shere Ali; while the Turis, nomad Ghilzaes, and certain Afridi clans will in all likelihood side with us. The probable attitude of the Parsiwan and Hindki population of Cabul we will consider on another occasion, merely remarking that the ties of religion will probably cause all the Mahomedan tribes, whether of the Shiah or Sunni persuasion, to combine against the infidel invader, as they did in the last war.

"Daily Telegraph" Oct 16th

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

PESHAWUR REINFORCED.

FORMATION OF A FRESH RESERVE.

EASTERN VIEWS ON ASIAN POLICY.

[BY EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]
SIMLA, OCT. 15 (7.15 A.M.)

Reinforcements are now rapidly reaching Peshawur, and another reserve force is in process of formation at Hassan Abdul.

The rumours stating that the Russians are in Yarkand are believed by some to refer to the Russian caravan sent to make commercial arrangements with the Chinese authorities.

Hassan Abdul is a town east of the Indus, between Attock and Rawal Pindi, on the high road to Peshawur; the troops collected there will form a support to the column gathering near the Khyber Pass, and, should these advance, would be in readiness to cross the river and occupy their places.

[BY DAILY TELEGRAPH SPECIAL WIRE.]
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]
VIENNA, TUESDAY NIGHT.

This morning I had an opportunity of conversing with an Eastern personage of high rank who is passing through this capital on his way to Paris, whither he is travelling in the strictest *incognito*. He spoke at some length on the present political situation, expressing himself in English sufficiently well to be understood, and, although he was particularly desirous that I should not give his name, manifested no objection to my communicating his views.

"England's troubles on the Indian frontier," he said, "are unquestionably the work of Russia; but I fancy that their importance for the moment is exaggerated, inasmuch as, providing Russia does not lend active assistance to Shere Ali, England will not have much difficulty in bringing him to his senses. But you must make up your minds to look beyond Afghanistan, and to deal at once with other and far greater dangers with which you are threatened. Persia is the sworn ally of Russia. The Shah hopes to get Arabia in exchange for the services he will be called upon to render; while Anatolia, in spite of your occupation of Cyprus, seems destined to become the early prey of Russia. I have travelled in those countries, as also in Kurdistan, and I always wondered why England did not exercise the power she commands by her immense wealth among the population, which is composed for the most part of savage tribes, ready to sell their services to the highest bidder. I found many of them well armed with Martini rifles, which I do not imagine will ever be used in defence of their legal Government. When the Russo-Persian scheme is carried out, which may be sooner than you expect, Turkey in Asia, with the Russians fortified at Batoum, Kars, and Bayazid, will be in the same helpless position as is Turkey in Europe at present, after the loss of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia; for believe me, those two provinces may henceforth be regarded as Russian. Thus hemmed in on all sides by the enemy, what is to save the rest of the Ottoman Empire? In my opinion the sick man is already a corpse, and the question now is, who is to get his estate? You will not succeed in improving the Turkish administration as long as you leave it in the hands of the Turks. Take it resolutely in your own now while it is yet time, and, if my experience of Orientals is worth anything, you will be hailed throughout the East as the envoys of Providence.

"If you do not do this," he added, putting his head on his hand, and closing his eyes as if asleep, "your Indian Empire is doomed to escape you." Then suddenly snatching up a crutch stick that lay beside him, and brandishing it in the air, he said, "You must fight; or at all events you must let Russia and her allies see that you are ready to fight. Wherever I go I hear the people say, 'No; England will not go to war; she will threaten and then she will yield.' But I say you will die if you continue to talk. Russia talks, but she works too, and spends more money than you. Other Powers make war to increase their Empire, and you will not even draw the sword to defend yours against them."

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]
CONSTANTINOPLE, OCT. 14.*

The *El Jawaib* has published a leading article deprecating Shere Ali's hostile attitude to England, and remarks that war between England and Cabul would profoundly disturb every Mohammedan kingdom, and that Shere Ali, by making war against England, the sole ally of Islam, would draw upon himself the censure, not only of all Mohammedan Sovereigns, but of every Mussulman. The *El Jawaib* expresses its conviction that if Shere Ali would frankly expose his grievances England would not refuse to give them a fair hearing.

* Delayed in transmission.

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"Times" Oct 17th

SIR BARTLE FRERE ON AFGHANISTAN.

We publish the following letter addressed by Sir Bartle Frere in 1874 to the late Sir John Kaye. It is an important contribution towards the formation of public opinion on the present crisis in our relations with Afghanistan :—

"24, Chapel-street, Belgrave-square,
June 12, 1874.

"My dear Kaye,—Many thanks for the papers regarding the Central Asian question. I have not seen Rawlinson's nor Burne's papers, and in what you sent me I find nothing new as regards the facts of the case—nothing, I mean, beyond what the newspapers tell us, and what has been, in fact, foreseen for the last quarter of a century, for we find the whole clearly predicted in Sir John M'Neill's pamphlet, which reached its third edition during the Crimean War, and in what many others have published since, besides what many more of us have written officially, and not published. The one new feature is that official politicians in India seem now at last seriously alarmed, and there is much risk that, like all men when they at last perceive a danger they have long been unable to recognize, they may rush in the wrong direction.

"However, the policy of 'masterly inactivity' seems at last abandoned by most of its former advocates. They no longer close their eyes and turn their backs on obvious dangers which are rapidly approaching. All agree that the time is come when 'something must be done;' but what is that 'something' to be? The Russians threaten Merv, and are steadily advancing along their whole frontier line. Our advisers all say, 'We, too, must advance;' one of them adds, 'We must saturate Turkestan with British influence and British goods;' and all seem to agree that we must make any move onwards by Russia a *casus belli*.

"As for Turkestan, it is quite right to open any trade routes we can in that direction, and if we can induce the people there and in Thibet to trade with India more extensively, so much the better. It is an object well worth all the trouble and expense of such Missions as Forsyth's to attain. I would only urge that we should look at such questions occasionally from a Chinese point of view, consider how our Mission affects our relations with China, and take good care that our alliance with the Ameer of Turkestan does not injuriously affect our position at Pekin. As a barrier against Russian advance, a Turkestan alliance seems to me of little value. Of course, it is well at all times to be on the alert, to have our attention directed in that direction, and to have constant, late, and accurate information of all that goes on in that quarter. The day may come when it may be very important to us to have a good name and good friends in Turkestan, whence a few active officers might in time of need make a useful flank impression on any force threatening India from the north-west. But Turkestan is not an easy route for invading India, and not likely to be used against us unless it should be so entirely neglected as, like any unguarded postern, to invite the approach of the invader.

"As for Merv, I do not in the least underrate the importance to us of its occupation by Russia. But our threat to make such occupation of a troublesome refuge for frontier robbers and man-stealers a *casus belli* would be worse than simply ineffectual. It would not stop the Russian advance in the least. It would merely, if the Russians regarded our threat at all, postpone that one step till, as in the case of the abrogation of the obnoxious clauses regarding the Black Sea in the Treaty of Paris, the step, in itself a necessary one and useful to civilization and good order, irrespective of Russian interests, would be taken at a moment when we could not go to war with any chance of fighting to good purpose.

"A little consideration will show that this must be the case. What is it that impels Russia to advance? We are pretty well agreed that the impulse is the same as that which impelled ourselves from Calcutta to Peshawur. We were a strong, united, aggressive, and growing Power, in contact with States so disunited and demoralized that their power was paralyzed and had no inherent vigour and capacity for resistance, still less for growth. Hence they invariably gave way and crumbled before us, and when there was any inherent vigour left in them to resist they always gave us some good cause for quarrel and were soon worsted in fair fight. We never stopped in conquering India for considerations of home policy or in obedience to any orders from London. Some of our greatest acquisitions were made, in our own generation, by men who came out sincerely determined to avoid extension of boundary, but the course of conquest was never stayed till we got to the barriers of the mountain regions which surround India on the land side. All this was in spite of the most constant and positive orders from home and the most sincere wish on the part of men at the head of affairs in India to obey those orders.

"It is the same with Russia, with this difference, that, instead of public opinion at home being, as was the case in England, strongly and sincerely pronounced against further extension of territory, there are in Russia, as I need not tell you, two opposite political parties. Neither of them objects, on any moral ground, to extension of territory; but one of them, including the Emperor himself and some of the best and most able financiers and enlightened politicians, is strongly opposed to further extension in Asia on grounds of expediency. The great mercantile party of protectionists, many of the Russianized Germans, who are more Russian than the Russians, most of the military and the ultra-national politicians, on the other hand, are enthusiastic supporters of further schemes of conquest, and this party is by far the more popular and powerful.

"If we, with our strong political discipline, with the earnest desire of Viceroys to obey orders, and with a still more earnest desire on the part of the nation at large to avoid conquest; if we, so favourably situated for abstention from aggressive warfare, found circumstances too strong for us, and were unwillingly forced on from the sea to the Himalayas, what chance has the Russian Government, or that party in it which dreads further conquest, of resisting the pressure of the same kind, but much greater in degree, which forces them to break up and annex the savage hordes intervening between them and India? I need not to you repeat how the annexation comes about; how the civilized Power, theirs as well as ours, is forced to put its best men in contact with the uncivilized neighbour; how if the frontier commander is ambitious, his uncivilized neighbours give him constant and apparently justifiable cause for hostilities, which in the end must always lead to the victorious advance of the stronger and more civilized Power; how, if the frontier commander is conscientious or unambitious, the uncivilized neighbour gravitates to the stronger Power by a process less violent than in the former case, but even more certain; how, when any semi-civilized 'Humpty Dumpty' gets his fall, 'all the king's horses and all the king's men' are utterly unable to set him up again; how there is life and power of recovery after the most damaging defeat and disaster in the most mismanaged branch of the civilized Power, and how there is nothing but death and decay in the uncivilized; how the one Power is insensibly and by internal vigour urged to grow and aggress, while the other has no inherent force of resistance, unless he gives up his antiquated arms and indiscipline, and takes to himself the powerful weapons and military array of civilized nations, which are of no avail,—in fact, which cannot long exist, unless he abandons also his barbarous habits and policy of finance and internal administration; in a word, unless he enters the ranks of civilized nations. All these things you know and have seen, and, therefore, I need not argue to you that, while Russia is a civilized, living, and growing Power, the wishes even of the all-powerful Czar and his ablest councillors are of little avail in stopping her career of growth and conquest among the least civilized races of Asia.

"But the Russians have one source of impulse which moves them more powerfully than it does us, though we, too, feel something of it. I mean the religious crusading element; this, as you know, is studiously discouraged and generally distrusted by our politicians, and though there is a strong missionary impulse in many classes of the community sufficiently strong to insure respectful treatment from those who do not share it among the governing class, it is by no means a fashionable and hardly a popular political impulse. But it is quite otherwise in Russia, where, whatever of real loyalty exists, is inseparably bound up with religion, and whatever is religious is actively propagandist and hostile to non-Christian Powers. To a modern religious Russian the prospect of a war with a Mahomedan or an idolatrous Prince has the same aspect and excites the same feelings as a crusade did among religious Englishmen in the middle ages. I only mention this because I think it is one of the forces impelling Russia onwards of which we take less account as a political force than it deserves. It is in many ways a great source of strength to her. So is the declared policy of the Russian Government, to spare no pains to put down slavery wherever her influence extends—such slavery, I mean, as that prevalent among the Turcomans and throughout Central Asia. Contrast our feelings, or the feelings of intelligent Americans, when they heard that the slave markets in Khiva and Bokhara were abolished, with what you and I felt when we ineffectually ground our teeth as we read of what poor Stoddart and Conolly were suffering, and we may have some faint idea of the national credit, the sense of duty performed, and the impulse to do more, which patriotic Russians feel when they consider what they are doing in Asia. The work may not be very perfect, but their feeling regarding it reckons for much in weighing political forces, as compared with the half-hearted shilly-shallying of our ordinary dealings with such questions, when we get beyond the bounds of India and the four corners of an Act of Parliament.

"The result of all this is that Russia will go on, whether her Government wish it or not, till something stops her; and what will stop her? Nothing that I can see, except an impassable barrier, such as we found in the mountain chain of the Himalayas; or a political barrier, such as finding herself on a frontier which she cannot pass without fighting an equally powerful nation on the other side; and where that powerful nation is civilized like herself, and able and willing to give her honest hearing and reasonable redress with regard to all frontier discussions, and to require equal justice from her.

"A 'neutral zone,' consisting of the territory of uncivilized Powers, is worse than useless as a barrier, simply because the uncivilized Power is, by the nature of things, sure to act in a way which would give an aggressive and growing Power on its border an irresistible cause for advance; or, if the civilized Power is sufficiently strong and determined to abstain from aggression, the weak and uncivilized Power must gravitate towards the stronger body and become in time a part of it, without formal annexation or aggression.

"For similar reasons, it will not be a sufficient check on the Russian advance to find themselves on the frontier of an uncivilized Power under our influence or protection, unless we are prepared to use that influence to direct the uncivilized Power in all its relations with its neighbours. We must be prepared not only to support the protected State when right, but to force it to make satisfaction when wrong; otherwise we shall not close the opening for interference by the other civilized Power on the opposite side, because we can offer no effectual guarantee that our

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uncivilized neighbour shall not repeat the provocation, and therefore we can have no valid objection to offer to Russia, on the opposite border, exacting efficient guarantees for her own security.

"This forms the great difficulty of any alliance with or protectorate of Afghanistan. An alliance is illusory, as we are now finding out to our cost, unless our ally be a ruler of exceptional wisdom, experience, and foresight, like Dost Mahomed. As for a protectorate, it is an essential element in any system of protection that the protected State should be willing to be guided by the advice of its protector in all matters of foreign policy. But it is hopeless to attempt anything of the kind in Afghanistan unless the protectorate were preceded by a thorough conquest, such as should clearly subject the ruler of Afghanistan to be guided by the advice of the British Government.

"What, then, is the barrier which I would propose to raise to Russia's advances towards India?

"Let us, before answering this question, consider the essential difference of British and Russian policy, using the word less in the sense of a design for political action, which may be changed from time to time, than as the result of national instincts and tendencies, and the expression of national interests, which are less variable. Used in this sense, Russian policy in Asia is, as we all see, positive, active, and aggressive. Whatever may be the professions or the wishes of Russian statesmen, the exigencies of her frontier position render it impossible for Russia to stand still until she meets some physical or political obstacle, which certainly does not at this moment exist between her frontier and ours. The question when the two frontiers will be conterminous is, as far as Russia is concerned, simply one of more or less time.

"Our policy, on the other hand, is purely defensive and stationary, and it seems to me that, by the nature of our position, it must so continue, unless we are inclined to enter the lists as rivals to Russia, and to embark on indefinite schemes of further Asiatic conquest. The nation is clearly not prepared, nor likely to be prepared, for this if it has due warning, has its eyes open to the consequences, and is aware that if once more on the move we may find it not easy to stop, nor to choose our own limit to our conquest.

"But our policy hitherto has been not only stationary, and nominally, though I think very imperfectly, defensive. It has been also purely negative. We are ready enough to say what we will not do, but all efforts by any of the other Asiatic Powers concerned have hitherto failed to elicit from the Government, either here or in India, any declaration of what it will do under any given or conceivable combination of circumstances.

"This peculiarity in our policy will at once explain to any one who knows Orientals, or, in fact, to any one who knows mankind in general, the inherent weakness of our policy as compared with that of the Russians. We find it so every day in Europe; negatives do not satisfy Belgium or Denmark, Switzerland, Turkey, Sweden, or any other Power that can possibly need a good word or a friendly act from us. How, then, can it satisfy a man like the Ameer, the Shah, or any other Oriental, who understands, and may trust, a positive promise, but who can neither understand nor trust a simple assertion that, 'when the time comes and the event happens we will think about it,' and who cannot estimate, as an European diplomatist can, what, from a variety of motives, we may do in the event of a weak European Power being threatened by a strong one?

"What, then, ought we now to do? Stand still, and do nothing? Clearly this can only precipitate events. Orientals generally misunderstand our present inaction. They suspect some deep design, some secret understanding with Russia. If it is once understood that nothing will move us till the Russians appear on our frontier, we shall certainly hasten that event by a great many years.

"But a defensive policy is not necessarily inactive, nor merely stationary, still less is it necessarily weak. On the contrary, a true defensive policy for India seems to me to require, now more than ever, much active exertion in many directions. Our great danger, greater than anything we can fear from foreign designs of aggression, seems to be on our own side the border, in the Indian belief that we are indifferent to, or afraid of, or connive at the Russian conquests, in our English *insouciance* and distaste for the subject, which is certain to end in a sudden rude awakening to the dangers of our position, and a risk of passionate, ill-considered, violent action, which is more dangerous to peace in democratic communities than the most ambitious designs of despotic autocrats.

"What, then, ought to be the character of our action? As for making an advance upon Merv by Russia a *casus belli*, I do not think the proposal will stand examination; the place is nothing to us except as a step towards Herat and Cabul, and it is not a necessary step to either; to prohibit the Russians from taking it might, in the event of their regarding our prohibition, force them to turn it, and thus delay for some short time the extermination of hordes of robbers and man-stealers, whose intervention between us and Russia must ever be a fruitful source of misunderstanding. But the Russians will not, or, more correctly speaking, they cannot, stop for any mere threats or promises of ours.

"Nothing, I believe, will be effectual to arrest their progress towards India till we have British officers stationed on the Indian side of a well-defined frontier, exercising an effective control over the politics of the semi-civilized races on our side of such a border, and in constant frank diplomatic communication with Russian officers on the other side.

"But how is this to be effected without annexation, or protectorate, almost equivalent to annexation, and supported by force?

"We must carry much further, and make more generally understood, the liberal, frank, and independent policy inaugurated by Lord Mayo. Much ingenuity and eloquence were expended, when Lord Mayo went out to India, to prove that in his dealings with the Ameer of Afghanistan there was no departure from our previous policy; but the fact is that Lord Mayo endeavoured, and with much success, to reverse the 'masterly inactivity' policy of the previous 20 years, and to revert to that system of dealing with our powerful frontier neighbours which, when Sir George Clerk was at Umballa and other men of like spirit in other parts of India, was so successful, and which at the present day, wherever it is tried, gives us all the security we can desire. Up to Lord Mayo's time our policy towards the Afghans had, with rare and fitful exceptions, been one of constant neglect and distrust. For many years after we had evacuated Afghanistan we maintained a sullen and distrustful silence, which, after the occupation of the Punjab, was exchanged for a policy of almost active hostility. We did all we could to weaken the Ameer's authority with his frontier chiefs, and to neutralize their power by sowing distrust and dissension among them.

"With the exception of expeditions to burn and lay waste, our Punjab officers were prohibited from intercourse with their neighbours over the border. When, after years of non-intercourse, some of the Candahar chiefs sought to renew friendly intercourse with our officers in Scinde, I was severely censured by Lord Dalhousie for proposing that the advance should be received in a kindly spirit. It is true that the discussion of the arguments I adduced in support of my views, aided by the sound sense with which Sir Herbert Edwardes shortly afterwards advocated a policy similar to that which I proposed, and possibly other causes unknown to me, soon afterwards induced Lord Dalhousie to relax in some degree the system of non-intercourse, and later on we were driven by our own interests during the Persian war to cultivate better relations with the Afghans; but nothing like a cordial, a generous policy towards the Afghans was adopted by the Government of India till Lord Mayo went out, and the success of the system had scarcely become apparent when he died.

"We must, it seems to me, act now independently and openly in the same spirit. We must not attempt to impose on the Ameer with any profession of disinterested regard for his welfare; we must let him see that we fully appreciate the danger which threatens ourselves as well as him by Russian advance, and that we intend to stop all occasion for such advance in his direction by assisting him so to govern Afganistan that he shall give Russia no pretence for interference.

"Your first and greatest difficulty will be, I fear, with your own people on the frontier. Matters are in some respects improved since I found it difficult to persuade a Punjab frontier official that it was possible to deal with Asiatic neighbours on the same principles as those professed in our dealings with Europeans; that by a 'just, conciliatory, and neighbourly policy' we did not mean a weak system of humbug, of wholesale bribery, and payment of blackmail to frontier robbers; that by a 'firm and strong policy' we did not intend sudden reprisals and raids into our neighbours' territory, setting tribe against tribe and family against family, ruthless destruction of the crops and trees, village burnings, and indiscriminate slaughter of all found in arms.

"The views held on these subjects by most of our Punjab frontier officers are much sounder now than they were 20, or even 10 years ago.

"But nothing can make up for the loss of such a noble school of frontier officers as John Jacob founded, and which the Government of India so persistently discouraged and ultimately abolished. You will find it every day more difficult to form men such as your Punjab frontier has furnished, and of which you have some still left. But if you intend to keep India, you must manage to train up men in the spirit of your Malcolms, Elphinstones, and Metcalfes of times past, and of Sir George Clerk in later days—men who, by their character and the confidence the natives have in them, can hold their own without the immediate presence of battalions and big guns.

"The active measures which seem to me essential for our present purpose are—first, to place an advanced post of our frontier army in the Khan of Khelat's territory, at Quettah, sufficiently strong to prevent the place being carried till reinforcements can arrive from the Indus, between which and Quettah the communication should be improved, as far and as fast as practicable, to the foot of the Bolan and throughout that pass. This would establish above the passes, and in the territory of a Power bound by treaty to act in subordinate co-operation with us, an advanced post in an excellent position for watching Southern Afghanistan, and acting, if necessary, on the flank of anything which might threaten India from the Kyber Pass and Cabul. These measures require no diplomacy, nor consultation with any other Power except the Khan of Khelat, and we have treaties and engagements with him which give us all the power we can require. A detachment from Jacobabad has frequently passed the summer at Quettah, and nothing more is necessary than to strengthen and provision such a post, and make it capable of permanent occupation.

"But I am not at all sure that you may not now find covert opposition in quarters where you would have found ready acquiescence in such a scheme a few years ago. I heard last week from an old Indian friend that he lately met on board a steamer in the Black Sea two Russian officers of rank, who began talking to him about Afghan politics, and one of them told my friend that he had lived for six months at Khelat. I never saw any mention of such a visitor in any of our frontier reports; but I have often thought that the perverse conduct of the Khan lately betokened an idea that he could rely on other support than that of the Government of India.

"The railway for 150 miles from the Indus to the

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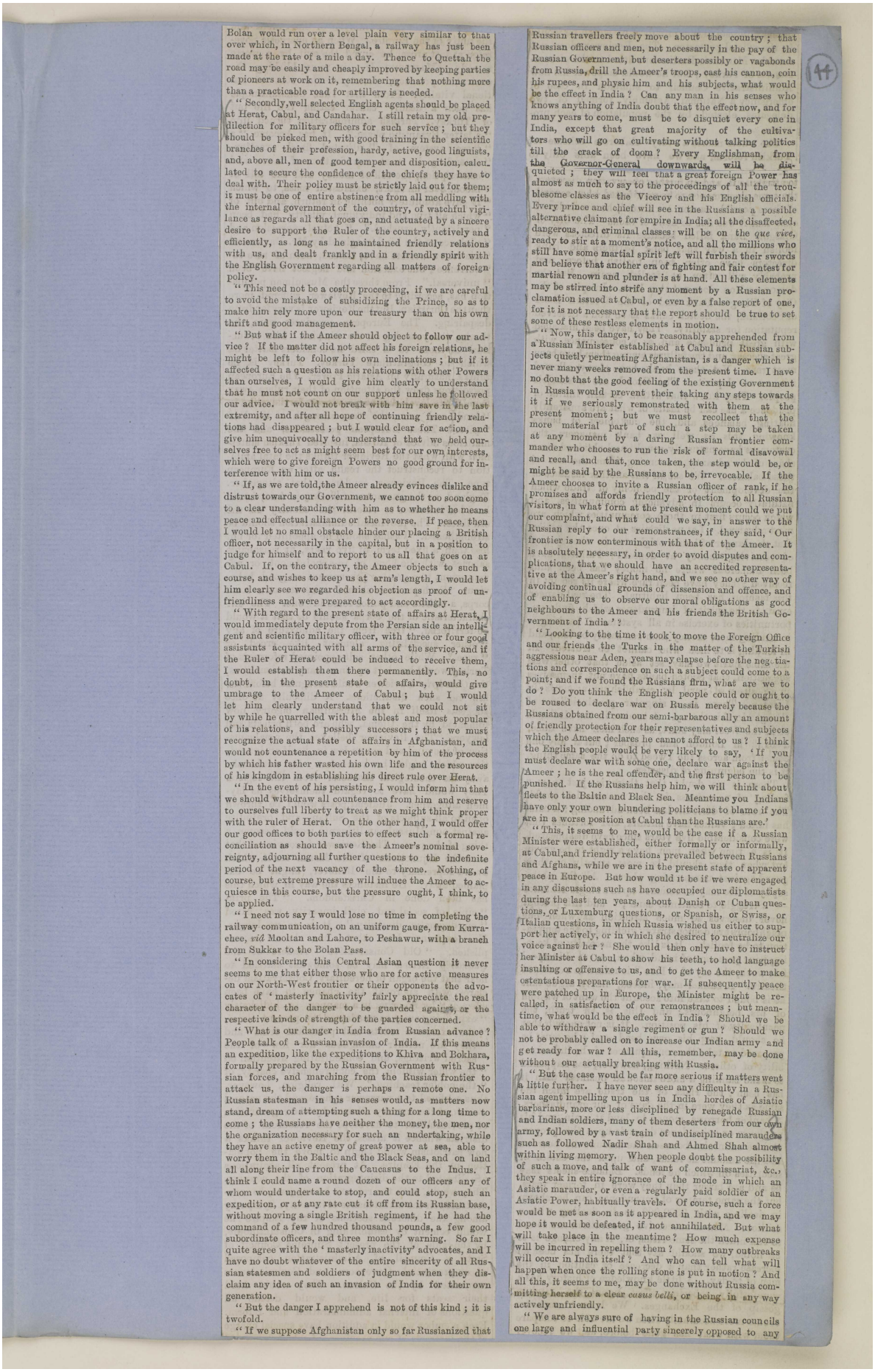

Bolan would run over a level plain very similar to that over which, in Northern Bengal, a railway has just been made at the rate of a mile a day. Thence to Quettah the road may be easily and cheaply improved by keeping parties of pioneers at work on it, remembering that nothing more than a practicable road for artillery is needed.

"Secondly, well selected English agents should be placed at Herat, Cabul, and Candahar. I still retain my old predilection for military officers for such service; but they should be picked men, with good training in the scientific branches of their profession, hardy, active, good linguists, and, above all, men of good temper and disposition, calculated to secure the confidence of the chiefs they have to deal with. Their policy must be strictly laid out for them; it must be one of entire abstinence from all meddling with the internal government of the country, of watchful vigilance as regards all that goes on, and actuated by a sincere desire to support the Ruler of the country, actively and efficiently, as long as he maintained friendly relations with us, and dealt frankly and in a friendly spirit with the English Government regarding all matters of foreign policy.

"This need not be a costly proceeding, if we are careful to avoid the mistake of subsidizing the Prince, so as to make him rely more upon our treasury than on his own thrift and good management.

"But what if the Ameer should object to follow our advice? If the matter did not affect his foreign relations, he might be left to follow his own inclinations; but if it affected such a question as his relations with other Powers than ourselves, I would give him clearly to understand that he must not count on our support unless he followed our advice. I would not break with him save in the last extremity, and after all hope of continuing friendly relations had disappeared; but I would clear for action, and give him unequivocally to understand that we held ourselves free to act as might seem best for our own interests, which were to give foreign Powers no good ground for interference with him or us.

"If, as we are told, the Ameer already evinces dislike and distrust towards our Government, we cannot too soon come to a clear understanding with him as to whether he means peace and effectual alliance or the reverse. If peace, then I would let no small obstacle hinder our placing a British officer, not necessarily in the capital, but in a position to judge for himself and to report to us all that goes on at Cabul. If, on the contrary, the Ameer objects to such a course, and wishes to keep us at arm's length, I would let him clearly see we regarded his objection as proof of unfriendliness and were prepared to act accordingly.

"With regard to the present state of affairs at Herat, I would immediately depute from the Persian side an intelligent and scientific military officer, with three or four good assistants acquainted with all arms of the service, and if the Ruler of Herat could be induced to receive them, I would establish them there permanently. This, no doubt, in the present state of affairs, would give umbrage to the Ameer of Cabul; but I would let him clearly understand that we could not sit by while he quarrelled with the ablest and most popular of his relations, and possibly successors; that we must recognize the actual state of affairs in Afghanistan, and would not countenance a repetition by him of the process by which his father wasted his own life and the resources of his kingdom in establishing his direct rule over Herat.

"In the event of his persisting, I would inform him that we should withdraw all countenance from him and reserve to ourselves full liberty to treat as we might think proper with the ruler of Herat. On the other hand, I would offer our good offices to both parties to effect such a formal reconciliation as should save the Ameer's nominal sovereignty, adjourning all further questions to the indefinite period of the next vacancy of the throne. Nothing, of course, but extreme pressure will induce the Ameer to acquiesce in this course, but the pressure ought, I think, to be applied.

"I need not say I would lose no time in completing the railway communication, on an uniform gauge, from Kurrachee, *viâ* Mooltan and Lahore, to Peshawur, with a branch from Sukkar to the Bolan Pass.

"In considering this Central Asian question it never seems to me that either those who are for active measures on our North-West frontier or their opponents the advocates of 'masterly inactivity' fairly appreciate the real character of the danger to be guarded against, or the respective kinds of strength of the parties concerned.

"What is our danger in India from Russian advance? People talk of a Russian invasion of India. If this means an expedition, like the expeditions to Khiva and Bokhara, formally prepared by the Russian Government with Russian forces, and marching from the Russian frontier to attack us, the danger is perhaps a remote one. No Russian statesman in his senses would, as matters now stand, dream of attempting such a thing for a long time to come; the Russians have neither the money, the men, nor the organization necessary for such an undertaking, while they have an active enemy of great power at sea, able to worry them in the Baltic and the Black Seas, and on land all along their line from the Caucasus to the Indus. I think I could name a round dozen of our officers any of whom would undertake to stop, and could stop, such an expedition, or at any rate cut it off from its Russian base, without moving a single British regiment, if he had the command of a few hundred thousand pounds, a few good subordinate officers, and three months' warning. So far I quite agree with the 'masterly inactivity' advocates, and I have no doubt whatever of the entire sincerity of all Russian statesmen and soldiers of judgment when they disclaim any idea of such an invasion of India for their own generation.

"But the danger I apprehend is not of this kind; it is twofold.

"If we suppose Afghanistan only so far Russianized that Russian travellers freely move about the country; that Russian officers and men, not necessarily in the pay of the Russian Government, but deserters possibly or vagabonds from Russia, drill the Ameer's troops, cast his cannon, coin his rupees, and physic him and his subjects, what would be the effect in India? Can any man in his senses who knows anything of India doubt that the effect now, and for many years to come, must be to disquiet every one in India, except that great majority of the cultivators who will go on cultivating without talking politics till the crack of doom? Every Englishman, from the Governor-General downwards, will be disquieted; they will feel that a great foreign Power has almost as much to say to the proceedings of all the troublesome classes as the Viceroy and his English officials. Every prince and chief will see in the Russians a possible alternative claimant for empire in India; all the disaffected, dangerous, and criminal classes will be on the *qui vive*, ready to stir at a moment's notice, and all the millions who still have some martial spirit left will furbish their swords and believe that another era of fighting and fair contest for martial renown and plunder is at hand. All these elements may be stirred into strife any moment by a Russian proclamation issued at Cabul, or even by a false report of one, for it is not necessary that the report should be true to set some of these restless elements in motion.

"Now, this danger, to be reasonably apprehended from a Russian Minister established at Cabul and Russian subjects quietly permeating Afghanistan, is a danger which is never many weeks removed from the present time. I have no doubt that the good feeling of the existing Government in Russia would prevent their taking any steps towards it if we seriously remonstrated with them at the present moment; but we must recollect that the more material part of such a step may be taken at any moment by a daring Russian frontier commander who chooses to run the risk of formal disavowal and recall, and that, once taken, the step would be, or might be said by the Russians to be, irrevocable. If the Ameer chooses to invite a Russian officer of rank, if he promises and affords friendly protection to all Russian visitors, in what form at the present moment could we put our complaint, and what could we say, in answer to the Russian reply to our remonstrances, if they said, 'Our frontier is now conterminous with that of the Ameer. It is absolutely necessary, in order to avoid disputes and complications, that we should have an accredited representative at the Ameer's right hand, and we see no other way of avoiding continual grounds of dissension and offence, and of enabling us to observe our moral obligations as good neighbours to the Ameer and his friends the British Government of India'?

"Looking to the time it took to move the Foreign Office and our friends the Turks in the matter of the Turkish aggressions near Aden, years may elapse before the negotiations and correspondence on such a subject could come to a point; and if we found the Russians firm, what are we to do? Do you think the English people could or ought to be roused to declare war on Russia merely because the Russians obtained from our semi-barbarous ally an amount of friendly protection for their representatives and subjects which the Ameer declares he cannot afford to us? I think the English people would be very likely to say, 'If you must declare war with some one, declare war against the Ameer; he is the real offender, and the first person to be punished. If the Russians help him, we will think about fleets to the Baltic and Black Sea. Meantime you Indians have only your own blundering politicians to blame if you are in a worse position at Cabul than the Russians are.'

"This, it seems to me, would be the case if a Russian Minister were established, either formally or informally, at Cabul, and friendly relations prevailed between Russians and Afghans, while we are in the present state of apparent peace in Europe. But how would it be if we were engaged in any discussions such as have occupied our diplomatists during the last ten years, about Danish or Cuban questions, or Luxemburg questions, or Spanish, or Swiss, or Italian questions, in which Russia wished us either to support her actively, or in which she desired to neutralize our voice against her? She would then only have to instruct her Minister at Cabul to show his teeth, to hold language insulting or offensive to us, and to get the Ameer to make ostentatious preparations for war. If subsequently peace were patched up in Europe, the Minister might be recalled, in satisfaction of our remonstrances; but meantime, what would be the effect in India? Should we be able to withdraw a single regiment or gun? Should we not be probably called on to increase our Indian army and get ready for war? All this, remember, may be done without our actually breaking with Russia.

"But the case would be far more serious if matters went a little further. I have never seen any difficulty in a Russian agent impelling upon us in India hordes of Asiatic barbarians, more or less disciplined by renegade Russian and Indian soldiers, many of them deserters from our own army, followed by a vast train of undisciplined marauders such as followed Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah almost within living memory. When people doubt the possibility of such a move, and talk of want of commissariat, &c., they speak in entire ignorance of the mode in which an Asiatic marauder, or even a regularly paid soldier of an Asiatic Power, habitually travels. Of course, such a force would be met as soon as it appeared in India, and we may hope it would be defeated, if not annihilated. But what will take place in the meantime? How much expense will be incurred in repelling them? How many outbreaks will occur in India itself? And who can tell what will happen when once the rolling stone is put in motion? And all this, it seems to me, may be done without Russia committing herself to a clear *casus belli*, or being in any way actively unfriendly.

"We are always sure of having in the Russian councils one large and influential party sincerely opposed to any

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attempt to favour such proposals among us, but we are also sure of there being always an opposite party, bent on Russian extension, regardless of ultimate consequences, and capable of doing an immense deal of mischief before any check can be applied.

"You will naturally ask, what is the remedy I propose for this state of things, and I will briefly state the principle on which I would proceed. First of all, I would endeavour to meet the danger as far as possible from our own frontier, without placing any hostile Power between us and our Indian base. Some of these measures I have already described. They involve the establishment of a perfect intelligence department of European officers in Afghanistan, and, if possible, a preponderating influence there; but I would not attempt the subjugation of the country nor its military occupation, because I believe that we can effectually keep out all rivals by supporting a national Government. Hence I would not attempt to hold Herat by a force of our own troops—at least, not until we had tried the effect of such measures as Todd, and Pottinger, and Rawlinson proved could be so effectual in like cases. I would not attempt to enforce union of the Afghan States under a single ruler; I would not oppose such union, if the ruler seemed capable of effecting it; I would give him the best advice I could on the subject, but avoid committing myself to support an unpopular or imbecile candidate for united Afghan empire. I believe if we deal candidly and frankly with the Afghans, as Metcalfe and Clerk dealt with the Sikhs, we might maintain supreme influence among them as long as we can command a succession of such men. But you must trust them largely and remember that their expenditure cannot be conducted like that of an overseer of a Union workhouse, under a vigilant Board of Guardians.

"I would greatly increase our naval force in Indian seas, and I would make those seas take the place of the Mediterranean as an ordinary cruising ground of one of our principal squadrons. Now that there are other Powers with a naval force in the Mediterranean besides France and Spain, our position there is much altered. There are Turks, Greeks, and Egyptians, Italians, and Germans, and Russians, as well as Frenchmen and Spaniards, to balance one another. With Gibraltar and Malta in our hands, we shall be as well able to hold our own in the Mediterranean as in old days; but we seem too apt to forget that the opening of the Suez Canal has materially altered our naval position in India. All the Mediterranean Powers I have named, and America also, have now some days' start of us in getting to the coast of India, and a well-directed naval expedition might now establish a hostile force on our Indian coasts, in a position to be seriously troublesome, while our attention was directed north-westwards. This would have been far more difficult before the Suez Canal was opened, because we had then the start of all other naval Powers in getting to India. We ought to have what we have not now, a squadron amply sufficient to protect our Indian coasts from insult or aggression, and able to refit in India even during a temporary interruption of the route by the Suez Canal. Hitherto the Viceroy has had little need for thinking of his navy, but in the next war he will have to make it his chief concern."

After discussing the future of Turkey and Persia, Sir Bartle Frere adds :—

"As regards Indian force, there are many things which seem to me of the utmost political importance as bearing on our position in Central Asia. I will only briefly indicate :—

"First, a thorough reform of our Indian army, the condition of which, at this present moment, seems to me in the last degree unsatisfactory. We are paying an enormous sum for an army which no one trusts, except as regards the European portion; and much of what is trustworthy is dangerously locked up in bad strategical positions. You know, as well as I do, that an effectual reform of the army, such as would make it as good as an army on a peace establishment can be, is not a difficult matter, if the necessary power were given to such men as Napier and the officers he would select. But I own I see little chance of such reform till the shock of war comes, and I only pray that it may not come in a form to surprise us before our General, whoever he may be, has time to re-organize his forces; but my distrust of anything but war awakening us is no reason why we should let our friends sleep contentedly in a fool's paradise, and therefore I would not cease to warn them of the risks they are running by persisting in their present course of aimless and costly inactivity.

"Secondly, whatever troops you have got—good, bad, or indifferent—ought not to be locked up, as so many thousands of them now are, in watching powers like Scindia, the Nizam, and Holkar. It is high time that these princes should feel and understand that their interests are identical with ours, and that they ought not to absorb 10,000 European troops in watching them or in keeping them upon their thrones. But they will never understand this, unless you can infuse into our political servants something of the old spirit which Lord Mayo so clearly showed was not dead or incapable of revival. All the troops at the capitals I have mentioned should be capable of withdrawal with a certainty that the ruler would be able and willing to protect himself and our friends at his own capital. I believe you may make these Princes as loyal and as little desirous of change as our own dukes, and the sooner we set about it the better.

"Thirdly, again, I think you should pay more attention in the Political Department to your lines of military communication. The Indus Valley and Rajpootana lines are still incomplete, and we have no lines of coast communication, except for a few hundred miles north from Bombay and south from Madras. I do not recollect for years past a single political paper of weight on this subject, and the political importance of completing the great trunk lines is discussed much as if they were lines to collieries or stone quarries, to be decided on purely commercial principles. You know I am not insensible to the inestimable value of canals or common roads; but war has now become a matter of days and hours, and we may any day bitterly repent our tardiness in completing the great strategical lines, which, after all, are identical with the great commercial lines of arterial communication.

"Neither can I recollect any careful discussion in the Political Department since I have been in Council on the various schemes of what seems to me most unwise military centralization which have from time to time been put forward regarding the constitution of the native army—for abolishing all but one dockyard, one gunpowder factory, one gun carriage factory, and in other ways putting all your eggs into one basket. These things are usually discussed in the Military and Financial Departments, where, of course, their importance is very great; but it is vital in the Political Department, which is very rarely, if ever, consulted.

"I hardly expect to carry you with me in my last suggestion, that you should permanently uproot the Viceroy both from Calcutta and Simla; let him by all means have palaces there, and in every other great division of the Empire, but let his habitual resort be on your western sea coast or your North-Western frontier, and let the permanent offices of his Government be at some place like Nassick, where Campbell showed long ago they ought to be put in a defensible position, close to the coast, in a climate where your clerks could live comfortably all the year round. You will think this a mofussilite crotchet. But, depend upon it, even a Bengal famine ought not to absorb the large share of the Viceroy's attention, which is always now habitually given to many local matters of less importance than that famine. Sixty millions of people, or twenty, or even ten millions, deserve as good a Governor as England can furnish and as perfect an apparatus of administration specially devoted to local interests. Your Viceroy should never be called in except to deal with really Imperial questions. At present he attempts to govern in detail half India, and the great Commissioners and Lieutenant-Governors, who were intended to be triennial or quinquennial Cæsars, are by turns left very much to their own devices, with a certainty that their measures will be upset within four years by their successors, or they are reduced to puppets by th direct interference of the Viceroy. If you keep a Vic roy at all, he can only be useful if he rules over an Ind divided somewhat after Bright's fashion into a federati of kingdoms, each furnished with complete apparatus administration, so framed as to be capable of continui uniform traditions of policy. You must, as Lord Elph stone said, build your great Eastern Empire as you bu your great iron ships, in separate compartments, which can isolate in case of necessity.

"Lastly, I would not trouble the Governor-General with the affairs of Persia, Arabia, or Africa; they are all affairs of Indian rather than European interest; but the attempt to rule them from Simla or Calcutta is a delusion. The only effectual means of dealing with the European interests they all involve resides in our Houses of Parliament and Cabinet, and ought to be dealt with in Westminster, and as directly by the Secretary of State for India as your Indian shipbuilding affairs at Wapping.

"Affairs at Aden and Bushire may then have some interest for an English Cabinet and Parliament. At present they have none, and the real interests of India are sacrificed in a vain attempt to maintain the sham of control from the Viceroy, who is powerless to do more than advise or remonstrate, when the Indian interests of his charge do not exactly coincide with European interests, or when his appeals disturb the quiet slumbers of our insular public. He has, indeed, the power to get you into an European imbroglio, with the hope of making you pull him through, and excuse his taking the only means he has of really rousing his countrymen's attention; but this is not an expedient of which you would wish to encourage the frequent use.

"I have gone on writing till my note has extended to sheets which required copying, and you may wish that I had put it in print, when it would at least have been legible. But it is not all for the public, and there are, perhaps, some things in it which you may like to lay before Lord Salisbury as opinions of one who has long, as an old Indian Warden of the Marches, had his attention directed to these matters.

"Believe me, dear Kaye, ever sincerely yours,
"Sir J. Kaye, K.C.S.I." "H. B. E. F."

LONDON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1878.

In another page we publish a very long and peculiarly instructive letter on Afghanistan, which Sir BARTLE FRERE addressed to the late Sir JOHN KAYE, the distinguished historian of the Afghan war. Although it was written more than four years ago, it so exactly meets the difficulties of the present situation that it might have been penned yesterday. Sir BARTLE FRERE'S services in India, and his practical acquaintance with its North-Western frontier, give a peculiarly high value to his opinion; and there can be little doubt that his elaborate minute has been carefully studied by the highest authorities of our Eastern Empire. It so exactly, indeed, foreshadows all they have done that they might safely put it forward either as a summary of instructions or a defence of their policy. It peculiarly merits study at a time when much perplexity has been caused in many minds by the adverse criticisms of Lord LAWRENCE. Sir

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BARTLE FRERE does not commend "the masterly "inactivity" of that eminent authority; his whole letter amounts to a plea for masterly activity. He argues that the advance of Russia in Central Asia ought to be checked, that we alone can check it, and that we ought to draw an impassable line by extending our influence over Afghanistan. But there is a very great difference between his view of the Russian progress and that of the alarmists who explain it by the perfidy of St. Petersburg, and by the determination of Muscovite soldiers and statesmen to overthrow our power in India. If the Russians can stop their march, and if they still proceed at the dictate of sinister motives, the case is very grave. But such a theory is at once dismissed by every man of political culture. The Russians, as Sir BARTLE FRERE points out, are pushing through Central Asia on account of exactly the same causes as those that have made us annex one after another of the native States of India. Uncivilized communities cannot keep their independence by the side of civilized Governments; sooner or later they must be annexed for the sake of order. Many of the Russian officers are also eager to distinguish themselves by fresh conquests, and thus they proceed in spite of stringent commands from the distant capital. Sometimes they may be prompted by secret orders. Sometimes they may feel the spur of religious fanaticism or commercial avarice. But, be the causes of advance what they may, they will continue to operate until Russia meets with a State possessing the coherence and the strength of civilization. It has sometimes been thought that we could stop her march by entering into an alliance with the Khanates of Turkestan; but, if such a union was ever possible, the day for it has long gone by. Sir BARTLE FRERE has equally little faith in the protecting power of a neutral zone. We cannot guarantee the good behaviour of the people in that zone, and we must either punish their inevitable aggressions or permit that work to be done by some other State. At the best, therefore, a neutral zone could only be a makeshift, and in Afghanistan it has now ceased to be a possibility.

To address vague reproaches to Russia for advancing towards our frontier is futile and undignified; it becomes us only to take precautions against a possible or probable danger; and Sir BARTLE FRERE'S anticipation of that danger is much the same as Sir JAMES STEPHEN'S. He supposes that the CZAR sends a Minister to Cabul, and that meanwhile England finds herself burdened in Europe by some perilous dispute, in which she and Russia take opposite sides. He assumes that the Government of St. Petersburg then instructs the Minister at Cabul to prompt the AMEER to make ostentatious preparations for war against India. Thus we should be obliged to increase our Indian army, and we should be embarrassed in Europe. Something not unlike that anticipation has actually happened. Sir BARTLE FRERE also supposes an Afghan horde to be really let loose upon our frontier. It would, of course, be defeated, but the process would be troublesome and expensive, and no country in the world has greater need than India of profound and prolonged peace. Sir BARTLE FRERE may somewhat, perhaps, overrate the danger. It ought to be remembered, also, that Afghan troops, even if drilled and led by Russian officers, would be much less formidable than the Indian soldiers of Lord WELLESLEY were at the beginning of this century, because they would be opposed, not by feeble Asiatic Princes, but by the strongest Power in the world. Such a difference is so important that the policy of masterly inactivity might have been successful if it had been consistently and thoroughly applied. The line of the Indus having been strengthened and the outlets of the Bolan and the Khyber fortified, it might have been safe to wait for the day when the Russian outposts should reach our own. But the Indian Government has never for any length of time consistently held by one course for the defence of the North-Western frontier. The disastrous Afghan war was a plunge into the most mischievous kind of activity. Then "we main- "tained a sullen and distrustful silence," and next we were actively hostile to the AMEER. Sir BARTLE FRERE says that he was severely censured by Lord DALHOUSIE for proposing to meet in an amicable spirit some chiefs from Candahar who sought to renew friendly intercourse with our officers in Scinde. Lord DALHOUSIE afterwards changed his views so far as to cultivate the friendship of the Afghans. Lord LAWRENCE gave a similar example of inconsistency, first, by his "masterly inactivity," and then by subsidizing the AMEER. Lord MAYO equally left the Afghans uncertain how far we should go to defend them from aggression. Thus Lord LAWRENCE'S policy was never fairly tried, and now it is too late to think of merely waiting for the approach of danger. Unless SHERE ALI should be unexpectedly meek, we must rely on something very different from inactivity.

Sir BARTLE FRERE proposes an elaborate scheme for the protection of our frontier. He would let SHERE ALI know that we should at all hazards bar the advance of Russia into Afghanistan, and would, in case of necessity, help him to defend his territory. He would also place well selected English agents at Herat, Cabul, and Candahar to watch the Russians. He would further put an advanced post of our frontier army in the Khan of KHELAT'S territory at Quetta, so as to be able to watch Southern Afghanistan, and to act on the flank of any force which might threaten India from Cabul and the Khyber Pass. That is what the Indian Government has actually done; and, to tell the truth, the political result of the movement has not as yet been altogether happy. The advance to Quetta may or may not have been necessary, but there can be little doubt that it deeply offended the AMEER, and perhaps it has done more than anything else to throw him into the hands of the Russians. It was the turning point of our Indian policy—the final abandonment of "masterly inactivity." Having gone so far, we should have been only halting halfway if we had not invited the AMEER to receive a British Envoy at Cabul. Sir BARTLE FRERE was prepared to insist that the request should be granted, and ready, of course, for the consequences of refusal. If the AMEER should yield at the eleventh hour, we shall be able to place British agents at Herat and Candahar, as well as at Cabul. But let us not delude ourselves with the idea that they could be mere Envoys. To be of real use they must be able to check the AMEER if he should be tempted to run the risk of foreign war, and to help him if his power should be threatened. That is the alternative of any consistent reversal of Lord LAWRENCE'S policy, and it would be useless to disguise the importance of such a change. Sir BARTLE FRERE does not completely lay bare its real character and moment. But, to say the least, it is not improbable that SHERE ALI may decline to let us gain so much influence in his country; and, if such should be his answer to the VICEROY, the necessary consequence of the policy advocated by Sir BARTLE FRERE is that we should establish by force centres of political influence in the chief towns of Afghanistan. We must, in other words, undertake the defence of that country, either indirectly by means of the AMEER, or directly by the employment of British troops. It would be useless to contest the necessity of such a course now that it has been deemed needful to forbid the advance of Russia beyond the Afghan frontier; but it would be equally useless to hide the gravity of the consequences, and Sir BARTLE FRERE'S very able minute would have been more satisfactory if it had set them forth more clearly.

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"Pall Mall Gazette". Oct. 17th

AFGHANISTAN.

SIMLA, Oct. 17.—The mustering of Afghans in the Khyber Pass is causing uneasiness, their disposition and intentions being unknown. The Peshawur and Kohat garrisons are being reinforced and placed in a state of readiness. Three Punjaub regiments have reached Thull. The Afreedee soldiers are rejoining the Punjaub regiments.

It is reported that Ali Musjid and Candahar have been largely reinforced.

SIR BARTLE FRERE ON AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times*, remarking upon a letter on the Afghan question addressed to Sir John Kaye in 1874 by Sir Bartle Frere, observes that Sir Bartle proposes an elaborate scheme for the protection of our frontier. He would let Shere Ali know that we should at all hazards bar the advance of Russia into Afghanistan, and would in case of necessity help him to defend his territory. He would also place well selected English agents at Herat, Cabul, and Candahar to watch the Russians. He would further put an advanced post of our frontier army in the Khan of Khelat's territory at Quetta, so as to be able to watch Southern Afghanistan, and to act on the flank of any force which might threaten India from Cabul and the Khyber Pass. That is what the Indian Government has actually done; and, to tell the truth, the political result of the movement has not as yet been altogether happy. If the Ameer should yield at the eleventh hour, we shall be able to place British agents at Herat and Candahar, as well as at Cabul. But let us not delude ourselves with the idea that they could be mere envoys. To be of real use they must be able to check the Ameer if he should be tempted to run the risk of foreign war, and to help him if his power should be threatened. That is the alternative of any consistent reversal of Lord Lawrence's policy, and it would be useless to disguise the importance of such a change. Sir Bartle Frere does not completely lay bare its real character and moment. But, to say the least, it is not improbable that Shere Ali may decline to let us gain so much influence in his country; and, if such should be his answer to the Viceroy, the necessary consequence of the policy advocated by Sir Bartle Frere is that we should establish by force centres of political influence in the chief towns of Afghanistan.

M. Arminius Vambéry, writing in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on the Sultan and the Ameer of Afghanistan, says that the effendis at Constantinople look upon their co-religionists in the far East with curiosity and some sympathy, but that this sympathy is purely of a religious and in no way of a national character. It is only two years ago that the first book on Central Asia in the Turkish language was published. The author of this work, which is based entirely on European sources of information, was Ali Effendi, the editor of the *Bassiret* newspaper. As to Afghanistan, the Turks know even less about it than of the Asiatic khanates. When shortly before the Russo-Turkish war broke out it was decided to send emissaries to all Mahommedan countries in order to gain allies for the Sultan against the enemy of Islam, it was with great difficulty that a few sheikhs and dervishes from Central Asia could be found to undertake the task. The envoy selected for Afghanistan was Khulussi Effendi, as he had formerly been in communication with some learned Mahommedans in India. M. Vambéry expresses a decided opinion that the Sultan could not have the slightest influence on the conduct of Shere Ali; the diplomatic communications which have passed between Constantinople and Cabul are, he thinks, merely demonstrations of etiquette, which can in no way affect the political attitude of the two States. "Sixteen years ago," adds M. Vambéry, "a Central Asian ruler said to me, 'The Caliph may have good soldiers and guns, his powder may be as fine as our barley-meal, and his fortresses as high as our mountains; but he is too far from us, and we can only beg for a prayer from him in the hour of need.' If some question of ritual were at issue in Cabul the Afghans would doubtless submit it to the Sultan for decision; but in political matters they would care very little for his advice. They have long gone their own way, and will do so in future."

OFFICIAL ECHOES OF ALARM.

TO-DAY are we treated to another illustration of the "story of the steed and the stable-door." Upon the long letter from Sir JAMES STEPHEN on which we commented yesterday follows a yet longer letter on the same subject written by Sir BARTLE FRERE to the late Sir JOHN KAYE in 1874, and setting forth the neglected exigencies of Indian policy with even more fulness and precision than its predecessor. Its reflections and counsels are all of them as sound and sensible as Sir JAMES STEPHEN'S, and all of them are now as miserably out of date. We listen with respect to these official echoes of the voice of the "alarmist" and the "irresponsible politician" of former years—echoes hitherto so carefully prevented from escape into the outer world—but we can gain nothing from them now, save perhaps a truer estimate of the illusions which have been allowed by officialism to arrest and bewilder public opinion. That is, indeed, the solitary advantage to be derived from these tardy echoes. No Indian administrator, however eminent, has been or will be able to add anything to the arguments and admonitions which have been pressed upon successive English Ministries by advisers from without. What such men can and do supply—and it is well worth having—is the knowledge that the very same arguments and admonitions were being pressed upon our rulers by their most trusted and experienced councillors from within. When, for instance, Sir BARTLE FRERE argues that the advance of Russia towards our Indian frontier must, for reasons independent of the Imperial Russian policy of the hour, be regarded as inevi-

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table; that it is ("was" in 1874) bringing her nearer and nearer to positions which, even if she does not deliberately seek to secure them, she must, by the force of circumstances ultimately attain; when he urges that, these positions once gained, she could easily and without any question of invasion of India, expose us to extreme danger, disquietude, and cost in that region, besides utterly paralyzing our action in any European question in which we might find ourselves opposed to Russia; when, Sir BARTLE FRERE, we say, is thus arguing, he is merely repeating, with the added force of his reputation and authority, what we and others have wearied ourselves and the public with repeating for years past. But how many of us knew, how many of us were allowed to suspect, that what we were saying as outsiders was being repeated in nearly the same words by men in the position of Sir BARTLE FRERE? When views like these were being ridiculed as alarmism by those "thoughtful persons" who are now engaged in thoughtfully eating their words, did the Government of the day, by any of its representatives, let fall a hint that the "alarmism" of the outsider was the serious alarm of the soberest and most experienced officials? When the "irresponsible" journalist was accused of panic-mongering, was the public permitted to know that a responsible administrator, so highly trusted as to be selected for most difficult tasks outside the sphere of his ordinary employment, was himself a large dealer in this very same commodity of alarm? Has it not, on the contrary, been the cue of successive Ministries and their hacks to encourage the cheap ridicule of Russophobia, or even, like Lord SALISBURY, to swell the chorus of derision? Has it not been their chosen part to discourage and suppress the opinions of men like Sir BARTLE FRERE, to do all in their power to make it appear that the only persons who held such opinions were English politicians of the type of the late Mr. URQUHART, or Anglo-Indian soldiers the English counterparts of General KAUFMANN? Have we not been sedulously taught that all the best and most trustworthy of Indian civil administrators were wedded to that policy of masterly inactivity to which Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, speaking last year on behalf of the Cabinet, gave his so unqualified adhesion?

We know that this is so; and, knowing it, we ought not to hesitate to call such conduct by its right name. In this, as in too many other instances, the English people have been systematically blinded or left in blindness by their rulers. The people, the authority from which Ministers nowadays profess with such ostentatious deference to derive their policy, have been studiously kept in ignorance of many of the most essential data for arriving at a sound judgment. Everything that could be done has been done to prevent them from seeing more than one side of the case upon which they are or must one day be called upon to pronounce; that side being the one which it suited ministerial weakness, or the supposed exigencies of party policy, that the nation should believe the stronger. And we see now to what a pass our affairs have been brought by this long course of bamboozling. It has led to this—that now when the hour for preparation has passed, and the hour for action, prepared or unprepared, has struck, the Government are seeking to justify enforced action by tardy admissions, which in reality only condemn them for ever having allowed the necessity to arise. The very futility of the defensive measures which Sir BARTLE FRERE proposed four years ago is the measure of what has been lost by delay. Effective possibly in 1874, they are obviously inadequate now. The time has come when the "alarmists" of a former period, and the "converted optimists" of to-day are alike unable to propose any other remedy for the Indian mischief than the sword—or a bad bargain with the enemy when he has passed within our gates. And we have to thank the discordant rabble called our Government that so it is.

A MUSSULMAN ADMONITION TO SHERE ALI.

AN article which lately appeared in a Mussulman paper, *al-Jawâib*, seems to have excited some attention. The following translation of it may therefore be welcome:—

When we had begun to hope that matters were about to settle down into something like order, a telegram reaches us which scatters our hopes to the wind. We refer to the misunderstanding which has arisen between his Highness Shere 'Aly Khân, the Amir of Afghanistân, and the Government of the Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India. The tension between the two has already reached a dangerous crisis, and there can be no doubt that it will seriously affect Muslim States generally, and the Sublime Porte in particular. This misunderstanding, as we stated in a former number of the *al-Jawâib*, originated in the despatch by Russia of a special mission to the Amir, composed of a number of staff and political officers, with an escort of 2,000 soldiers of the army of observation in Central Asia, the whole under the command of General Schouvaloff. According to the Russian journals, the object of this mission was to confirm the relations and commercial interests at present existing between Russia and Afghanistân. A telegram also states that Russia's aim in this matter is to conciliate the Amir. We have no notion of finding fault with his Highness Shere 'Aly for his reception of the mission; but we beg to observe that the manner in which he welcomed the enemies of the Muslims to his country, so different to what has been usual hitherto, calls for grave comment. He had his soldiers drawn up to do honour to the chief of the mission, and to show him that he had an army at hand capable of meeting the English in the field. Be it borne in mind here that the English have certain rights over that kingdom too well known to be mentioned, and that when they saw that Samarkand, Khokand, Khiva, and other Central Asian Muslim States had been annexed by Russia, they also, to borrow the

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Russian phraseology, desiring to cement their friendly and commercial relations with Afghanistân, and, to conciliate the Amîr, determined in like manner to send a special mission to him. We had thought that, acting impartially, he would have received it as he did the Russian mission, and that when the two missions were with him he would have a good opportunity of analyzing both, and of deciding which was the more favourable to his country. In that case we should have seen a spectacle such as has not been witnessed for the last twenty years. But, according to all acounts, the Amîr chose arrogantly to follow his own bent, and to calculate upon the capital which he had in hand. But therein it is certain that he is placing himself and his country in jeopardy; for the English are evidently determined to defend their rights, even at the cost of losing their last man and spending their last farthing on the enterprise. This is clear from the telegrams arriving from India, which set forth that the Government of India is making preparations for the war, and is determined to measure its strength with Afghanistân. We do not believe that the war will be of long continuance, for the Muslim States beyond Afghanistân which are already held by Russia will back the Amîr, knowing, as their chiefs doubtless know, that the result of this war will tend to uphold the Muslim kingdoms. The Muslims of India, also, will certainly adopt the same view, for they know that during the late war the British Government was the only ally of the Sublime Porte, and that it alone came forward with land and sea forces to prevent the approach of the Russians to Constantinople. Hence it is impossible that the Muslims generally can approve of the Amîr making war upon the English, and seeking to conciliate the Russians; and what is applicable to the Sublime Porte is also applicable to this Afghan question, which will not be confined to the British Government and Shere 'Aly Khân, but will affect the Muslims of the world at large, and in its onward course will deprive the Muslim States of that tranquillity and security so indispensable to the improvement of their condition and strength. If, therefore, it is the intention of the Amîr to bring discouragement upon the Muslims and to disappoint their hopes, he is exposing himself to the highest censure, to opprobrium, and contumely, without knowing, moreover, what the result will be. For who can venture to assure us that this war will not involve all the Muslim States, especially if it should become known that Russia is abetting the Amîr? Is Shere 'Aly Khân ignorant that the Sublime Porte is in need of the English to enable it to carry out reforms in its remote provinces, and that his hostilities with the English will postpone their execution indefinitely? This, indeed, is what the Russians desire; and, whether he should be victor or vanquished, it will alike serve their purpose, for their hatred of the English is on a par with their hatred of the Muslims. Is the Amîr unaware, moreover, of the responsibility which he will incur towards the people of the two Holy Places—Makkah and al-Madînah—and towards the pilgrims who will visit them this year? Only let them hear that a Muslim Amîr has opened the way for the shedding of Muslim blood in order to please the enemies of Islâm, and they will load him with censure for his hateful crime and will rise up like one man against him. It is not to be denied that there should be some settlement of the differences existing between the English and the Amîr such as befits his exalted dignity, he being one of the Muslim Sovereigns; but how can any such settlement be expected if he refuses to receive the mission from India? We trust that his religious sentiments, his patriotism, and compassion for his subjects will prevent him from rushing headlong into this war, the horrors of which and the results of which he cannot foresee. We conjure him, in the name of the Creator, that he will not add to the severe trials which the Muslims have undergone during the last fatal year, but that he will strive to establish his kingdom in that which will profit it, in that which will be approved by Him who seated him on the throne, and in that which will win for him the praise of all Muslims. In like manner we trust that the British Government will be disposed to be indulgent towards and to soothe him, so that all differences may be amicably settled, and friendship and amity be established between them. Such a result will be the confusion of the enemies of the Muslims, and satisfy the wishes of every lover of Islâm. We pray that God will inspire all Muslim Amîrs with what is well-pleasing in His sight, and convert their hearts to obey His commandments.

"Pall Mall Gazette" Oct. 18th

ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Times* remarks that if the country has not yet made up its mind upon the Afghan question, it is from no want of full and definite information on the most essential facts of the case. The facts are fully before us, and we have only to discover the conclusion to which they point. If there is any hesitation here, it must be attributed, not to the want of guides, but rather to the excess of numbers in which they have offered themselves. Before, however, we can approach the Afghan question, we must form some opinion or other as to the position and designs of Russia. It is these alone that can lend any importance to it. That Russia has been advancing year after year and drawing nearer to our borders is a patent fact. She has now come so close, and has been so active in promoting her influence in a territory which does not belong to her, that we are compelled, whether we will or no, to ask where she is to stop. If we do nothing, we must be prepared to see Afghanistan fall quietly into her arms. Sir Bartle Frere's conclusion on the whole matter is, that in some way or other we must make our own influence supreme in Afghanistan and must get rid of Russian influence. This much granted, we have at least a firm standing ground, and can proceed with some hope to a further discussion of the question before us. Whatever we may think of the latest phase of our Afghan policy, we can be in little doubt as to the position to which it has conducted us. We are no longer free to choose in what way we shall behave to the Ameer. Our conduct to him must now depend entirely on his conduct to us. We can scarcely get off until we have done some fighting first, on whatever terms we may think it well to shake hands afterwards.

The *Daily News* cannot venture to guess what the substance of the Ameer's reply to the Viceroy will be; but thinks it is at least probable that it will be courteous in tone. As to its substance, however, public opinion, in England at least, is in a far better condition to judge coolly and impartially than it was some three weeks ago. The country was at that time a good deal misled by hasty and inaccurate reports. The impression upon everybody's mind was that a courteous request made by our Viceroy had been discourteously and instantly replied to by the Ameer, who had ordered his commandant to signify to the Viceroy's emissaries that if they dared to advance he would open fire on them. Now, at all events, we know that the alarming and exciting reports were very unlike the truth. The mission was stopped at what we may call the Ameer's gate and told, not rudely, but rather civilly, that the Ameer had given no authority for their admission, and that therefore they could not be admitted. There was no threat of opening fire on them—there was no occasion for any such threat. Now, whatever the determination of the Ameer may be, whatever may be the terms of the reply which the envoy has brought, and of the policy proper for the Indian Government to pursue in consequence, it is clear that the condition of the facts thus far is very different indeed from that which rumour at first represented. There is nothing for us to grow wildly excited over. We can all afford to wait calmly for the Ameer's answer.

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"Times" Oct. 18th 147

AFGHANISTAN.

REPLY OF THE AMEER.

BOMBAY, OCT. 18.

The *Times of India* publishes a telegram stating that Gholam Hussein Khan has returned, and that the reply of the Ameer, of which he is the bearer, is unsatisfactory.

According to despatches received here, the Mohmands are divided in their allegiance to the Ameer. Nowrog Khan, the late Governor of Lalpura, has offered to assist the British.

It is stated that desertions occur daily in the Afghan army, owing to the want of food, clothing, and pay.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The letter of Sir James Stephen in *The Times* of the 16th inst., while stating clearly his views on the subject of our North-Western policy in India, appears to me misleading in some of its military aspects, and I shall be glad if you will afford me an opportunity of reply.

And first as to the general position of Russia in Central Asia. Sir James Stephen in his remarks compares it with that which we held in India in 1803 under Lord Wellesley, and, although he does not ignore the isolated and precarious position of the Russian troops in the Central Asian deserts, he still appears to think that by raising armies and by forming alliances they may gradually develope into a great power there, and thus become a danger to us in India. But the circumstances are almost entirely different. India and Central Asia do not compare with each other. The former is a fertile country, and rich in military resources—that is, in warlike races, in food, forage, fuel, and, now-a-days, in its roads and communications. It contains about 200,000,000 people, of different races and religions, of which the Mahomedans are a minority. By conquering India we have, in short, obtained a magnificent empire; one which under our rule is daily rising in prosperity. Civil government is firmly established, and the military position is far stronger than ever. Our troops, both English and Native, are well armed and trained; the arsenals are fixed at strategical points; while our internal communications by river, road, and rail are comparatively easy, and our resources are capable of almost indefinite expansion.

Russia in Central Asia holds in virtual subjection the three great Principalities of Khiva, Bokhara, and Khokand. This is not very difficult, as their forces are mere armed rabble, and if the power of Russia in that part of the world were measured by mere geographical extent, it would be formidable; but, in truth, this very extent is the cause of great weakness. There is a general deficiency throughout the whole vast region of food, water, fuel, forage, and roads. The few rivers are difficult of navigation, and the transport is almost entirely carried on by means of camels. This latter point at once indicates the desert nature of the country, and greatly aggravates the difficulty of massing troops and stores at their outposts. The whole population of Central Asia in Russian possession does not, it is said, exceed four millions and a half, consisting chiefly of predatory tribes thinly scattered over a vast area. They are fanatical Mahomedans and bitterly hostile, and I have never heard that Russia has ventured to raise a single battalion on the spot. Civil government is in its infancy, and financially the country is a perpetual drain. The nearest railway station is at Orenburg, about 1,000 miles from Samarcand, and the country between the Caspian and Tashkend is for the most part a hopeless desert. It is possible that Russia may in time, to some extent, consolidate her conquests, but the geographical features and permanent condition of the country are against her.

I can see no analogy between the precarious position of General Kaufmann amid barren steppes and that of Lord Wellesley in 1803 standing in the fertile plains of Bengal. A consideration of all the circumstances would appear to prove that the present position of Russia in Central Asia is not one calculated to afford her a favourable base of operations against our dominion in India. It is very important to have a clear conception on these vital points of the comparative power of Russia and England in the East.

As regards our frontier policy in the North-West Provinces of India, Sir James Stephen puts forward military views which, I believe, are held by many—namely, that we should improve our position by entering the mountains and taking possession of the passes in our immediate front. In my opinion such an idea is a dangerous delusion. Afghanistan is a country of mountains, and the Suliman range which forms our boundary is merely the first of a series of great ridges, running down south-westerly from the Hindoo Koosh.

If we enter the country and merely hold the nearest passes, we shall at once find ourselves in a maze of mountains, with dozens of other passes and strong positions in our front. Not only that, but we shall become involved with other tribes; and as soon as our flag is seen flying within the Afghan mountains our influence will begin to extend; political and military complications will arise, and we shall inevitably be carried forward. In short, there is no tenable military position such as that imagined by Sir James Stephen. Afghanistan must be viewed as a whole; we cannot halt, nor can we tolerate that Russia or any other Power than ourselves shall exert military and political supremacy to the southward of the Hindoo Koosh. If these military considerations are sound; if the mountains of Afghanistan are our real barriers against external attack, the broad outlines of our policy would appear to be defined by the very geographical features of the country.

For many years past that policy has been consistent, and may be described as one of conciliation, of mediation, and of subsidies. Acknowledging the strategical importance of Afghanistan, our object has been to gain the confidence and friendship of the Afghan and Belooch rulers, and also of the independent frontier tribes, in the hope that should external danger ever arise they would be on our side, and be ready to become the joint defenders with us of their mountain ranges. I always contemplate the possibility of our having to enter the country for our own defence, and it should be prepared for by conciliating and not by attacking our neighbours.

"Masterly inactivity" is the expression commonly used to denote the policy which for many years has prevailed. It is a misleading term, as it conveys the idea that we have washed our hands of our neighbours' concerns, whereas the real circumstances are very different. It is true we have refrained from interference in their internal feuds and battles. Unless invited to mediate, we have left them to settle their own affairs, being only anxious to see strong and quiet Governments established on our borders. With half-savage, fanatical people like the Afghans and Beloochees, great difficulties have naturally arisen, but on the whole we have been successful. For instance, so long ago as January, 1857, Sir John, now Lord Lawrence, made a treaty with Dost Mahomed, Shere Ali's father, and by a large subsidy and present of muskets induced him to drive the Persians from Herat; but another result indirectly followed from this successful effort at conciliation. The great mutiny broke out in May, 1857; but although we were in dire extremity, and although the Punjab was considerably denuded of troops for the siege of Delhi, Dost Mahomed, though much pressed by his people, refused to allow a single Afghan to attack us in our hour of danger. That, to my judgment, is a very pregnant instance that conciliation and kindness are as likely to be successful with Afghans as with other people. Again, in 1869, the late Lord Mayo received Shere Ali with honour at Umballa, and by gifts of money and arms gave practical proofs of our friendship; and although Shere Ali may not be as reliable or as great a man as his father, there is no reason to believe that Lord Mayo's policy was other than prudent and successful. Again, in 1873, after a long diplomatic correspondence, Lord Granville induced the Russians to accept our view of the northern boundaries of Afghanistan, by which Badakshan and Wakkan were secured to Shere Ali. This was a further proof of our friendly intervention, and throughout the correspondence Prince Gortchakoff fully acknowledged that Shere Ali was legitimately under our influence and beyond that of Russia. In all our dealings with the Belooch and Afghan frontier tribes, the same general policy has been followed for years past and with considerable success. The border throughout its length is far quieter now than in years gone by. Occasional acts of outrage and robbery are treated as matters of police. Many of the men of the Afghan tribes beyond the border now enter our service, and do their duty well. Some hold positions of trust and settle inside our territory. Therefore I maintain that a conciliatory policy has been in a great measure successful, and was leading straight to the object we had in view, although time, patience and forbearance are required before the results become palpable and confirmed. I do not propose to discuss the exceptional causes which have led to our recent rupture with Shere Ali. As regards the military operations which now appear imminent, the main difficulties lie in the necessity for collecting the supplies of food, munitions, and transport at our frontier posts before we can enter the country. Whether we advance by the Khyber or the Bolan, our lines of communication will lie through rocky defiles, and over stony desert tracts, deficient in food, forage, fuel, and often in water. Sir John Keane, in 1838, is said to have lost 20,000 camels between the Indus and Candahar, although his march was virtually unopposed. Looking at the fleeting nature of Afghan internal politics, to the perpetual discords which arise between the ruler at Cabul and his insubordinate chiefs, I think it very possible that Shere Ali may find he is not backed by his people, and that he may still make such concessions as will save him from the inevitable ruin which his present conduct will otherwise bring upon him. Should we, however, be compelled to advance in force and enter on a campaign, its cost will be excessive, and the worst feature is that our chief difficulties will arise when we find ourselves in possession of the country with the feelings of the people roused against us. I must not, however, enlarge on these subject now. If my letter should in any way throw light on the present military aspects of the situation on our North-West Frontier, my object will have been accomplished.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADYE, Major-General.

AFGHANISTAN.

The news from India points merely to a general concentration of forces, Afghan and British, on the respective frontiers. The Ameer, on the one hand, is reinforcing Candahar, Kuram, and Ali Masjid, in order to ward off the coming blow; we, on the other, are strengthening Quettah, Thull, and Peshawur. For the former place the 2d Punjab Cavalry, the 2d Punjab and 30th Bombay Infantry have already marched, so that by the middle of next month the troops on the Khelat border will probably number about 3,500 men, a force quite sufficient to defend Quettah from any threatened attacks from the direction of Candahar, though far too small to admit of anything but defensive action being taken in that quarter until the arrival of General Biddulph's brigade.

At Thull, on the Kuram frontier, are at present massed the 5th Punjab and 12th Bengal Cavalry,

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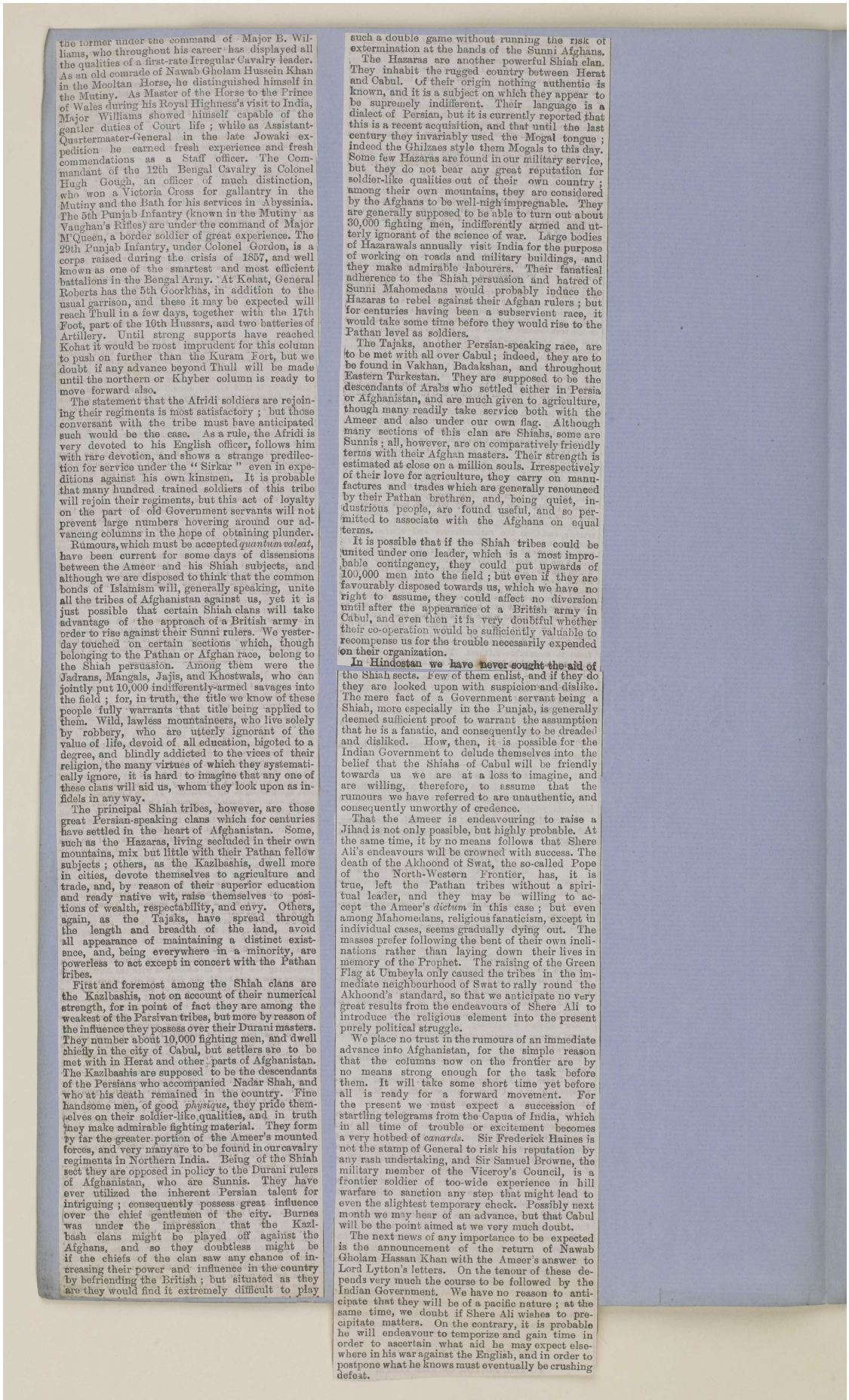

the former under the command of Major B. Williams, who throughout his career has displayed all the qualities of a first-rate Irregular Cavalry leader. As an old comrade of Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan in the Mooltan Horse, he distinguished himself in the Mutiny. As Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales during his Royal Highness's visit to India, Major Williams showed himself capable of the gentler duties of Court life; while as Assistant-Quartermaster-General in the late Jowaki expedition he earned fresh experience and fresh commendations as a Staff officer. The Commandant of the 12th Bengal Cavalry is Colonel Hugh Gough, an officer of much distinction, who won a Victoria Cross for gallantry in the Mutiny and the Bath for his services in Abyssinia. The 5th Punjab Infantry (known in the Mutiny as Vaughan's Rifles) are under the command of Major M'Queen, a border soldier of great experience. The 29th Punjab Infantry, under Colonel Gordon, is a corps raised during the crisis of 1857, and well known as one of the smartest and most efficient battalions in the Bengal Army. At Kohat, General Roberts has the 5th Goorkhas, in addition to the usual garrison, and these it may be expected will reach Thull in a few days, together with the 17th Foot, part of the 10th Hussars, and two batteries of Artillery. Until strong supports have reached Kohat it would be most imprudent for this column to push on further than the Kuram Fort, but we doubt if any advance beyond Thull will be made until the northern or Khyber column is ready to move forward also.

The statement that the Afridi soldiers are rejoining their regiments is most satisfactory; but those conversant with the tribe must have anticipated such would be the case. As a rule, the Afridi is very devoted to his English officer, follows him with rare devotion, and shows a strange predilection for service under the "Sirkar" even in expeditions against his own kinsmen. It is probable that many hundred trained soldiers of this tribe will rejoin their regiments, but this act of loyalty on the part of old Government servants will not prevent large numbers hovering around our advancing columns in the hope of obtaining plunder.

Rumours, which must be accepted *quantum valeat*, have been current for some days of dissensions between the Ameer and his Shiah subjects, and although we are disposed to think that the common bonds of Islamism will, generally speaking, unite all the tribes of Afghanistan against us, yet it is just possible that certain Shiah clans will take advantage of the approach of a British army in order to rise against their Sunni rulers. We yesterday touched on certain sections which, though belonging to the Pathan or Afghan race, belong to the Shiah persuasion. Among them were the Jadrans, Mangals, Jajis, and Khostwals, who can jointly put 10,000 indifferently-armed savages into the field; for, in truth, the title we know of these people fully warrants that title being applied to them. Wild, lawless mountaineers, who live solely by robbery, who are utterly ignorant of the value of life, devoid of all education, bigoted to a degree, and blindly addicted to the vices of their religion, the many virtues of which they systematically ignore, it is hard to imagine that any one of these clans will aid us, whom they look upon as infidels in any way.

The principal Shiah tribes, however, are those great Persian-speaking clans which for centuries have settled in the heart of Afghanistan. Some, such as the Hazaras, living secluded in their own mountains, mix but little with their Pathan fellow subjects; others, as the Kazlbashis, dwell more in cities, devote themselves to agriculture and trade, and, by reason of their superior education and ready native wit, raise themselves to positions of wealth, respectability, and envy. Others, again, as the Tajaks, have spread through the length and breadth of the land, avoid all appearance of maintaining a distinct existence, and, being everywhere in a minority, are powerless to act except in concert with the Pathan tribes.

First and foremost among the Shiah clans are the Kazlbashis, not on account of their numerical strength, for in point of fact they are among the weakest of the Parsivan tribes, but more by reason of the influence they possess over their Durani masters. They number about 10,000 fighting men, and dwell chiefly in the city of Cabul, but settlers are to be met with in Herat and other parts of Afghanistan. The Kazlbashis are supposed to be the descendants of the Persians who accompanied Nadar Shah, and who at his death remained in the country. Fine handsome men, of good *physique*, they pride themselves on their soldier-like qualities, and in truth they make admirable fighting material. They form by far the greater portion of the Ameer's mounted forces, and very many are to be found in our cavalry regiments in Northern India. Being of the Shiah sect they are opposed in policy to the Durani rulers of Afghanistan, who are Sunnis. They have ever utilized the inherent Persian talent for intriguing; consequently possess great influence over the chief gentlemen of the city. Burnes was under the impression that the Kazlbash clans might be played off against the Afghans, and so they doubtless might be if the chiefs of the clan saw any chance of increasing their power and influence in the country by befriending the British; but situated as they are they would find it extremely difficult to play such a double game without running the risk of extermination at the hands of the Sunni Afghans.

The Hazaras are another powerful Shiah clan. They inhabit the rugged country between Herat and Cabul. Of their origin nothing authentic is known, and it is a subject on which they appear to be supremely indifferent. Their language is a dialect of Persian, but it is currently reported that this is a recent acquisition, and that until the last century they invariably used the Mogal tongue; indeed the Ghilzaes style them Mogals to this day. Some few Hazaras are found in our military service, but they do not bear any great reputation for soldier-like qualities out of their own country; among their own mountains, they are considered by the Afghans to be well-nigh impregnable. They are generally supposed to be able to turn out about 30,000 fighting men, indifferently armed and utterly ignorant of the science of war. Large bodies of Hazarawals annually visit India for the purpose of working on roads and military buildings, and they make admirable labourers. Their fanatical adherence to the Shiah persuasion and hatred of Sunni Mahomedans would probably induce the Hazaras to rebel against their Afghan rulers; but for centuries having been a subservient race, it would take some time before they would rise to the Pathan level as soldiers.

The Tajaks, another Persian-speaking race, are to be met with all over Cabul; indeed, they are to be found in Vakhan, Badakshan, and throughout Eastern Turkestan. They are supposed to be the descendants of Arabs who settled either in Persia or Afghanistan, and are much given to agriculture, though many readily take service both with the Ameer and also under our own flag. Although many sections of this clan are Shiahs, some are Sunnis; all, however, are on comparatively friendly terms with their Afghan masters. Their strength is estimated at close on a million souls. Irrespectively of their love for agriculture, they carry on manufactures and trades which are generally renounced by their Pathan brethren, and, being quiet, industrious people, are found useful, and so permitted to associate with the Afghans on equal terms.

It is possible that if the Shiah tribes could be united under one leader, which is a most improbable contingency, they could put upwards of 100,000 men into the field; but even if they are favourably disposed towards us, which we have no right to assume, they could affect no diversion until after the appearance of a British army in Cabul, and even then it is very doubtful whether their co-operation would be sufficiently valuable to recompense us for the trouble necessarily expended on their organization.

In Hindostan we have never sought the aid of the Shiah sects. Few of them enlist, and if they do they are looked upon with suspicion and dislike. The mere fact of a Government servant being a Shiah, more especially in the Punjab, is generally deemed sufficient proof to warrant the assumption that he is a fanatic, and consequently to be dreaded and disliked. How, then, it is possible for the Indian Government to delude themselves into the belief that the Shiahs of Cabul will be friendly towards us we are at a loss to imagine, and are willing, therefore, to assume that the rumours we have referred to are unauthentic, and consequently unworthy of credence.

That the Ameer is endeavouring to raise a Jihad is not only possible, but highly probable. At the same time, it by no means follows that Shere Ali's endeavours will be crowned with success. The death of the Akhoond of Swat, the so-called Pope of the North-Western Frontier, has, it is true, left the Pathan tribes without a spiritual leader, and they may be willing to accept the Ameer's *dictum* in this case; but even among Mahomedans, religious fanaticism, except in individual cases, seems gradually dying out. The masses prefer following the bent of their own inclinations rather than laying down their lives in memory of the Prophet. The raising of the Green Flag at Umbeyla only caused the tribes in the immediate neighbourhood of Swat to rally round the Akhoond's standard, so that we anticipate no very great results from the endeavours of Shere Ali to introduce the religious element into the present purely political struggle.

We place no trust in the rumours of an immediate advance into Afghanistan, for the simple reason that the columns now on the frontier are by no means strong enough for the task before them. It will take some short time yet before all is ready for a forward movement. For the present we must expect a succession of startling telegrams from the Capua of India, which in all time of trouble or excitement becomes a very hotbed of *canards*. Sir Frederick Haines is not the stamp of General to risk his reputation by any rash undertaking, and Sir Samuel Browne, the military member of the Viceroy's Council, is a frontier soldier of too-wide experience in hill warfare to sanction any step that might lead to even the slightest temporary check. Possibly next month we may hear of an advance, but that Cabul will be the point aimed at we very much doubt.

The next news of any importance to be expected is the announcement of the return of Nawab Gholam Hassan Khan with the Ameer's answer to Lord Lytton's letters. On the tenour of these depends very much the course to be followed by the Indian Government. We have no reason to anticipate that they will be of a pacific nature; at the same time, we doubt if Shere Ali wishes to precipitate matters. On the contrary, it is probable he will endeavour to temporize and gain time in order to ascertain what aid he may expect elsewhere in his war against the English, and in order to postpone what he knows must eventually be crushing defeat.

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"Daily Telegraph" Oct 18th.

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LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18.

Uneasiness, according to a telegram of yesterday's date from Simla, is being caused by the mustering of Afghans in the Khyber Pass, their disposition and intention being unknown. The Peshawur and Kohat garrisons are being reinforced and placed in a state of readiness.

Our Pera correspondent telegraphs that the Sultan has written to Shere Ali, advising pacific conduct on the part of Afghanistan towards England.

ENGLAND AND CABUL.

LETTER FROM THE SULTAN.

[BY INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH.]
[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

PERA, THURSDAY EVENING.

The Sultan has written to Shere Ali, advising pacific conduct on the part of Afghanistan towards England.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.]

SIMLA, OCT. 17.

The mustering of Afghans in the Khyber Pass is causing uneasiness, their disposition and intentions being unknown. The Peshawur and Kohat garrisons are being reinforced and placed in a state of readiness. Three Punjab regiments have reached Thull. The Afredi soldiers are rejoining the Punjab regiments.

It is reported that Ali Musjid and Candahar have been largely reinforced.

CONSTANTINOPLE, OCT. 17 (11.15 A.M.)

The Sultan yesterday informed Sir Henry Layard that he had despatched a letter to the Ameer of Afghanistan calling upon him as a good Mussulman to come to an amicable arrangement with the English Government.

ACCORDING to a telegram forwarded through Baron REUTER'S Agency, the assemblage of Afghans in the Khyber Pass has caused some uneasiness at Simla, because the disposition and intentions of SHERE ALI'S levies were unknown. As a consequence, the garrisons of Kohat and Peshawur have been reinforced, and we are aware that a reserve has been ordered to concentrate at Hassan Abdul. These indications, coupled with the firm language used by Mr. CROSS at Southport last night, show that the Supreme Government, fully alive to the emergency, is prepared to repel any rash onset, as well as to carry out the plans implied in the gathering of forces upon the selected lines of operation. That the troops in the Peshawur valley should be augmented follows from the situation created by the Ameer and his Russian friends; because it is not improbable that the neighbouring tribes may be set on to make a diversion by raiding on the frontier, and because it is essential to maintain a commanding body of troops at a point whence an extensive, if not predominant, influence is exercised over the whole region of the Five Rivers. Even were it not likely that any forward movement would be undertaken, no Indian Government would leave Peshawur without the means of striking offensive blows against the mountaineers, who are always on the alert at the first symptom of trouble. Independently, therefore, of other projects involving hostilities with SHERE ALI, it is most imperative to hold in adequate strength the mountain-girt lowlands which give access to the plains of Northern India. The troops stationed at Hassan Abdul will, as we have already explained, be available either for Peshawur or Kohat. It should not be forgotten that the frontier posts have lost none of their usual garrisons, and that the columns for active service have been drawn from the interior cantonments. The line beyond the Indus is consequently as strong as it was before the occurrence of the dramatic incident and grave political event in the mouth of the Khyber Pass. Provided due diligence and something more have been displayed in collecting and equipping the forces destined for Quettah, the Khurrum Valley and Sukkur, the Government should be in a position to act immediately, and without a moment's delay, so soon as the letters brought by our Cabul Envoy have been received and considered. These may, of course, contain ample satisfaction, and express a ready compliance with our demands; but, judging from the past conduct of the Ameer, and remembering who are near him, no such result can be reasonably expected. Meanwhile the season for operations in the highlands is slipping away, and it is obvious that no further time can be allowed for delusive parleys. The issues between the Afghan and the Indian Governments—Russian at their source—have grown to such a dangerous magnitude that common prudence, as well as sound policy, require their prompt, entire, and solid settlement, not at some future date, but now.

It needed not the letter of Sir BARTLE FRERE, published yesterday in the columns of a contemporary, to show how long those issues have been maturing, or how frequently their steady growth has been emphatically placed before successive Governments. Sir HENRY RAWLINSON three years ago published the famous "Memorandum" which, in 1868, he addressed to the Indian Secretary of State, who duly forwarded the document to the Governor-General. No one could mistake the tenour, although it was easy to disregard the warnings, of that powerful paper. In the very same year a "Punjab Official" published a pamphlet at Lahore specially intended to set forth the perils of "masterly inactivity," and point out whither it would inevitably lead. "To sum up," he wrote, "the result of our continued inaction and abstention from intervention in the affairs of Cabul and Central Asia has been to disturb the minds of our Indian subjects with apprehensions of all sorts of impending dangers and disturbances, to shake the confidence of all the bordering tribes and nations in our power and prestige, to encourage Russia in the boldness of her aggressions, and to impair the integrity of Afghanistan as a buffer between our Indian Empire and Russia." Such were the effects produced at that period, and what was to follow? "If longer persevered in," our author averred, "this policy must result in the desertion by Cabul from our alliance and her subordination to Russian interests, with the unknown perils that these are calculated to lead to." Ten years ago the presence of Russian influence in Cabul was thus distinctly foreseen. What would the writer who raised his voice have said could he have known that Russia would annex Khiva, dictate terms of peace at the gates of Constantinople, and retain as prize of war Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum? We are told, and the view is ably expounded by Sir BARTLE FRERE, that Russia has absorbed Asiatic territory because she is a civilised, living, and growing Power, unable, if she were willing, to stop her own expansion. Granting the truth of this apology, surely it only increases our peril, because the vital expansive forces with which she is credited are directed by a settled policy, the aim of which is to bring her into contact with England's Eastern realms. The reduction of the Caucasus, and the successive expeditions in Central Asia, were undertaken and carried out expressly for the purpose of providing embarrassments for us in case an opportunity offered of pushing a traditional policy on the Bosphorus. That end has been attained, and, as foreseen, Russia is in Cabul. There is no real analogy between the whole motives actuating our proceedings in India and those governing the movements of Russia. When we reached the foot of the hills we did not threaten her Empire or possessions, and our object in conquest was not to injure her. She, on the contrary, has deliberately acquired territories that are and always have been a costly burden, which her people are made to bear, because the districts annexed are regarded as stepping-stones to domination on the Straits and in Asia Minor, and as means of disturbing British rule in the East. The fruits of political and military designs worked out uninterruptedly for a quarter of a century are visible in the Treaty of Berlin, "the desertion of Cabul from our alliance, and her subordination to Russian interests." The attack, as a rule, is more powerful than the defence. "Russian policy in Asia," says Sir BARTLE FRERE, "is, as we all see, positive, active, and aggressive," and has naturally prevailed over one that has been "purely negative."

An evil deep-rooted, long-neglected, yet signalised at every stage by men who, putting phrases aside, kept their eyes steadily on the central fact, has now come to a head. We are bound to meet it effectually, or tamely submit to defeat; but we must recognise the veritable agency which has brought about the disturbance, or the measures adopted will be futile. The partial devices which might have served our purpose four years ago will no longer suffice.

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The challenge thrown down by Russia must be answered in such a way as to leave the issue indisputable. Those responsibilities of empire which we have shirked for twenty years must be accepted and redeemed, or the penalty entailed will be severe. It is now not a question of the weakness or strength of a frontier in a military point of view. So long as no enemy was at hand the existing line sufficed, and we could bear its inconveniences; but no sensible person ever pretended that we could put up with its disadvantages on the supposition that a "positive, active, and aggressive" foe was permitted to absorb the whole political influence beyond its bounds, and, under cover of our complacent inactivity, prepare and accumulate at leisure what means and combinations he pleased. Since we have permitted the elements of mischief to gather under our eyes, the political overtops the purely military considerations which should govern our course. What we have now to secure is the certainty that the country south of the Oxus and east of the Caspian, that the valleys of Khorassan and the mountain block of Afghanistan, shall not serve as a gathering ground for hostile forces, and that can only be done by establishing our political influence on an impregnable basis. Whatever measures may be needful, the end to be steadfastly kept in view is the exclusion of the Russians from Afghanistan and the attainment of satisfactory relations with the Afghan people. How far it may be necessary to proceed in order to accomplish these objects, Indian statesmen should be best able to determine; but the duty and prudence of accomplishing them is at this moment placed beyond all doubt. If the first thing to be done is to effect the affront put on the QUEEN'S representative, the second and principal business is to arrest effectually the persistent encroachments of Russia. While these are natural to her, resistance is equally natural to us; and, while she is "impelled" to advance, so are we, if faithful to our country, impelled to lay down limits which, at the risk of instant opposition, she shall not transcend. We did not seek her; she sought us to do us hurt, and upon her Sovereigns and statesmen must rest the grave responsibilities of a rivalry which they have courted, and we have shunned.

"Times" Oct. 19th

AFGHANISTAN.

DARJEELING, OCT. 18.

Nawab Gholam Hussein, the Viceroy's Envoy, has returned safely from Cabul to British territory.

BERLIN, OCT. 18.

The St. Petersburg *Ruski Mir* says that General Stoletoff, on his return to Tashkend on September 15, was accompanied by an Afghan Embassy, headed by Munshi Mahammed Hassan Khan, Shere Ali's Minister of the Interior. On the 22d of September General Stoletoff left Tashkent for Livadia. The Afghan Minister remained at Tashkend, awaiting General Stoletoff's return from the Crimean Palace of the Czar. In all probability General Stoletoff by this time is back at Tashkend.

NAWAB GHOLAM HUSSEIN KHAN, C.S.I.

It may be interesting at the present crisis to give a sketch of the career of Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, the native gentleman deputed by Lord Lytton to announce to Shere Ali Sir Neville Chamberlain's intended Mission. It tends to illustrate the unswerving loyalty displayed by certain sections of our Pathan fellow-subjects—loyalty, unfortunately, not rewarded as it should be—and certainly shows that in no part of Her Majesty's dominions has more unshaken devotion been shown than along the Punjab border.

Gholam Hussein Khan, whose clan, the Alizae Pathans, have, according to their own traditions, been settled in the Derajat for upwards of 1,000 years, is the eldest son of one Ashik Mahomed Khan, who was ruler of the Tank subdivision of the Dera Ismail Khan district under the Maharajah Runjeet Singh. The country was held under a military tenure by which Ashik Mahomed was allowed the whole revenue of the province, he guaranteeing to furnish the Sikh Maharajah a certain contingent in time of war. On the death of his father, Gholam Hussein Khan went to Lahore, and in 1847, under the orders of the late Sir Frederick Currie, then resident at the Sikh capital, he, together with other Mahomedan chiefs, attacked the rebellious Bhai Maharajah Singh, completely dispersing his band. The handsome rewards and warm thanks of the British officer apparently won the heart of the Alizae chief, for we find Gholam Hussein Khan a few weeks later earning the approbation of Major R. Napier, chief engineer at the siege of Mooltan. No sooner was that fortress captured than Sir Herbert Edwardes despatched the Tank Nawab to Dera Ismail Khan with the order to hold the country against the Sikh troops then in open rebellion in Bannu. Their loyal assistance to Lieutenant Reynell Taylor enabled that officer, with a few untrained levies and two old cannon—the only shot for which were stones—to reduce by siege the fort of Laki, which was defended by 500 men and 10 guns. This little known exploit is, perhaps, one of the finest military achievements in our Indian history. During the siege Azim Khan, Dost Mahomed's son, marched down from Cabul with a strong force and endeavoured to seduce the Alizae chiefs from their allegiance, but it was of no avail; and on finding that he could expect no support from his co-religionists in the Derajat, Azim Khan fell back. From 1851 to 1857 Gholam Hussein remained at or near Bannu, aiding his old chief, Major Reynell Taylor, in the civil duties of the place; but on the outbreak of the Mutiny he once more placed his sword at the disposal of the British, and was directed by Sir Herbert Edwardes to raise a body of Horse for service in the Derajat, so that the regular garrisons might be detached for service in Hindostan. In a few weeks Gholam Hussein had raised 2,000 men, who were the mainstay of the District Officer on the frontier during the early part of the rebellion. Towards the end of 1857, Sir John Lawrence directed the Nawab to take six troops of his Mooltani Horse to Lahore, where they were formed into a regiment and placed under the command of Captain, now General, C. Cureton. This corps took part in no less than 16 different engagements with the rebels; and for his services during that period Gholam Hussein received the title of Khan Bahadur, the Third Class Order of Merit, the Mutiny Medal, and a pension of £60 per annum! Many tales might be told of these wild Mooltani horsemen, and of the good service they did in Oude and Rohilkund under Sir Thomas Seaton and Brigadiers Penny and Jones. Perhaps the most characteristic is that, on the first occasion of their being formed up on parade, the rear rank flatly refused to ride behind the front, asserting that they were equal in every way, and, therefore, fully entitled to ride side by side. On the fact being explained that the formation was one for drill purposes and not intended to reflect in any way on either rank, the men consulted among themselves and finally consented to give way, provided that the rear-rank files should lead every other day. In spite of their slight peculiarities, the Mooltani made excellent Irregular Cavalry, and were as dashing in action as they were willing and obedient in quarters.

At the close of the Mutiny the Nawab was despatched to Cabul as our Envoy, and remained there until 1863, during which time he did the British Government excellent service. He accompanied the Afghan army to Herat, and was the means of inducing Shere Ali to punish Sultan Mahomed Khan (his own father in-law), who openly assisted the Momunds in the affair against us at Shubkudder in 1863. During the five years he remained in Cabul his conduct received the warmest approval of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, who placed on record his appreciation of the wisdom, tact, and loyalty of the Nawab; and Shere Ali himself officially expressed himself thoroughly well pleased with the manner in which Gholam Hussein had fulfilled his duties, naively writing, "God knows there have been few Envoys deputed by the British Government distinguished by so much worth and fitness." On his return from Cabul, Gholam Hussein was raised to the rank of Nawab, and in 1868 he was made a Companion of the Star of India. In the same year he was appointed Commandant of the Army of the State of Bhawalpore; but, owing to a slight put upon him at a durbar before the Nawab, where he, an old and tried servant of Her Majesty and a Companion of the Star of India, was made to sit below many underlings of the Bhawalpore State, he took umbrage and requested to be removed. Lord Napier of Magdala promptly reinstated him in his position of Native Commandant of the Mooltani Horse; and, to show his disbelief in certain charges that had been preferred against Gholam Hussein, appointed him his Aide-de-Camp at the Camp of Exercise in 1873. During the Prince of Wales's visit to India the Nawab was nominated to his Royal Highness's Staff, and subsequently was granted a pension and small estate in the Bannu district.

On the decision being arrived at by Lord Lytton to despatch a mission to Cabul, the Government of India wisely determined to send Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan as an *avant-courier*. His personal friendship for Shere Ali and the tact he had displayed while Envoy in Cabul from 1859 to 1864 peculiarly justified this selection. But it seems that, in spite of his diplomatic skill, Gholam Hussein has been unable to avert the coming storm, which he himself predicted would burst if ever a British Resident were forced on the Ameer. It is strange that Sir Harry Lumsden and the Nawab, both of whom have filled the position of Envoy at the Court of Cabul, should have been so opposed to any attempts at imposing a British Ambassador on the ruler of Afghanistan.

We are glad to learn of the Nawab's safe arrival in British territory. India can ill-afford to lose a man of whom one of our best and bravest Punjab officers wrote:—

"Gholam Hussein Khan is a perfect gentleman, with chivalrous ideas of honour, a peacemaker among his equals, kind and benevolent to those under him. In soldierlike spirit there is not probably his superior in the country."

As long as India contains such men as Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, and as long as Indian officials can retain their friendship and loyalty, we have little reason to fear discontent within our borders.

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RUSSIA AND CHINA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The remark of Sir Bartle Frere in his letter which you publish this morning, that "we should occasionally look at Central Asian politics from a Chinese point of view," draws attention to an important factor in the settlement of Asiatic questions which is too often overlooked at the present juncture. China has suffered much at the hands of Russia. Whole provinces have been taken from her, and outlying frontier districts have from time to time been absorbed, with barely an apology, into the Russian Empire. At the present moment, also, the Chinese province of Kuldja is held by the Russians in defiance of their promises to yield it up whenever the Chinese should be prepared to retake possession, and of the repeated demands which have been made for its restitution by the Pekin Government.

The recent successful campaign in Kashgaria has left China stronger in Central Asia than she has ever been; and since the retention of Kuldja has placed her on a common ground of antagonism to Russia with ourselves, the merest prudence would suggest that we should come to a clear understanding with her in support of our common interests. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

October 17. ROBERT K. DOUGLAS.

"Daily Telegraph" Oct. 19th

OUR telegraphic message from Simla conveys the welcome news that the Sirdar GHOLAM HOUSSEIN has safely reached British territory, and this tends to confirm the report yesterday published that the reply of which he was the bearer was "unsatisfactory." The latter intelligence is likely, we think, to be found accurate, and it has no doubt a serious significance. When we remember that the Viceroy has despatched three communications to the Ameer of AFGHANISTAN, without hitherto obtaining an answer, and when the contents of Lord LYTTON'S principal letter are recalled, it cannot but be seen that for the response to be "unsatisfactory" at all implies something more than mere delay, evasion, or ambiguity. The Viceroy's language was simple and precise, and may be usefully recalled. He said: "The authentic intelligence which I have lately received as to the course of recent events at Cabul and in the countries bordering on Afghanistan has rendered it necessary that I should communicate fully and without reserve with your Highness upon matters of importance, which concern the interests of India and Afghanistan. For this reason I have considered it expedient to depute an especial and confidential Envoy of high rank, who is known to your Highness, his Excellency General Sir NEVILLE BOWLES CHAMBERLAIN. He will visit your Highness immediately in order that he may converse personally with your Highness regarding these urgent affairs. It appears certain that they can best be arranged for the welfare and tranquillity of both States and the preservation of friendship between the two Governments by a full and frank statement of the present position." This announcement, which was handed to SHERE ALI by our native Envoy, did not admit of controversy, and only one way of answering it satisfactorily remained open to the Ameer. He replied by closing his territory against us; but if subsequently he had written that he had been ill-advised in entertaining the Russian agent while he repulsed the British Mission, that he regretted this course of action, and that he had given orders to re-open the pass and receive an English Ambassador with due honours, there might yet have been time to withdraw the troops on either side, and to consider whether the dissolved Mission could not be profitably reconstituted. But nothing of a nature so wise and pacific will be found, we fear, in the text of the Ameer's answer; and we repeat that if this answer, as the report foreshadows, prove even at all "unsatisfactory," it must from the circumstances prove highly unsatisfactory indeed, to the extent probably of putting an end to all further efforts at negotiation. It is difficult to imagine how the Viceroy's Government could possibly continue friendly relations with the Cabul Court if any reply but a completely conciliatory one shall have been received. There is nothing for which Oriental minds have such contempt as the amiable diplomacy which can go on inquiring whether anything disrespectful is intended after a palpable insult has been inflicted. Accustomed to our slow but sure ways in military matters, the Asiatics will understand and will await those deliberate preparations with which we take up a quarrel; but they would at once regard us as secretly afraid if the Persian and Russian scribes of SHERE ALI were allowed to involve Lord LYTTON in any wordy warfare. If, then, there be evasion or ambiguity in the Ameer's reply—still more if there be a final refusal to associate the policies of Afghanistan and India, however skilfully the defiant resolve may be couched in polite phrases—in such a case, we conceive, the Viceroy will have but one course open to him. This Ruler, who has received so many favours from the British Power, repulses our friendly Mission with a threat of force, while he entertains the agent of a Sovereign, who can have no business in Afghanistan, except of a sort incompatible with English interests and with the pledges of his own Ministers. That repulse has since been followed up by the array of large armed forces and the levy of the tribes, while the Ameer's tardy response to the letter of the QUEEN'S Viceregent—by its very date an affront—promises to furnish no reparation or suggestion of re-arrangement. In such an event it is obvious that the British Government would have to provide for the future security of its frontier by methods which would entirely set aside SHERE ALI'S consent and personal interests.

Meanwhile there is little fear that the dangers of a religious war will be added to those which our army may have to encounter in establishing better securities against a Russian advance. It would be utterly useless for the Ameer to cry a *jehad* against the only European Power which is now looked upon by Asiatics as just and well disposed towards Mahommedans. Some grossly ignorant observations have been recently made by writers, who, pointing to the conduct of this Muslim Prince, ask what benefit we have derived from English goodwill towards the Ottomans, when the first event after the Peace of Berlin is a "revolt of Islam" at Cabul. Such shallow critics of public affairs do not know how slight and yet how strong is the continuity of the Muslim world. In politics Cabul and Constantinople are too wide apart for much mutual influence. SHERE ALI'S Moollahs would bow to an interpretation from the Sheikh-ul-Islam as to the force of a ritual or a verse, but his chiefs and Ministers would not trim their measures of state one hair's-breadth this way or that to please the Grand Vizier. Nevertheless it is something more than an empty act of friendliness which the Sultan has just done for Great Britain in writing with his own hand to SHERE ALI to reproach him for his conduct towards the best and strongest friends of the rights of Believers. This declaration from the acknowledged head of the Sunni profession, to which the majority of Afghan and Indian Mussulmans belong, will pass with very excellent and valuable effect throughout the East, and assuredly stamp the Ameer as a self-willed disturber of affairs, whom a good Muslim might perchance aid for political or patriotic reasons, but assuredly need not assist from motives of pious duty. It is not going too far to believe that the letter of the Sultan will, even before its arrival, and by its mere existence, paralyse the religious side of the intrigue concocted at Cabul; all the more because the hands of the Russians are, as it were, still red with the blood of the faithful, and Muscovites are only to be dealt with as allies by any Muslims on the supposition that the just and powerful "Feringhees" have finally given up Persia and Afghanistan to the cunning "Ooroos." The cordial aid—we might almost say, speaking from an Oriental point of view, the consecration—which the Sultan has given to the British cause in the present crisis is, moreover, really the reflection of a sentiment almost universally prevailing throughout Islam. The Arabic and Turkish papers of the Levant do justice to the resolute character of English policy during the approach of the Russians towards Constantinople, and to the sincere beneficence displayed in our new projects of protection and reform. The *Al Jewaib* has just published an article of admirable feeling and high enlightenment in this sense; and whatever else the morose tyrant of Cabul may seek to do, he certainly cannot hope to find us accepted as typical "Kafirs" or natural enemies of his people, while he is seen fawning on the fanatical and blood-stained Muscovites, and has placed in his hands this letter from his Lord and Caliph, reproaching him for his behaviour, and recommending him to crave and to preserve the friendship of the Christian people who know how to be equitable towards other races and creeds.

An argument has been used in vindication of "masterly inactivity," which would have great force did it not omit the weightiest factor in the problem. The course pursued during the last

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twenty years, described as a policy of kindness and conciliation, is credited with excellent results upon the frontier tribes from the Black Mountain to the deserts of Scind. So far as these people and the Afghans themselves were concerned, down to a recent period, the claims put forward may be allowed. Yet, as regards the ruler of Cabul, it has evidently and signally failed, seeing that he has courted a Russian alliance, and turned contemptuously from British friendship. That striking fact exposes the weakness of a policy which dealt with the whole frontier question as if there were no outposts of a great European Empire within sight of the Hindoo Koosh. The cardinal defect in the course adopted by every Government was that it proceeded on the assumption that Russia never would or could come to Cabul. Yet ten, nay, twelve years ago, the path of Russian conquest was distinctly foreseen, and a Central Asian policy which, in its calculations, left out so formidable a quantity, was doomed to failure. "Masterly inactivity," tempered as it really was, from 1857 onwards, by occasional intervention, might have been practised for ever, if our only foes behind the mountain barrier had been Afghans and Pathan tribes. They, however, were at no time our real antagonists, and it was only by fits and starts that British Ministers faintly recognised and feebly encountered the veritable enemy. The sin of "masterly inactivity" was that it never took sufficient account of "mischievous activity," which gradually pushed up hostile agencies and influences until, as we perceive, they are formally established in Cabul. When SHERE ALI saw Turkey abandoned and Russia triumphant, when he heard the drift of the debates in the English Parliament and of the violent essays showered from the English press, he not unnaturally concluded that the part of wisdom was to side with the apparently stronger Power, and he may have gone so far as to think that he would recruit zealous supporters from party politicians in England. But, although he is the obvious, he is not the occult offender; and, if we are to deal thoroughly with the far-reaching issues now distinctly raised, we must go behind the Cabul throne. Mr. CROSS on Thursday stated the question with force and perspicuity. "If," he said, "the Ameer is no longer strong, if he is no longer independent, if he is no longer friendly, it is time for us to inquire how that comes about and what is to be done. If, however, influences are at work in that direction close upon our border frontier of India, it is time, at all events, for us to look about us." Whether the answer sent from Cabul be satisfactory or not, one thing must be decided. "There must be no doubt about our position, no doubt about our own influence, and on the northern boundaries of India there must be no doubt about our own power and our own supremacy. It is of vast importance to India, it is of vital importance to the Empire." In order to remove the doubt we must not handle the matter in a way which excludes the fountain-head whence springs so powerful a stream of Oriental turbulence.

PAST DAYS IN AFGHANISTAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH."

SIR—I have seen a statement in a provincial newspaper, headed "The Last Afghan War," and I must ask you for a little space for my remarks on it, and on similar calumnies. The account given by the writer is tolerably correct in its outline, although, like most of your contemporaries' articles poured forth at this crisis of our relations with Afghanistan, it is inexact in various particulars. It is not my business nor my inclination to supply these deficiencies, but one statement has appeared regarding the conduct of our troops at the taking of Istalif which is wholly at variance with the facts. The writer says: "Then followed horrible scenes of slaughter. Not content with butchering the men, the British army fell upon the women and children, shooting, bayoneting, and pillaging, and carrying death and destruction everywhere." I cannot suppose that the author of this has wilfully and knowingly put forth so monstrous a calumny, for such it is. I was one of the Cabul captives. After we had released ourselves and joined the late Field Marshal Sir George Pollock at Cabul, that officer sent me in charge of Prince Shahpoor and about 2,000 Kuzzilbash horsemen to assist the late Sir John M'Caskill in the reduction of the valley of Kohistan and, of course, of the town and fortifications of Istalif. I joined in the assault of these last, and, to make a long story short, we took the place after several hours of hard fighting. It is quite possible that several non-combatants were, as is inevitable in such cases, killed by accident, for flying bullets on both sides have no respect of persons; but certainly and beyond question there was no intentional slaughter of either women or children. On the contrary, we collected all the women and children at the top of the city, where they were all day long joined by stragglers; we set guards over them, and provided for their comfort in every possible way until the evening. We then sent them, under the escort of a friendly Afghan chief, to the place where their routed countrymen had re-assembled, and this act of British humanity was gratefully acknowledged by the Afghans themselves. There are unspeakable ruffians in all armies, ours not excepted, but, except when maddened by drink, the British soldier is a good-natured, kindly fellow. For instance, shortly after we had secured the safety of the women I saw a soldier coming up one of the streets, carrying something besides his musket very carefully. I asked him what it was. "A babby, your honour," quoth he, showing me a perfectly beautiful Afghan child. He added, "I didn't think, sir, it was my duty for to kill it." I quite agreed, and relieved him of his pretty, soft burden, not knowing exactly what to do with it. As it was impossible to find the mother, I carried it to our captive women and offered it to a young lady who had no child with her. She brusquely refused to accept my foundling, whom I then presented to another girl. She also declined. I then took the little waif to a grandmother-looking woman, and she, to my surprise, was quite rude in her refusal. There being no other remedy, I sternly informed this hard-hearted old person that if she did not take and treat the little darling kindly I would eject her from her place of safety and let her take her chance. She yielded, and I think that the tender touch and sweet face of my little charge seemed to rouse up a womanly feeling towards it. As I said before, the British soldier is a kindly fellow, and contrasts favourably even with some women.

At the time I allude to and subsequently, and especially towards the close of the great Sepoy mutiny, many false reports injurious to the character of our soldiers were recklessly spread in England, some from malice and some from a love of sensational horrors, especially if these be well garnished.—I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

COLIN MACKENZIE, Lieutenant-General.

Oct. 16.

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THE
PALL MALL GAZETTE
An Evening Newspaper and Review.

No. 4263.—Vol. XXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1878. Price Twopence.

INDEPENDENCE AND ITS ADVERSARIES.

There are several signs that the feebler Liberal newspapers and the feebler school of Liberal politicians are disposed to make much of the position that international law permits "independent" princes to refuse embassies, and that Shere Ali, of Cabul, being an independent prince, is only exercising an international right in declining to receive Sir Neville Chamberlain. The argument shows an amusing confusion between refusals to admit particular envoys and refusals to allow any diplomatic intercourse whatever. It is true that under international law the chief of a State may decline to receive a particular person as Minister; this right was quite lately put in force by Russia, when she declined to permit the appointment of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the embassy at St. Petersburg. In older times the larger right has been asserted to keep out diplomatic representatives who claimed to be something more than diplomatists; and on this ground States have sometimes refused to receive the Nuncios of the Pope. Sir Neville Chamberlain, however, was expressly selected for the Afghan mission as a personal acquaintance of the Ameer, nor is there the smallest pretext for saying that he was intended to interfere with the domestic affairs of Afghanistan. He has been declined because Shere Ali refuses to have any diplomatic intercourse with the British Indian Empire except on terms to be settled by himself; and it so happens that this is one of the surest marks of the barbarism which disentitles a State to the advantages of international recognition. It was precisely on the ground of their refusal to receive ambassadors, or of their refusal to recognize ambassadorial rights and immunities, that the Turks were long held to be beyond the pale of international law. It is a circumstance of some interest, and one not at all to the discredit of the Russians, that they were the first to compel the Turks to give up their fierce isolation. Russia was still a wholly barbarous country when a predecessor of the present Czar insisted that, if the Turks wished for peace with him, they should not only receive his ambassador, but send an ambassador to him. And the Porte, though possibly it was at the time the first military Power in the world, gave way to the Russian demand, while it was still occasionally sending the Ministers of other Christian States to the Seven Towers or threatening them with execution. It may, meanwhile, have been observed that the last expedients adopted by the British Government for establishing civilized relations with China have consisted in stipulating for diplomatic representation at Pekin, and for the mission of the Chinese Minister who with his suite is now conspicuous in our streets.

It would be time wasted to give all the reasons which might be assigned for denying the status called "independence" by the publicists to the Ameer of Afghanistan. One is sufficient by itself. It is now matter of common knowledge that his dissatisfaction with the Indian Government has mainly arisen from their rejection or equivocal reception of certain of his demands. He has perseveringly asked for two things—for a British guarantee of his dynasty, and for a British guarantee of the territorial limits of his dominions. We say nothing at present on the point whether it was wise or unwise to decline to give such guarantees; but the request amounted to a disclaimer of independence. Nothing was insisted upon more strongly than this by Liberal writers during the late discussions on the treaty of 1856. The framers of that treaty, as is well known, introduced into it that unhappy guarantee of the integrity of the Sultan's dominions which melted away in the first heat of European dispute; but they were well aware of the inference to which their provision pointed, and therefore they declared in express language that the sovereignty and independence of the Sultan were to remain unimpaired. But it became wellnigh a commonplace with Liberal speakers and writers to assert that the declaration was of no effect, and that a Power which required the protection of its neighbours had no claim to be considered independent.

But the argument from the sacredness of independence is laughably misplaced in the mouths of the same persons who scoured the whole range of casuistry to find justifications for the Russian attack on Turkey. The strongest feature of the Liberal partisanship of Russian policy, or tenderness towards [illegible] is the extraordinarily small knowledge of Russian history on which it proceeds. For if Russian foreign policy were to be shortly described by the international lawyer as it has shown itself throughout the whole course of Russian history, it would be described as consistently founded on contempt for the international doctrine of the independence of all foreign States, whether they be great or small. We are not now contending that the Russian policy was good or bad, morally justifiable or immoral. We merely assert that it has been one long and continuous denial of the international rights founded on independence. It would be in itself a suspicious circumstance that there is not a single neighbour of Russia which has not had to surrender to her great masses of territory in the course of a comparatively short history. She has Swedish, German, Turkish, Roumanian, Persian, Tartar, and Chinese provinces; but still it is just conceivable that each one of these might have been the accidental fruit of success after a casual quarrel with each of the dispossessed States. As a matter of fact, however, we know on the best evidence that the greatest part of these conquests are the spoils of wars begun in the assertion of one single principle. The international lawyers reckon among the clearest and most elementary rights of independent States the right to govern as the authorities of the State may choose. Russia has always denied this right. She has substituted for it a doctrine which became famous in the United States during the furious controversies which preceded the War of Secession—the doctrine of a "higher law." Slavery was lawful under the positive law of the American Union; but the Abolitionists declared that there was a "higher law" which superseded and annulled it. The publicists deny to one State the right of supervising the domestic concerns of another State; but the Russian Government has always been able to discover some higher principle extinguishing the right in its neighbours. Unfortunately for its credit, the particular nature of the higher law which it affected to vindicate has been subject to astounding variations. When Russia devoured Poland in two mouthfuls, she asserted that a State which had so disorderly a Government had no right to exist. The international lawyers might lay down that the disorders of Poland were the sole affair of the Poles, but Russia discovered a higher law in the necessity of maintaining European order. Not many years after the final partition of Poland, the Russian Emperor Paul allied himself with the French Government, which from the first establishment of the Republic had waged a series of victorious wars in assertion of the exactly opposite principle to that which the Empress Catherine had applied to Poland. The French had fought not for order, but for something very like its contrary: for the right of every State which desired liberty, equality, and fraternity to overthrow its existing institutions at the cost of any imaginable disorders; and the Russian Emperor became their enthusiastic admirer. Paul's murder put an end to the French alliance for a while; but soon the Peace of Tilsit showed the Russian Emperor employing all his strength in assertion of a new principle, which this time was the baseness and ambition of England. Napoleon had placed this country under the ban of Europe for its audacity in resisting the establishment of a universal despotism; and Alexander joined in the proscription without reserve. The precious confederates shortly quarrelled; but all through his later life Alexander was the devotee of a principle equally fatal to the independence of States. He was notoriously the author and patron of the Holy Alliance, which used the armies of France as its instrument to stifle the infant liberties of Spain.

The accession of Nicholas brings us close to our own times and our own experiences. This Emperor strongly held with the Holy Alliance that all liberty was wicked and should be suppressed; and this opinion led him to employ his troops in the subjugation of Hungary. But the great principles for which he contended through life and on which he wrecked his fortunes were the inherent badness of Mahommedan Governments, and the natural right of Christian Governments to attack and overthrow them. They have been fully adopted and carried to extremity by his son. We say nothing of their moral and political defensibility. We merely say that they temporarily take the place of other principles of equal amplitude asserted in the course of Russian history; that they are absolutely unknown to international law; and that, in particular, they are fatal to the doctrine of "independence," which they contradict diametrically.

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EPITOME OF OPINION IN THE MORNING JOURNALS.

ENGLAND, RUSSIA, AND AFGHANISTAN.

The *Morning Post* observes that the public have little cause for complaint at the lack of information on the question of Afghanistan. There is, however, one grievance in this respect, and it well deserves the consideration of the Foreign Office. It is not a little singular that though the public have learned from unofficial sources the fresh promises which Russia has made to the present Government, the latter should refrain from carrying out their undertaking given to Parliament in the early part of August, and let the world know in what respect the pledges of the Czar and his Ministers have been broken. The more light that can be thrown upon the actions and policy of the Russian Government in Central Asia the greater the encouragement which our own Government is likely to receive in the energetic course upon which they seem to have embarked. Supremacy cannot be gained by permitting Russia to regard Afghanistan as within the sphere of her influence, or by allowing Shere Ali to receive Russian envoys. Nor can it be obtained without the use of British Residents at the Cabul Court and at other strategical points in Afghanistan, like Balk, Herat, and Candahar. These are the least of the courses which can secure what Mr. Cross declares to be the essentials of our policy. Should the Ameer's answer fall short of these proposals, and show a temporising spirit in order to gain time for further preparations, or for securing the indirect assistance which Russia will not hesitate to give, the Indian Government will be justified in commencing their advance.

The *Daily News*, discussing a letter which it prints from Sir Henry Havelock upon the danger of Russia's presence in Afghanistan and the necessity to England of an offensive and defensive alliance with the Ameer, says it fails to see the efficacy of such an alliance forced upon Afghanistan by threats or by military operations. The influence of Russia, which now is described as supersubtle and all-pervading, could surely not be exorcised by the magic of a treaty with Shere Ali. Apparently the Ameer is not quite convinced of our friendly intentions even now. A little force would doubtless compel him to yield, but would hardly buy his confidence and secure his affection. If it be found necessary to have a treaty with the Ameer let us have it, but let no statesman or soldier be weak enough to think that we have by virtue of that mere engagement secured a perpetual friend and put an impassable barrier in the way of hostile influence. In truth, the best plan, if not the only plan, of winning and keeping the confidence of a population like that of Afghanistan is by proving that we are not aggressive; that we are not selfish; that we will not allow every momentary alarm to force us into being unjust and unscrupulous towards our weaker neighbours. However we are to get out of our present difficulties, the *News* does not believe that extension of frontier or annexation of territory will do anything more for us than to help us into new complications.

AUSTRIA AND THE PORTE.

The *Standard* finds it rather startling to be told that, now the Court of Vienna has received and answered the communication of the Porte concerning the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the relations of Austria and Turkey are greatly improved. Yet the politics of the East are so fertile in paradoxes that it would not be wise to deny that the semblance of a better understanding may ensue from these curious recriminations. Nevertheless, Austria and Turkey cannot possibly trust each other; and one of them at any rate has the best reasons for viewing the other with suspicion. What is Austria aiming at? That is a question much debated in Austria itself, and still more earnestly in Hungary; but no one seems able to find a definite and certain answer to the question. English statesmen flatter themselves that Count Andrassy is consciously and intentionally assisting them to erect a barrier against the designs of Russia upon the Turkish Empire, and against the Panslavic idea generally. But Austria is itself a Slav Power; and the approbation which the entry into Bosnia has met with in Croatia is a significant symptom. The occupation of Bosnia is a step towards the completion of a political and military position, whence Austria could either co-operate in checking Russia's territorial aggrandisement in the direction of Constantinople, or could procure for itself strategical compensation for tolerating that aggrandisement within certain limits. This circumstance it is, doubtless, which renders the Porte uneasy. The tendency of the moment at Constantinople seems to be to accept with cheerful resignation what has been done in Bosnia, and to dissuade Austria from carrying the operation further. But the Treaty of Berlin conferred on that Power larger rights than have yet been exercised under it. And there are those who think that Austria's advance will not finally cease until it finds for itself a natural limit at Salonica.

MR. CROSS IN LANCASHIRE.

The *Times*, commenting upon Mr. Cross's speech at Southport, says that on the question of finance he seems to have displayed a wise courage. He has, so to say, taken the bull by the horns. There has been a good deal of uneasiness felt as to the great increase which has been going on in our public expenditure. Here was likely to be the weak point of the present Government. They have spent money freely, and this at a time when trade is bad and when the revenue has ceased to be elastic. Mr. Cross on this matter displays some skill in choosing his line of defence. But when all has been said that Mr. Cross has to say, the fact remains that there has been a very large increase in our expenditure, and that this will have to be met by a corresponding increase in our burdens. It is not enough to prove, in such a case as this, that the country ought to be tolerant of the new weight which will be thrown upon it. The weight has not yet begun to be felt, yet there is already a good deal of grumbling in advance over the prospect of next January, and there is no reason to suppose that anything will happen in the course of next April to lessen it. If there is a rock ahead of the Ministry in any direction, it is in the matter of finance that it may be looked for with most certainty. The country, no doubt, can bear all that will be laid upon it. It is less certain how far it will like the infliction, or what amount of gratitude it will display towards those whom it will hold responsible for it.

THE SPEECH OF THE ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER.

The *Daily Telegraph* remarks that great expectations had been excited throughout the Continent generally, in anticipation of the address which the Italian Premier, Count Cairoli, has at last delivered. The unsatisfactory condition of affairs in Italy, the machinations of those advocating "Italia Irredenta" principles, the tension in the relation between the Quirinal and the Papacy, and the irritating demonstrations in which Italians of late have indulged, combined to render the Premier's speech of more than ordinary significance, and it was hoped that Count Cairoli's oration would enunciate with clearness and decision the policy, internal and external, which his Government have resolved to adopt. Anticipation has, however, been unpleasantly disappointed. Irresolution, except in respect of one particular impost, is everywhere apparent. Beneath the impracticable and senseless cry of "Italia Irredenta" will be found something more dangerous to the peace of Italy than even a rupture with her Northern neighbours. And it is to be regretted that Count Cairoli's speech at a critical time like the present should have contained no condemnation of the proceedings of the Irredenta association. His own connection with the movement is likely to be misconstrued, and any injudicious pandering to the predilections and aspirations of the organization are calculated seriously to imperil the urgent interests of the country.

OPINION IN THE WEEKLY REVIEWS.

AFGHANISTAN.

The *Saturday Review* remarks that every day which in passing reduces the interval between early autumn and winter diminishes the probability of an immediate advance of the English army into Afghanistan. Some of the reasons which might justify a consistent policy insufficiently explain an alleged change of purpose. It is said that the Ameer has placed in the fort of Ali Musjid an unexpectedly strong garrison; but it is scarcely possible that any responsible officer can have allowed his plans to depend on the strength of the force which the enemy might place at any single post. There is happily no ground for further solicitude as to the fate of the Nawab Gholam Hussein Khan, who has returned to the frontier with the Ameer's answer to the Viceroy; but if the temporary possession of a hostage has given the Ameer the incalculable advantage of postponing a conflict for several months, it is difficult to condemn too strongly the rashness which placed the envoy in his hands. It would have been easy to forward letters through the frontier posts without incurring the alternative of exposing a valuable public servant to great personal risk, or enabling the enemy to choose his own time for beginning the war. The despatch of Sir Neville Chamberlain's mission still requires explanation. It was highly probable that, as the event proved, Shere Ali would profit by the opportunity to offer a public affront to the English Government. That a whole winter should be allowed to elapse before redress could be exacted is an inconvenience which seems to have been wantonly encountered. Time has now been allowed for the Russians to organize resistance, and to prosecute intrigues with native Indian potentates.

The *Spectator* says the policy finally adopted by Lord Lytton, and the arguments presented by Sir James Stephen to the country, through the *Times* of Wednesday, both point to the same conclusion—that it is expedient for Great Britain to conquer Afghanistan. England and Russia must meet, and the question to be settled is the place of meeting most advantageous for the British. Sir James Stephen believes that this would be the Hindoo Koosh, with Afghanistan in our own hands. One single but immense fallacy underlies his whole argument. He assumes that in taking military possession of Afghanistan, the Government of India will have changed its position in regard to Russia; the *Spectator* asserts that it will not have changed it at all, except for the worse. We shall, when Afghanistan is held down by "military positions," or annexed, be just where we are now, or rather, where we should be if Cabul were a dependency of Russia—that is, we shall be behind a vast mountain-chain, pierced by few passes, and held on the other side by a possible enemy of great military resources. This chain, the Hindoo Koosh, is not yet proved to be stronger on the Russian side than the Suleiman—which just at this moment is keeping us out in the most suggestive manner—while it is weaker on the Persian side, Persians having repeatedly invaded, and once at least conquered and held, Afghanistan. We should, therefore, have to do in Afghanistan precisely what Sir James says we must otherwise do in India, and do it in a country 400 miles further from our permanent base, the sea, so rugged that railways would either be hopeless or excessively costly, and so raised into the air that the Sepoys of the plains are cowed, and almost paralyzed by the winter climate. Moreover, the Afghans do not want to be conquered, or controlled, or officered by Russians, any more than by Englishmen. The Russians could no more rule them than we can without annexing them, nor could she let them loose for plunder in India without rousing India into a hearty cordial fighting adherence to us, which in a week would make India impregnable.

THE POSITION OF THE REPUBLIC IN FRANCE.

The *Economist* observes that some surprise has been expressed in this country at the moderation of M. Gambetta's speeches at Grenoble as compared with the one delivered at Romans. Those, however, who express this feeling fail to appreciate fully what has occurred in the interval. In the first place, the Ministers who were censured, or rather advised that censure might be forthcoming, have, for the most

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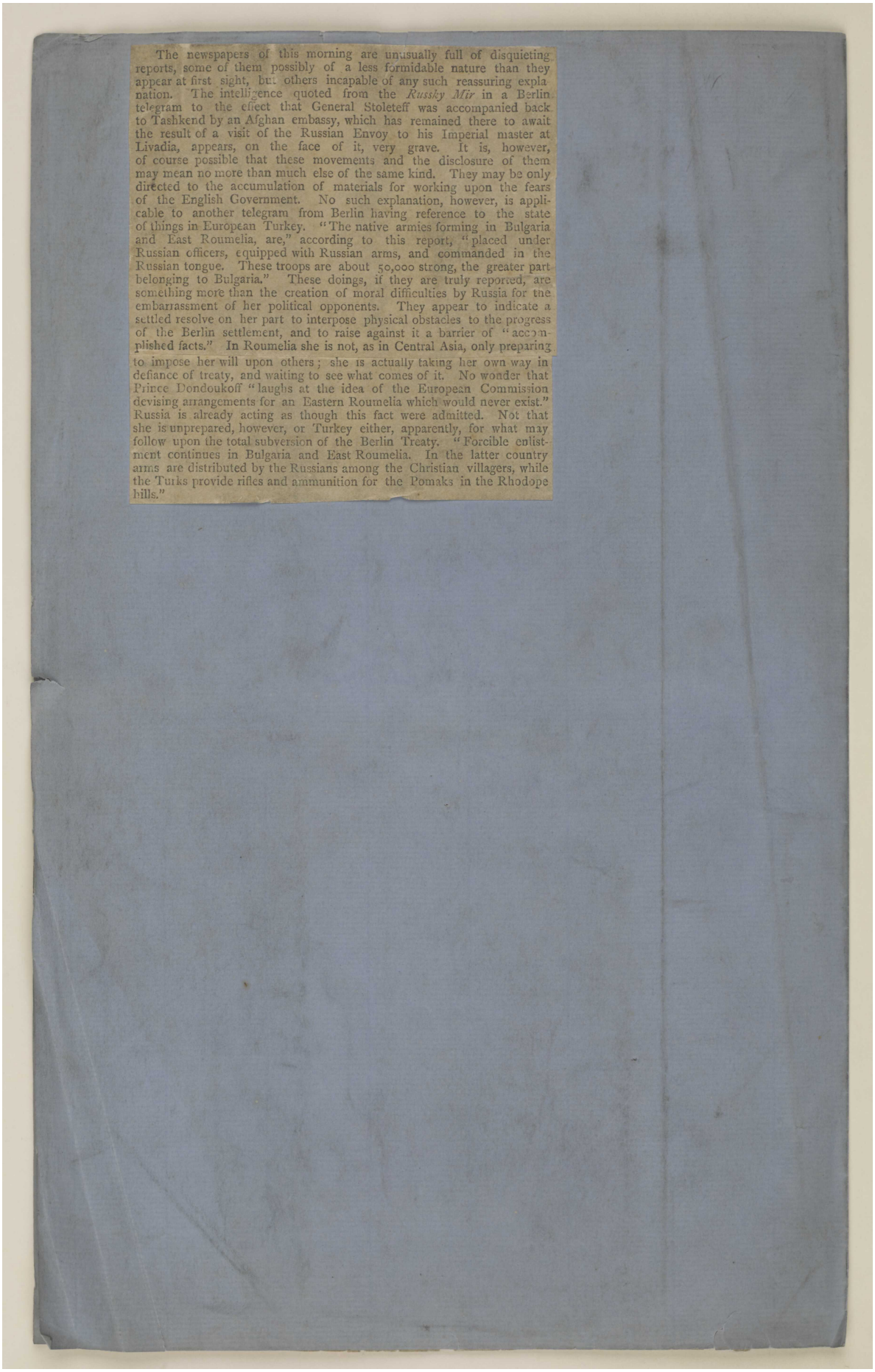

The newspapers of this morning are unusually full of disquieting reports, some of them possibly of a less formidable nature than they appear at first sight, but others incapable of any such reassuring explanation. The intelligence quoted from the *Russky Mir* in a Berlin telegram to the effect that General Stoleteff was accompanied back to Tashkend by an Afghan embassy, which has remained there to await the result of a visit of the Russian Envoy to his Imperial master at Livadia, appears, on the face of it, very grave. It is, however, of course possible that these movements and the disclosure of them may mean no more than much else of the same kind. They may be only directed to the accumulation of materials for working upon the fears of the English Government. No such explanation, however, is applicable to another telegram from Berlin having reference to the state of things in European Turkey. "The native armies forming in Bulgaria and East Roumelia, are," according to this report, "placed under Russian officers, equipped with Russian arms, and commanded in the Russian tongue. These troops are about 50,000 strong, the greater part belonging to Bulgaria." These doings, if they are truly reported, are something more than the creation of moral difficulties by Russia for the embarrassment of her political opponents. They appear to indicate a settled resolve on her part to interpose physical obstacles to the progress of the Berlin settlement, and to raise against it a barrier of "accomplished facts." In Roumelia she is not, as in Central Asia, only preparing to impose her will upon others; she is actually taking her own way in defiance of treaty, and waiting to see what comes of it. No wonder that Prince Dondoukoff "laughs at the idea of the European Commission devising arrangements for an Eastern Roumelia which would never exist." Russia is already acting as though this fact were admitted. Not that she is unprepared, however, or Turkey either, apparently, for what may follow upon the total subversion of the Berlin Treaty. "Forcible enlistment continues in Bulgaria and East Roumelia. In the latter country arms are distributed by the Russians among the Christian villagers, while the Turks provide rifles and ammunition for the Pomaks in the Rhodope hills."

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