

other stores. The Cabul gate was blown open by a terrific explosion; the storming party entered the gate; a few moments of darkness and confusion, and then the foremost soldiers caught a glimpse of the morning sky, and pushing gallantly on, were soon established in the fortress.\* In two hours from the commencement of the attack Ghuznee was in the hands of the British forces. There were great doubts, almost universal doubts, at home as to the policy of this Afghan war. There could be no doubt as to the brilliancy of this exploit. The duke of Wellington gave his warmest testimony to the merits of the officer who had achieved this success. The duke went further. Carefully reserving his opinion as to the origin of the war, he declared, in assenting to the vote of thanks to the army of the Indus, that he had had frequent opportunities of noticing the arrangements made for the execution of great military enterprises, but that he had never known an occasion on which the duty of government had been performed on a larger scale, on which more adequate provisions had been made for all the contingencies which might have occurred, or in which more attention had been paid to the wishes of the officers, the comforts of the soldiers, and all those considerations which are likely to make a war successful.†

On the 29th of July the British army quitted Ghuznee. It entered Cabul in triumph on the 7th of August. Shah Soojah, restored to his sovereignty, was once more seated in the Bala-Hissar, the ancient palace of his race. Dost Mahomed had fled beyond the Indian Caucasus. The country appeared not only subjected to the new government, but tranquil and satisfied. There was a notion at one time of withdrawing the greater part of the forces, but it was finally determined that the first division of Bengal infantry with the 13th Queen's regiment should remain in Cabul and Candahar, and that Ghuznee and Jellalabad should be occupied by native regiments. One division of the Bombay army, which was returning home, effected the capture of the strong fortress of Khelat, with a view to the deposition of the Khan, who had conducted himself hostilely and treacherously towards the British. To the forces remaining in Cabul there were a few months of ease and recreation. As the spring and summer advanced insurrections began to break out in the surrounding country. Dost Mahomed had again made his appearance, and had fought a gallant battle with the British cavalry, in which he obtained a partial victory. Despairing, however, of his power effectually to resist the British arms, he wrote to Cabul, and delivered himself up to the

\* Kaye, vol. i. p. 447.

† Hansard, vol. li. col. 1174.

envoy, sir William MacNaghten, claiming the protection of his government. He was sent to India, where a place of residence was assigned to him on the North-West frontier, with three lacs of rupees (about 30,000*l.*) as a revenue. But the danger of the occupation of Afghanistan was not yet overpast. The events of November and December, 1841, and of January, 1842, were of so fearful a nature as scarcely to be paralleled in some of their incidents by the disasters of the mutiny of 1857.

In September and October, 1841, the direction of affairs at Cabul was almost wholly in the hands of Sir William MacNaghten, the envoy. Sir Alexander Burnes was also there, but without any official appointment. The chief command of the army was committed to major-general Elphinstone, an old Peninsular officer, but whose energy had passed into a state of nervous debility, totally unfitting him for any sudden emergency. Shah Soojah was complaining that he had no real authority, and that he did not understand his position. Burnes was equally dissatisfied that at Cabul he was without employment, consulted at times, but possessing no responsibility. An administrative change was at hand. MacNaghten was appointed governor of Bombay, and Burnes looked forward to the attainment of a sphere of duty suited to his abilities, as the successor of MacNaghten. The British at Cabul were in a condition of false security. The army was in cantonments, extensive, ill-defended, overawed on every side. Within these indefensible cantonments English ladies, amongst whom were lady MacNaghten and lady Sale, were domesticated in comfortable houses. Sir Robert Sale had left Cabul in October, expecting his wife to follow him in a few days. The climate was suited to the English; and our officers, true to their national character, had been cricket-playing, riding races, fishing, shooting, and when winter came, astonishing the Afghans with skating on the lakes. After the catastrophe which we shall have to relate, an unfinished memorandum was found among the papers of sir William MacNaghten, in which he says, "I may be considered culpable for not having foreseen the coming storm. To this I can only reply that others, who had much better opportunities of watching the feelings of the people, had no suspicion of what was coming."\* All looked with complacency upon the profound tranquillity around them, as that of an unclouded morning,—all

\* "Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,  
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

\* Kaye, vol. ii. p. 3.

On the night of the 1st of November there was a meeting of Afghan chiefs, who were banded together, however conflicting might be their interests, to make common cause against the Feringhees (foreigners). One of these, Abdoollah Khan, who had been active in his intrigues to stir up disaffection, had an especial quarrel with Burnes, who had called him a dog, and had said that he would recommend Shah Soojah to deprive the rebel of his ears. He proposed that at the contemplated rising on the 2nd of November, the first overt act should be an attack on the house of Burnes. Lady Sale, in her journal of that day, says, "This morning early all was in commotion in Cabul; the shops were plundered, and the people were all fighting." Before daylight an Afghan who was friendly to Burnes came to report to him that a plot had been hatched during the night which had for its chief object his murder. The Vizier arrived with the same warning. Burnes was incredulous, and refused to seek safety either in the king's fortress-palace, the Bala-Hissar, or in the British cantonments. A mob was before his house. Perfect master of the language of the people, he harangued them from a gallery. At his side stood his brother Charles, and lieutenant Broadfoot, who had arrived to perform the office of military secretary to Burnes when he should be the highest in place and power. The mob clamoured for the lives of the British officers, and Broadfoot was the first to fall by a shot from the infuriated multitude. The insurgents had now forced their way into Burnes's garden, upon the culture of which he prided himself, and they called to him to come down. Charles Burnes and the servants of the house had been firing from the gallery. A Mussulman from Cashmere, who had entered the house, swore by the Koran that if they would cease firing, he would convey the brothers in safety to the Kuzzilbash (Persian) fort. The three entered the garden, when the betrayer proclaimed to the insurgents "This is Secunder Burnes." The brothers were instantly struck down, and were cut to pieces by the Afghan knives. Sir Alexander Burnes, who thus perished in the thirty-sixth year of his age, was of the same family as the great Scottish poet, his grandfather being the brother of the father of Robert Burns. He was one of those remarkable men who have won their way to high distinction in the service of the East India Company through their intimate knowledge of the Oriental languages, associated with that indefatigable spirit of inquiry and observation which have made Hindostan and the neighbouring countries so familiar to the nation that was gradually advancing to supreme dominion over two hundred millions of men. He is described as one of an impulsive tempera-

ment, whose mind was subject to fluctuations of opinion,—sometimes an alarmist, more frequently sanguine and over-confident. "His talents were great; his energies were great. What he lacked was stability of character."\*

From the 2nd of November to the 23rd of December, the position of the British at Cabul became more and more perilous. At the beginning of the insurrection some vigorous resolve, some demonstration of the power of the British arms, might have insured safety, if not ultimate triumph. There were four thousand five hundred good troops in the cantonments, but there was no one effectually to lead them against the rebels in the city. There were about six hundred British troops in the Bala-Hissar. MacNaghten at the beginning of December urged general Elphinstone to retire from the cantonments, and place the remainder of the troops in that fortress, in which they would be in a position to overawe the populace. The last alternative was to march at once to India, and turn with the desperate courage of the lion at bay upon their surrounding foes. General Sale and general Nott were expected with reinforcements, but they were themselves hemmed in by enemies. The public events of this distressing time are told with the clearness and spirit of the intelligent historian by Mr. Kaye. The alternations of hope and fear amongst the unhappy residents, especially the women, are recorded in the journal of lady Sale. In the first week of December the troops in cantonments were threatened by the near approach of starvation. The camp followers were living upon the carcasses of dead camels. Negotiations were going on with the Afghan chiefs for the safe retreat of the army, and for a supply of provisions. They were protracted from day to day, the Afghans requiring as a first condition that the forts in the neighbourhood of the cantonments should be given up. They were evacuated; and then the enemy looked down with triumphant derision upon those who, within their defenceless walls, were perishing, whilst the supplies which had been promised them were intercepted by a rabble from the city. Every day added to the expected difficulties of the retreat. The winter was setting in. On the 18th of December snow began to fall. MacNaghten, wearied and almost desperate amidst the bad faith and insulting demands of the chiefs, received on the evening of the 22nd a proposal from Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Mahomed, which even Elphinstone, enfeebled as he was by illness and generally inapt to offer a decided opinion, regarded as treacherous. On the morning of the 23rd, according to the proposal that had been made to him, Mac-

\* Kaye, vol. ii. p. 13.

Naghten, with three friends, Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie, went out about six hundred yards from the cantonment for a conference with Akbar Khan, the Sirdar (the title which the chief assumed). The envoy had desired to propitiate him by sending that morning the present of a beautiful Arab horse. On a hill side Akbar Khan's servants had spread some horse-cloths over the fallen snow. The party were invited to dismount and sit down. The Afghans were gathering round them in numbers—a circumstance which corroborated the suspicions of Lawrence and Mackenzie. In an instant they were seized from behind. The two who were best prepared by their apprehensions for some plot against their lives contrived to escape. Trevor was murdered; Akbar Khan rushed upon MacNaghten in the endeavour to seize and detain him. "The look of wondering horror that sat upon his upturned face will not be forgotten by those who saw it to their dying days. The only words he was heard to utter were, *Az baraa Khoda* ('for God's sake!')." \* Akbar Khan drew a pistol from his girdle—it was one of a pair which MacNaghten had presented to him the previous day—and he shot the unarmed envoy through the body. Wonderful to relate, not a gun was fired from the British cantonments, not a soldier went forth to avenge the murder of the British minister. On Christmas-day intelligence arrived that reinforcements were on their way from India. Major Pottinger, who now took the place of the unfortunate MacNaghten as political agent, exhorted the military chiefs either to fight their way to Jellalabad, or forcibly to occupy the Bala-Hissar. They preferred to capitulate. At a Council of War on the 26th a treaty was ratified, which contained the humiliating conditions that all the guns should be left behind except six; that all the treasure should be given up, and forty thousand rupees paid in bills, to be negotiated upon the spot; and that four officers as hostages should be detained to insure the evacuation of Jellalabad by general Sale. On the 6th of January, 1842, on a morning of intense cold, the army, consisting of four thousand five hundred fighting men and twelve thousand followers, began to move out of the cantonments. So tedious was the progress, chiefly caused by the disorderly movements of the camp-followers, that, at six o'clock in the evening, the rear-guard was leaving the walls of the cantonments which the advanced guard had quitted at half-past nine in the morning. The order and discipline which could alone save an army retreating in the midst of a hostile population had no place in that confused mass, who were without food or fuel or shelter. Akbar Khan came up with a body of six

\* Kaye.

hundred horsemen to demand other hostages as security for the evacuation of Jellalabad. On the 8th, Pottinger, Lawrence, and Mackenzie were placed in his hands. Akbar Khan declared that he also came to protect the British and Hindoos from the attacks of the Ghilzyes, one of the most fanatic of the Mussulman tribes of Afghanistan. His authority appears to have been exerted with all sincerity to interfere between these cruel assailants and their victims; but it was manifested in vain. The disorganized force entered the Pass of Khoord-Cabul, which for five miles is shut in by precipitous mountains, with a torrent rushing down the centre. On the hill-sides were the unrelenting Ghilzyes, who shot down the fugitives without a chance of being resisted or restrained. In this Pass three thousand men are stated to have fallen. "The ladies were mostly travelling in kujavas (camel-panniers), and were mixed up with the baggage and column in the Pass. Here they were heavily fired on." \* Lady Sale, who rode on horseback, was shot in the arm. Her son-in-law was here mortally wounded. On the 9th, Akbar Khan, who had arrived with his three hostages, "turned to Lawrence and said that he had a proposal to make, but that he did not like to do so lest his motives might be misconstrued; but that, as it concerned us more than himself, he would mention it; and that it was, that all the married men, with their families, should come over and put themselves under his protection, he guaranteeing them honourable treatment, and a safe escort to Peshawur. He added, that Lawrence must have seen from the events of the day previous—the loss of captain Boyd's and captain Anderson's children—that our camp was no place of safety for the ladies and children." † Lawrence and Pottinger urged the acceptance of this proposal upon general Elphinstone. There were ten women and thirteen or more children; six married men went with them, with two wounded officers. It was better to trust to Akbar Khan for the protection of these helpless women and children than to continue their exposure to the attacks of the cruel tribes whom the Sirdar could not restrain, and to the horrors of a continued march in a most inclement season. "There was but faint hope," says lady Sale, "of our ever getting safely to Jellalabad; and we followed the stream. But although there was much talk regarding our going over, all I personally know of the affair is, that I was told we were all to go, and that our horses were ready, and we must mount immediately and be off." † On the 10th of January the small remnant of the force that had left Cabul on the 6th continued its march towards Jellalabad. The

\* Lady Sale's "Journal." † *Ibid.*

Native regiments were nearly annihilated by cold and hunger and the Afghan knife. The frost-bitten Asiatics, who still crawled to a narrow defile, were unable to make any resistance. The dying and the dead soon choked up the narrow gorge between the precipitous spurs of two hills. There was now not a single Sepoy left. Not more than a quarter of the men who had left Cabul now survived. The European officers and soldiers scarcely numbered five hundred. They would have fought with the energy of desperation, but they were hemmed in by the crowd of camp-followers, who from the first had rendered their march as dangerous as the assaults of their enemies. The next day Akbar Khan invited general Elphinstone and two English officers, brigadier Shelton and captain Johnson, to a conference. The Sirdar required that the three should remain as hostages for the evacuation of Jellalabad. Elphinstone implored the Afghan to permit him to return and share the fortune of his troops. The two officers were equally unwilling to leave their doomed comrades. But resistance was in vain. On the evening of the 12th the march was resumed. They had to struggle with the dangers of the Jugdulluck Pass, in which the steep road ascends through a dark defile. As they approached the summit they found a barricade of bushes and branches of trees. Here the relentless enemy was in waiting. A general massacre ensued, in which many of the remaining officers perished. Twenty officers and forty-five European soldiers were able to clear the barricade. The next morning they were surrounded by an infuriated multitude. They were as one to a hundred; most of them were wounded; but they were resolute not to lay down their arms. They all perished except one captain and a few privates, who were taken prisoners. Out of those who had been in advance of the column in the Pass, six reached Futtehabad, within sixteen miles of Jellalabad. These last companions in misery were three captains, one lieutenant, and two regimental surgeons. Five were slain before the sixteen miles were traversed. General Sale's brigade had held possession of Jellalabad from the morning of the 13th of November, when they took the place from the Afghans by surprise. From time to time they heard rumours of the perilous position of the British force in Cabul. At last a letter, addressed to captain MacGregor, the political agent, arrived from Elphinstone and Pottinger, stating that an agreement having taken place for the evacuation of Cabul, they should immediately commence their march to India. In the absence of any security for the safe conduct of the troops to Peshawur, they resolved to disobey these instructions, and not to surrender the fort, whose defences they

had been assiduously labouring to improve. The Afghan chief who bore the letter had been appointed governor of Jellalabad. On the 13th of January a sentry on the ramparts saw a solitary horseman struggling on towards the fort. He was brought in, wounded and exhausted. The one man who was left to tell the frightful tale of the retreat from Cabul was doctor Brydon.

The refusal of Sale and MacGregor to surrender Jellalabad was that heroic determination to face the danger which in almost every case makes the danger less. Akbar Khan lost no time in besieging Jellalabad. Sale had well employed his enforced leisure in repairing the ruinous ramparts and clearing out the ditch. He had made the place secure against the attack of an army without cannon. But the garrison was not secure against the approach of famine. Akbar Khan with a large body of horse was hovering around to prevent the admission of supplies. On the 19th of February a serious misfortune called forth new energies in these resolute men. An earthquake to a great extent rendered the labour vain which had been so long employed in the repairs of the works. By the end of the month the parapets were restored, the breaches built up, and every battery re-established. At the close of March, being at the last extremity for provisions, the garrison made a sortie, and carried off five hundred sheep and goats. It was known to sir Robert Sale that general Pollock was advancing to his relief. The time was come when a vigorous attack on the enemy without might have better results than a protracted defence. On the morning of the 7th of April three columns of infantry, with some field artillery and a small cavalry force, issued from the walls of Jellalabad to attack Akbar Khan, who with six thousand men was strongly posted in the adjacent plain. The columns were commanded by colonel Dennie, colonel Monteath, and captain Have-lock, who led the attack. In leading his column to storm a square fort colonel Dennie fell. Every point attacked by the three columns was carried, and the victory was completed by a general assault upon the Afghan camp. In a few hours the battle was over. Two days before this victory general Pollock had forced the Khyber Pass, which general Wild had previously attempted without success. This was an achievement in which the bravery of troops would have been thrown away if the arrangements of the general had been less skilful. The Afghans made no attempt to resist the progress of the troops till they were at the entrance of the Pass. They relied upon being able to destroy them from the precipices that overhung the road. The heights were carried on

both sides, and the Afghans themselves in the Pass were exposed to that fire from above which had been so perilous to the British army in its former marches through the mountainous barriers of their country. It is considered that if Pollock had moved precipitately with his main column into the Pass, he would probably have been driven back with great slaughter; but that the precaution he took in crowning the heights and turning the enemy's position secured him, though not without some fighting the whole way, a safe passage.\* On the 16th of April Pollock's advanced guard was in sight of Jellalabad; and the two little armies were united in the exulting hope that it would be for them to retrieve the disasters which had befallen the British arms. Lord Ellenborough had arrived at Calcutta as Governor-general on the 25th of February. The close of lord Auckland's rule in India was clouded with misfortunes which fell heavily upon a proud and sensitive man. His policy was proved to be a mistake. Nothing in the annals of our country had ever exhibited so disastrous an issue to a war undertaken in the confidence that it would avert the possibility of an impending danger. When, on the 30th of January, the utter destruction of the army of Cabul was known at Calcutta, the Governor-general published a proclamation containing brave words. A new Governor-general had arrived, who, appointed by a new Administration, had been amongst the most vehement denouncers of the Afghan war.

The interest attached to the remaining history of this war is the interest attached to the hopeful anticipation of lord Auckland in his proclamation of the 31st of January. The calamity which had overtaken the British arms was, he said, "a new occasion for displaying the stability and vigour of the British power, and the admirable spirit and valour of the British-Indian army." The successes of Sale and Pollock had renewed the confidence of our countrymen in India that the storm would soon be overpast. They had interrupted the hopes of those native Powers who believed that the rule of the Feringhees was coming to an end. Shah Soojah had been for some time able to maintain himself in the citadel of Cabul after he had been left to his own resources. He finally perished by assassination. The English ladies, children, and officers, who were treated as prisoners rather than as hostages, were carried from fort to fort. General Elphinstone died at Tezeen on the 23rd of April. At the end of April, general England had forced the principal Pass between Juettah and Candahar; and

\* Kaye, vol. ii. p. 338.

early in May had joined his forces to those of general Nott at Candahar. Ghuznee, which was in the possession of the Afghans, was recaptured by him on the 6th of September. General Pollock had been detained by sickness and other impediments at Jellalabad to the end of August. He then fought his way through the Passes, and was joined by general Nott. On the 15th of September the British standard was flying on the Bala-Hissar of Cabul. The prisoners of Akbar Khan had been hurried towards Turkistan. The khan who had charge of them agreed with the English officers, for the future payment of a sum of rupees and an annuity, that he would assist them to regain their freedom. The advance of the army upon Cabul secured the aid of other chieftains. On the 15th of September, the hostages, the ladies and the children, had quitted the forts of the friendly khan, and were proceeding towards Cabul, when, on the 17th, they were met by a party of six hundred mounted Kuzzilbashes, under the command of sir Richmond Shakespear, who had been sent by general Pollock to rescue them from their perils. On the 19th a horseman met the party alternating between hope and fear, to say that general Sale was close at hand with a brigade. The husband and the father met his wife and widowed daughter. Their happiness produced "a choking sensation, which could not obtain the relief of tears." The soldiers cheered; a royal salute from mountain-train guns welcomed them to the camp; the joy was proportioned to the terrible dangers that were overpast. On the 1st of October a proclamation was issued from Simla by lord Ellenborough, which stated that the disasters in Afghanistan having been avenged upon every scene of past misfortune, the British army would be withdrawn the Sutlej. On the 12th of October the army began its march back to India. Dost Mahomed was released, and returned to his sovereignty at Cabul.

Of the proclamation dated from Simla on the 1st of October there was much adverse notice in Parliament. Mr. Macaulay maintained that it was ante-dated; for that on the 1st of October the release of the captives on the 19th of September could not have been known to the Governor-general; and that knowing of this joyful event on the 12th he omitted all mention of it, that he might have the childish gratification of insulting his predecessor in the vice-royalty, by dating on the same day on which, in 1838, lord Auckland had published his unfortunate declaration of the causes and objects of the war. But there was another proclamation by lord Ellenborough which his ministerial friends could scarcely vindicate, and which brought down upon him the bitterest denunciations of his political enemies. It was as follows:

"From the Governor-General to all the Princes, and Chiefs, and People of India.

"MY BROTHERS AND MY FRIENDS,

"Our victorious army bears the gates of the temple of Somnauth in triumph from Afghanistan, and the despoiled tomb of Sultan Mahomed looks upon the ruins of Ghuznee.

"The insult of eight hundred years is at last avenged. The gates of the temple of Somnauth, so long the memorial of your humiliation, are become the proudest record of your national glory; the proof of your superiority in arms over the nations beyond the Indus.

"To you, Princes and Chiefs of Sirhind, of Rajwarra, of Malwa, and of Guzerat, I shall commit this glorious trophy of successful war.

"You will yourselves, with all honour, transmit the gates of sandal-wood through your respective territories to the restored temple of Somnauth.

"The chiefs of Sirhind shall be informed at what time our victorious army will first deliver the gates of the temple into their guardianship, at the foot of the bridge of the Sutlej."

The Hindoo temple of Somnauth was in ruins, and it was maintained by those to whom the pompous words of the proclamation were distasteful, that the Governor-general meant to restore it, and thus to manifest a preference for one of the great rival creeds of India—a preference which the policy of England expressly forbade. This might be a wrong inference from the words of the proclamation. But to despoil the tomb of a worshipper of Mahomed, that honour might be done the worshippers of Vishnu, was to offer an outrage to those sensibilities which more than any other cause made and still make the British rule in India so like treading on beds of lava.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Continuation of the previous notices of English literature.—Law of Copyright.—Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's long struggle to amend the Law.—Mr. Carlyle's petition.—Serjeant Talfourd's Bill rejected.—Lord Mahon's Bill.—Mr. Macaulay's Amendments.—Application of the Act to Copyrights about to expire.—Authors recently deceased.—Novelists.—Theodore Hook and the Silver-fork School.—Ephemeral Critics and Writers without knowledge.—Utilitarianism.—Changes in the Character of Literature.—Historians.—Macaulay.—Hallam.—Carlyle.—Lingard.—Fraser Tytler.—Palgrave.—Kemble.—Forster.—Mahon.—Napier.—Mitford.—Thirlwall.—Grote.—Arnold.—Novelists.—Bulwer Lytton.—Dickens.—Ainsworth.—Thackeray.—Serials.—Prevalence of Fiction.—Kitchen Literature.—Miss Martineau's Tales illustrative of Political Economy.—Social Aims of Novelists.—Dickens.—Mrs. Gaskell.—Kingsley.—Thackeray's Novels.—Poets.—Tennyson.—Browning.—E. Barrett Browning.—Thomas Hood.—Union of Pen and Pencil.—Theology.—Milman.—Robertson.—Political Economy.—Science.—Criticism.—Antiquarian Inquiry.—Travels.—Book Trade.—Newspapers.

BEFORE we enter upon a narrative, which may be best given continuously, of the great historical period from 1841 to 1846, during which sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister, we purpose to introduce a chapter on the Literature of that period and of the period immediately preceding. We shall attempt this in connection with the subject of the New Law of Copyright, which was finally settled in the session of 1842.

In the preceding volume we devoted a chapter to English Literature in the three latter decades of the reign of George the Third, and gave a chronological table of the principal writers of the present century, with the exception of those who were living at the end of 1861. We propose in this chapter to point out a few of the more prominent instances of the beneficial operation of the Copyright Act of 1842 with reference to the families of authors then recently deceased. Its benefits to living authors, whether in the maturity of a high reputation or rising into public notice, need not be illustrated by individual instances. The oldest writer with a dependent family, and the youngest writer who had given hostages to fortune, felt a comfort and a relief in its salutary provisions against the uncertainty of the future with regard to the descendants "of those who devote themselves to the most precarious of all pursuits." \* What is now called "the Victorian Era" of

\* "Pickwick Papers," 1837; Dedication to Serjeant Talfourd.