

impartially dealt with, we had no just claim against the Nizam." In '1853,' he repeats 'we had little or no claim against the Nizam.'† In 1853 there was, in fact, a disputed balance-sheet. The balance of 430,000*l.* which was demanded was made out by debiting the Nizam with cash payments from our Treasury for the Hyderabad Contingent, while refusing to credit him with sums due to him by our Government on other accounts. Interest, first at 12 and afterwards at 6 per cent., on all our advances, formed nearly a quarter of the claim. The principal of the Nizam's counter-claim, without any calculation of interest, was more than the whole charge against him. But no set-off, or inquiry as to a set-off, was tolerated by Lord Dalhousie's Administration; though subsequently, under Lord Canning's Government, the chief item—the *abkaree*, or excise collections of Secunderabad and Jaulnah—was prospectively allowed to be a portion of the legitimate revenue of the Hyderabad State.‡

No plea of set-off was listened to, and a distress was put in, embittered by terms of menace and insult. Lord Dalhousie, in the process of enforcing this most questionable pecuniary claim—most questionable even if the Nizam's large counter-claims were excluded—had written personally to the Nizam, telling him that the Hyderabad State was bound to maintain the Contingent 'by the stipulations of existing treaties,' reminding him that it was dangerous 'to provoke the resentment of the British Government,' 'whose power can crush you at its will,'§ and warning him that 'the independence of his sovereignty' stood in imminent danger. In the same letter the Nizam was advised, as an indispensable measure of economy, to disband 'the Arab soldiery,' those 'turbulent mercenaries' who consumed so large a portion of his revenues, and to rouse himself to make a great effort for 'the early liquidation of the accumulated debt.' If the Nizam were unable to meet the call on his treasury, he must 'forthwith make over' to the British Government certain frontier districts of his territory enumerated in a schedule annexed to this letter.¶

It was a ready money question entirely. In 1851, when the unpleasant letter from which I have quoted was addressed to him, the Nizam staved off the difficulty by paying a large sum on account. If he had produced the cash that was demanded in 1853, when similar pressure was applied, he would have avoided the sequestration of his districts. But his resources and his credit were exhausted, and the Governor-General would wait no longer. The Nizam's vain endeavours to gain time were cut short by an intimation that unless he at once consented to sign the new treaty, orders would be given for the advance of British troops, not merely into the districts that were wanted, but also into his capital. Then the Nizam and his advisers saw that he had before him the choice of signing the treaty

or being dethroned. They understood perfectly, if every one else was ignorant of it—which is not likely—that it must come to that. The Nizam's Government was not as strong in 1853, nor was Hyderabad as orderly, as they have become during the twenty years' administration of the Nawab Salar Jung. Without counting the armed men in a fortified city of 200,000 inhabitants, were almost every man was armed, Hyderabad was full of those turbulent mercenaries whom our Government, as they, of course, were well aware, was urging the Nizam to disband. They knew that military occupation meant not only the loss of their bread, but the loss of their hard-earned savings. For the Arab soldiery were the greatest money-lenders in Hyderabad, and after their expulsion by British power they would obviously have had great difficulty in collecting their little accounts. Their leaders would certainly have taken every advantage of Mussulman fanaticism and general excitement to have one last despairing struggle before they submitted to the loss of their homes, and of all that they possessed. Although the city could not have resisted a British force for six hours, it would not have been occupied without a contest. But the first shot fired from the walls, the first drop of blood shed, would in those days, so far as we can argue from the general tone and temper of Lord Dalhousie's administration, have cost the Nizam his throne. It would certainly have been worse than useless for him to plead that he could not control the unruly rabble of his capital. If, as might easily have been the case, a great number of the combatants had been proved to be in his own pay, his conduct would have been stigmatized as gross and infamous treachery. It would have gone hard with him.

We have seen Lord Dalhousie representing to the Nizam that the Hyderabad State was bound to maintain the Contingent 'by the stipulations of existing treaties,' and I have said that this representation was erroneous. That it was so I shall prove from Lord Dalhousie's own mouth, and this will afford a very striking illustration of the iniquitous manner in which the actual system of secret correspondence and consultation effects the weaker party. In 1851 the Governor-General insists that 'the efficient maintenance of the Force is a duty imposed on the Government of Hyderabad by the stipulations of existing treaties,' and again, that it is 'necessary to fulfil the obligation of treaties.' In 1853—having in the meanwhile, we may suppose, examined more carefully the documents bearing on the case—he arrived at a very different result. 'I have found myself forced,' he says, to the 'conclusion that the Government of India has no right whatever, either by the spirit or by the letter of the Treaty of 1800, to require the Nizam to maintain the Contingent in its present form.' And again, in the same minute he says: 'I, for my part, can never consent, as an honest