INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is a mountainous country; more than half of its area is a high plateau covered with lofty mountains, while the other half consists of level tracts. The Danish geographer Humlum (1959) divided Afghanistan into ten natural provinces. 1 The country, as a whole, is divided into northern and southern parts by the ranges of mountains which start from the north east and reach the south west. These consist of the Hindu Kush, Kohi Baba and Ferozkoh ranges. 2

Afghanistan has been at the crossroads of world trade; it has also been a meeting ground of different cultures. It was in this country that the Aryans settled for the first time. Again, it was in Afghanistan that Zoroaster preached his monotheistic religion. 3 Later in the fourth century B.C., it became a part of the Macedonian Empire. It was about the middle of the third century B.C., during the reign of Ashoka, that Buddhism found its way into the country. 4

Afghanistan, being accessible almost from all sides and situated on the main routes of Asia, was the main centre

3 Mohammed Ali, Afghanistan, the National Awakening (Lahore, 1958), p. 11.
4 Ibid.
for various civilization and cultures. In history this land had different names, each of which lasted for centuries. In the ancient times it was known as Aryana, in medieval period it was called Khurasan. The modern name, Afghanistan, can be traced even in medieval texts. An anonymous work "Hudud-al-Alam" (Boundaries of the World), which appeared in A.D. 980, contains this name. It occurs again in the writings of Mohammad Ibn-i-Ahmad Al-Biruni (A.D. 1060) who comments: "In the Western frontier mountain of India live various tribes of Afghan."\(^5\) Ahmad Shah Abdali, who ruled the Afghan Empire from 1747-67, called this region Afghanistan.

Modern Afghanistan almost consists of the same area as mentioned in the old Greek as Ariana and in Sanskrit as Arya-Varta. Situated between India and Persia, the western and northern boundaries of Afghanistan were not precise; but those on the east and south were the Indus River and the Indian Ocean.\(^6\)

The word Khurasan, signifying land of the rising sun (East), appeared in the second century of the Christian Era but was applied to the land east of Iran in the fifth century. The Afghan historian, Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghubar, is of the opinion that "for fourteen centuries Khurasan was applied initially to parts of Afghanistan and later to the

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whole country and is still in use for a small region to the northwest of it\textsuperscript{7}. When strong governments, such as Tahirid (A.D. 821-873), Saffarid (A.D. 867-1495), Ghaznavid (A.D. 1077-1186), and Ghurid (A.D. 1000-1215) arose in Khurasan, their rulers were called Amirs of Khurasan by the Caliphs of Baghdad.\textsuperscript{8}

The expansionist policy of the Mughal emperors in India and the Safavids in Persia in the 16th and 17th centuries continuously tried to bring the Afghans under their sway. The Afghan tribes on the eastern frontier continuously fought against the Mughals from the days of Babur (1504-1530) to the death of Aurangzeb in 1707.

Bayazid Ansari, popularly known as Pir Rooshan, launched a struggle against Akbar's rule in the North-West Frontier. This movement is known in history as the Rushania Movement. Bayazid was able to establish his authority in the region from Khyber to the Sulaiman range. When Aurangzeb came to power (1658), he too could not pacify the Afghans. The Yusufzai, Afridi and Khattak tribes continuously fought with Aurangzeb. Khushal Khan Khattak fought throughout his life and never accepted the Mughal rule.\textsuperscript{9}

At the beginning of the 18th century, national liberation movements started everywhere in Afghanistan. The

\textsuperscript{7} Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghubar, \textit{Afghanis Dar Ma Seer-i-Tarikh} (Kabul, 1967), p. 9.

\textsuperscript{8} Hasan Kakar, n. 6, p. xvi.

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p. xix.
first to strike successfully was a Hotaki Chief of Kandahar, Mir Vais Khan. The Safavids controlled the commercial and strategical centre, Kandahar. In medieval period Kandahar was a bone of contention between the Mughal and Safavid empires. 10

Afghanistan as a national entity existed in 1708, when Mir Vais Khan Ghilzai led the tribes and drove away the Persians and founded the Afghan Kingdom in Western Afghanistan. He consolidated his power and established his authority up to the Persian border. His successor defeated the Persian ruler, Shah Husain Safavi, and conquered the Persian capital Isphahan.

From 1707 to 1713, the Persians sent army after army against the new Afghan Government, but without success. Mir Vais brought the Afghans together and by the end of 1713 he was accepted as sovereign ruler by all the leading Afghan families. He died in 1715. His successors extended their rule beyond Afghan boundaries and in 1722 they captured Isphahan. The Afghans ruled Persia for a short period, and their last ruler Shah Ashraf was defeated by Nadir Shah, and later in 1737 he captured Kandahar and subsequently Kabul and the Punjab. 11 Nadir Shah secured the goodwill of


11 MacGregor, C.M., Central Asia, Part II. A Contribution towards the Better Knowledge of the Topography, Ethnology, Resources and History of Afghanistan (Calcutta, 1871), pp. 73-75.
the Afghan people and raised a contingent of sixteen thousand horses in Afghanistan. This force subsequently rendered such important services to Nadir Shah that he preferred them to his own troops and thereby excited the jealousy of the Persians. Most probably his dependence on the Afghans caused his assassination by the Persians in 1747. After Nadir Shah's assassination the Persian army fell on the Afghans. The Afghans in Nadir's service, led by Ahmad Khan, returned to Kandahar and found the Afghan kingdom.

In 1747 Ahmad Shah Durani founded the modern kingdom of Afghanistan. By 1750 he assumed direct control over all the regions lying between the Indus and the Oxus. The limits of the Afghan empire at the death of Ahmad Shah in 1773 are given by a British traveller who visited Afghanistan a few years after his death in the following words: "The frontier on the north was defined by the Oxus, and the mountains of Kafiristan (Pamir range); on the south by the Sea of Oman; on the east by the mountains of Tibet, the river Sutlej and the Indus; and on the west by Khorasan, Persia proper and Kirman."

12 Ibid., p. 76.
14 MacGragor, n. 11, p. 76.
Ahmad Shah Durani was succeeded by his son Timur Shah in 1773. In Kandahar a strong Abdali clique was formed against him. He, therefore, transferred his capital to Kabul. Timur Shah was able to keep his father's empire, in spite of revolts in Sind, Balkh and Khurasan. He died in 1793 in Kabul. 15

Timur Shah left 36 children of whom 23 were sons. After his death, his fifth son, Shah Zaman, with the backing of Payenda Khan, chief of the Barakzai Clan, came to power in Kabul. Shah Zaman's two brothers, Humayun at Kandahar and Mahmud in Herat, challenged his claims, but he was able to overpower them.

Shah Zaman, who consolidated his position in the country, now wanted to revive his grandfather's empire. He was faced with a series of external threats. On his eastern frontier, the Sikhs were trying to establish their own rule in the Punjab, and from the western side Agha Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Kajar dynasty, was threatening Afghanistan. The Amir of Bukhara in the north, with the incitement of Mahmud, Governor of Herat, captured Balkh; but with Shah Zaman's success in Herat the Amir of Bukhara retreated to the northern side of the Oxus river.

The European powers in the beginning of the imperialist stage were trying to colonize and extend their

hegemony over Asian countries, particularly, in Central Asia including Afghanistan. Though the British had by this time annexed large territories adding up to a huge empire in Asia, they needed time to consolidate their rule and the large productive agricultural plains of India were still threatened by the Afghans. In the south Tipu Sultan, who had regular contacts with the ruler of Kabul, posed a serious threat to the establishment of British hegemony in India. 16

The French were training the armies of Tipu Sultan, the Nizam of Hyderabad, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab. French and Russian agents in Persia and Central Asia were creating difficulties for Britain in building their Indian Empire. Thus, to meet the internal and external challenges, the British were trying to consolidate their rule in northern India and an attempt was being made to expand the sphere of influence towards Eastern Afghanistan and establish a safe and 'scientific' frontier.

Though Shah Zaman was surrounded by enormous problems at home, he soon began to turn his attention to the invasion and conquest of India. The fear of Shah Zaman's expeditions kept the British Indian Empire in a chronic state of unrest. Shah Zaman carefully examined the unsettled state of India, and despatched emissaries to several Indian rulers asking their help and co-operation against their enemies. He also

sent spies to incite the Muslims against the Sikhs and the
Marathas at the time of his invasion. After receiving a
mission from Tipu Sultan, asking him to lead an expedition
to India, and getting favourable reports from India, he
reasserted his claim to Ahmad Shah's empire.17

The news of Shah Zaman's invasion created panic
in India. The Mughal Emperor at Delhi sent a mission to
Shah Zaman with a promise to pay a large sum of money if the
Afghan monarch could expel the Marathas from Delhi and
safeguard the Mughal throne. The British, being perturbed by
the Afghan's warlike character, were in a dilemma and could
not make up their mind whether it was in the British
interest to support the Afghans against the Marathas. The
possibility of a French, Persian and Afghan alliance against
the British led the British to attempt to secure the friend­
ship of Persia and prevent her from joining the dangerous
alliance. Then the British tried to persuade the Persians
to threaten the Western frontier of Afghanistan while Shah
Zaman was planning to invade northern India. The Governor-
General of India, Wellesley, instructed Mehdi Ali Khan, who
was acting as the Resident of the Company at Bushire, "to
take measures for inducing the court of Persia to keep Shah
Zaman in perpetual check (so as to preclude him from returning
to India) but without any decided act of hostility".18 Fateh

17 Ibid., p. 83.
18 Sir Percy Sykes, A History of Afghanistan (Lahore, 1979),
Ali Shah, who came to power in 1797, and considered Western Afghanistan part of the Safavid empire, favorably responded to the British plan. He encouraged and helped Shah Zaman's brothers, Mahmud and Feroze-ul-Din, to attack Herat. He supplied them with soldiers and sent his army towards Khurasan in 1799, which undoubtedly caused the retirement of Shah Zaman from the Punjab to Peshawar. 19

Mehdi Ali Khan's mission paved the way to the Mission led by Captain Malcolm, who had command over the Persian language. Loaded with costly presents, Malcolm was advised by Wellesley to induce Fateh Ali Shah to maintain pressure on Shah Zaman by threatening Khurasan and Herat. He succeeded in persuading the Shah and his ministers not to have dealings with Zaman Shah until he had given up his designs on British possessions in India. Malcolm, on his part, agreed to furnish munitions to the Shah in case Iran was attacked by the Afghans and the French. 20

The ruler of Persia was receiving the attention of a major European power as well. Napoleon, in his aggressive designs against Tsarist Russia, considered Fateh Ali Shah as a potential ally because of the Persian resentment at the annexation of Georgia by the Russians. Fateh Ali Shah,

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19 Ibid.
setting aside his agreement with Malcolm, agreed with Napoleon to attack Russia and in 1807, the Treaty of Finkenstein was signed between Persia and France. The Shah of Persia further declared that "if the French have an intention of invading Khurasan, the King will appoint an army to go down by the road of Kabul and Kandahar."21 It seems that the Shah was not committed to his earlier agreement with the British and was ready to invade India. Meanwhile after a few months General Gardane led an important Russian military mission to Persia and set to work to train Persian troops for invading India via Afghanistan. But the treaty of Tilsit between Napoleon and the Tsar in 1807 disgusted Fateh Ali Shah mainly because of no reference to the return of Georgia to Persia. Yet Napoleon was optimistic about his schemes to make Persia an ally of France against the British.22

The British were worried about the growing French influence in Persia. Accordingly, Malcolm was despatched in 1808 on a second mission to Persia. He was not treated with the courtesy due to a British emissary. He was, therefore, much upset and advised the despatch of an expedition to seize the Island of Kharak. General Gardane, who was negotiating with the Shah, had overplayed his hand, and the Shah realized that he had no power to decide about Georgia. Consequently,

21 Sykes, n. 18, p. 379.
22 Ibid.
Sir Harford Jone, a representative of King George III, landed in Persia in late 1808, and was welcomed by the Shah. The Shah agreed to accept an annual subsidy of £120,000 so long as Great Britain continued to be at war with Russia. A treaty incorporating these terms was signed by the end of 1808.23

Shah Zaman returned to the Punjab in 1798 where the situation was very serious owing to the capture of Lahore by Sikh raiders. They had killed the Afghan Governor of the Punjab. On reaching Lahore, Shah Zaman received the homage of Sikh chiefs, among whom was Ranjit Singh. Shah Zaman was aware of Anglo-Persian conspiracy against Afghanistan. He, therefore, gave up his idea of advancing on Northern India. He appointed Ranjit Singh as Governor of the Punjab and returned to Peshawar, where he left his brother Shah Shuja was governor. He was trying to eliminate tribal chiefs and establish a central government. They turned to his brother Mahmud who had already left Persia and was on his way to seize Kabul. On his arrival at Kabul, Shah Zaman realized that his position had become helpless due to the defection of the chiefs. He decided to retreat to Peshawar, and on his way to Jalalabad he was blinded by Mahmud's supporters. This was the end of Shah Zaman's dream of a north Indian empire. The Sikhs established their independent kingdom in the Punjab. 24

23 Aitchison, n. 20, p. 46.
24 Sykes, n. 18, p. 382.
After the dethronement of Shah Zaman, Afghanistan remained, for about twenty years, without any capable ruler. Mahmud and Shah Shuja were competing for the throne. Fateh Khan, the most powerful Barakzai Sirdar, was playing the role of a king-maker. Afghanistan remained in a state of anarchy till 1818, when Dost Mohd Khan, the youngest of the Barakzai brothers, replaced the Sadozai dynasty by his own. The anarchical condition of Afghanistan was a welcome relief to the British rulers in India.

Ranjit Singh in the Punjab was trying to expand his power on all sides, particularly towards the Afghan dominion. In Afghanistan when Fateh Khan, Mahmud's powerful minister, was able to overcome the internal difficulties in Afghanistan, he began to turn his attention towards Ranjit Singh. He asked the Sikhs to cooperate with the Afghans against their rebellious governor of Kashmir, Atta Mohammad Khan. A joint expedition was sent to Kashmir and the governor fled; his brother, Jahandad Khan, who was holding the Attock fort, surrendered to the Sikhs and sought Ranjit Singh's protection. The surrender of the Attock fort opened a new chapter in the history of Afghanistan and widened the rift between the Sikhs and the Afghans. 25

In 1816, Khurasan had been conquered by the Persians and a powerful army was ready to advance on Herat. Though

25 Asghar H. Bilgrami, Afghanistan and British India, 1792-1907 (New Delhi, 1972), pp. 43-44.
the Governor of Herat, Haji Firuz-ud-Din, had refused to pay tribute to the Kabul Government, Fateh Khan was sent along with a strong force to Herat to stop Persian aggression. He attacked Persian forces in Kafir killa, and the Persians retired after heavy losses. Fateh Khan on his return to Kabul, was blinded. The Sadozai dynasty of Ahmad Shah Durani came to an end in 1818.26

The new Barkzai ruler Azim Khan, who was next to Fateh Khan, emerged as the most powerful figure and led combined forces against the Sikhs. The Sikhs bribed the Afghan Chiefs one of whom was Dost Mohammad Khan - the most active, young and energetic Barakzai brother. This led to the defeat of the Afghans near Attock. After this incident Azim Khan died a broken-hearted man, as he never expected such behaviour from Dost Mohammad Khan. Afghanistan remained divided among the Barakzai brothers of which Dost Mohammad Khan was stronger and controlled Kabul and Ghazni. The only region being held by the Sadozais was Herat and northern Afghanistan remained independent under petty local chiefs.27

Taking advantage of the chaotic state of affairs in Afghanistan, the British encouraged Shah Shuja, who had already been given asylum in Ludhiana, to recover his lost throne. He attacked Kandahar but was defeated by the forces

26 Sykes, n. 18, pp. 390-91.
27 Ibid.
led by Dost Mohammad Khan.28

Dost Mohammad Khan, having defeated Shah Shuja who had the backing of the British, claimed the title of Amir-ul-
Numim. He was supported by the Chief mullah of Kabul and other religious and spiritual leaders of Afghanistan. His aim was to declare a religious war against the Sikhs. While he was busy in Kandahar, Ranjit Singh had occupied Peshawar and had driven out Sultan Mohammad Khan and his brothers and had subsequently threatened villages dependent on Kabul. Dost Mohammad Khan sent an army under his son Akbar Khan who defeated a Sikh army in Jamrud in 1837 and many Sikh generals including their commander Hari Singh was killed.29

In the month of March 1836, Lord Auckland was appointed Governor-General of India. Dost Mohammad Khan addressed a letter of welcome and requested help against his opponents inside and outside the country.30 Auckland replied: "I have learned with deep regret that dissensions exist between yourself and the Maharajah Ranjit Singh. My friend you are aware that it is not the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states; and indeed it does not immediately occur to me how the interference of my Government could be

28 Ibid., p. 396.


exercised for your benefit."\(^3\) The British dilemma was that they needed the active cooperation of both Ranjit Singh and Dost Mohammad Khan for the success of their Central Asian policy. It was however, impossible, for them to maintain friendship with the two potentates who were at daggers drawn.

In September 1837, Alexander Burnes was sent on a so-called commercial mission to Dost Mohammad Khan; it was in reality a journey of political discovery.\(^3\)\(^2\) Burnes appears to have been strongly in favour of attaching Dost Mohammad to the British by strengthening his hands against foreign and domestic enemies. Burnes tried to make peace between Ranjit Singh and Dost Mohammad Khan. The latter was willing to compare his differences with the Sikhs provided Afghanistan's eastern province was returned to him. He also objected to the Sikhs control over Kashmir. He frankly spoke to Burnes that his policy was to recover Peshawar on the east and Herat on the west. In return for his recognition by the Government of India, as Amir of Kabul and for the receipt of a subsidy, he would be a devoted ally of the British. Burnes realized that it would be a sound policy to agree to the Amir's requests and strongly supported

\(^3\) Ibid., pp. 250-52.
\(^3\)\(^2\) Bilgrami, n. 25, p. 80.
them. Regarding Peshawar, Burnes recommended that Dost Mohammad Khan might hold the city and pay tribute to Ranjit Singh. This arrangement was not acceptable to Dost Mohammad Khan.33

When the negotiations between Burnes and Dost Mohammad Khan were going on, Kohndil Khan, the ruler of Kandahar, received a Persian agent and was planning to send his second son to the Court of Persia. To prevent this action, Burnes wrote to Kohndil Khan, advising him not to negotiate with the Persians and the Russians. In case of attack he promised Dost Mohammad Khan's support, and assured Kohndil Khan of British financial help. Burnes, in his letter of 30 December 1837 to Macnaghten, Chief Secretary to the Government of India and dealing with the Afghan affairs, wrote:

Russia has come forward with offers which are certainly substantial. Persia has been lavish in her promises, and Bukhara and other States have not been backward. Yet, in all that has passed or is daily transpiring, the Chief of Kabul declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offers of the British to all these offers. 34

Meanwhile, Dost Mohammad Khan had opened channels of communication with Persia and Russia. In his letter to the Shah he expressed his inability to deal with the Sikhs on his own; the only way to deal with them was to enlist the support

33 Sykes, n. 18, p. 402.
34 Ibid., p. 403.
of the British, who would bring Afghanistan under their influence and would become immediate neighbours of Persia. This way Dost Mohammad Khan tried to frighten the Shah into cooperation with him. He also warned the Tsar that the Sikhs were the allies of the British, and would overpower him and that the British would destroy the trade between Moscow, Bukhara and Kabul. 35

While the negotiations between Burnes and Dost Mohammad Khan were going on, a Russian commercial agent, Captain Vickovich, reached Kabul. He had two letters with him, one from the Tsar and the other from the Russian Minister at Tehran. Dost Mohammad Khan was now in a difficult position and still hoping for British support against the Sikhs. He was quite frank with Burnes, sought his permission to receive Vickovich, and showed the Tsar's letter which made no reference to political matters. The letter continued:

In a happy moment the messenger of your Highness, Mirza Husain, reached my court with your friendly letter.... It flattered me very much, and I was satisfied with your friendship to my everlasting government. In consequence of this... I shall always feel happy to assist the people of Kabul who may come to trade into my kingdom.... 36

On 23 December 1837 Burnes, who by this time had been in Kabul for three months, and was fully conversant with the

35 Ibid.

views of Dost Mohammad Khan, wrote a confidential letter to Lord Auckland, describing in detail his views on the situation in Afghanistan. He had already pointed out to Lord Auckland that the stability of the Sikh alliance depended on the life of one man, and that once Ranjit Singh had gone, tranquility in the territories of the Sikhs could not be expected. He now drew attention to the unhappy effect on the Afghans of Ranjit Singh's aggressive policy and of British indifference, which had caused Dost Mohammad Khan in despair to seek help from Russia and from Persia. And yet as soon as the British showed an interest in his affairs, the Amir was prepared to drop all other connections and was ready to become an ally of the one power in a position to bring peaceful pressure on the Sikhs. In return for the restoration of Peshawar, Dost Mohammad Khan was willing to oblige the British in many ways. Burnes thought that Afghan gratitude would make it easy to form a league among the Sunni Muslims of Bukhara, Kunduz, Herat, Kandahar and Kabul, which under the British guidance would end Russo-Persian designs on Afghanistan. 37

The Government of India did not agree with the proposal to restore Peshawar to the Afghans on condition that the latter would pay tribute to the Sikhs. They made it clear to their envoy that the only thing which they could do was to ask the Sikhs not to provoke conflict with

37 Tytler, n. 13, p. 97.
Afghanistan. Burnes remained in Kabul to find a solution to the Afghan problem. Having failed in his efforts, he left Kabul on 26 April 1838 and reported to the Governor-General at Simla. During the siege of Herat by the Shah of Persia, the British envoy in Tehran had sent Major Todd on a mission to induce Auckland to adopt vigorous measures against Persia. The East India Company also urged the Governor-General to take strong action in defence of their eastern possessions.38 Had the British supported Dost Mohammad, he would have been able to settle all the problems faced by the ruler of Herat and Kandahar. Captain Wade influenced Auckland to prefer Sikhs friendship. In May 1838 Macnaughten, Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign and Political Department, was despatched to Lahore to discuss the question with the Sikh ruler. Accordingly, a tripartite treaty was concluded and the Governor-General decided that Shah Shuja, supported by the British, would march on Kandahar and the Sikh forces along with Shazada Timur, son of Shah Shuja, on Kabul via the Khyber Pass. Ranjit Singh was reluctant to send his troops to Kabul; he was afraid of the war-like tribes in the vicinity of the Khyber Pass and he thought that the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Kabul would not benefit him.39


39 Ibid., p. 2.
The decision to instal Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul was accepted by the Home Government and the Governor-General was empowered to decide on the course of action. On 1 October 1838, a manifesto was issued in which Dost Mohammad Khan was criticized for his hostile attitude towards the British ally, Ranjit Singh. The manifesto stated that information was received by the Governor-General that the troops of Dost Mohammad Khan had made a sudden and unprovoked attack on Maharajah Ranjit Singh. 40

There was an unfortunate development from the British point of view in September 1838 the Persian forces had been withdrawn from Afghanistan. On the disappearance of the Russo-Persian menace from Herat, it was obviously necessary for the British in India to reconsider their expedition to Afghanistan. Had the British under the new circumstances cancelled their military expedition, the disaster of the First Afghan War could have been averted.

The British troops led by Sir John Keane, Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Presidency, accompanied by a force of 6,000 men hastily assembled by Shah Shuja, marched toward Afghanistan. Macnaughten was appointed to the important post of Envoy and Minister, and Burnes was deputed under him. Shah Shuja along with the British forces entered Kandahar on 25 April 1839. The ruler of Kandahar, who was a brother of

40 For details see Appendix I.
Amir Dost Mohammad Khan, escaped to Girishk and later to Seistan. The Amir, on knowing the fall of Kandahar, sent his sons to various places to prevent their capture by the enemy. Towards the end of June 1839, Shah Shuja along with Macnaughten marched on Kabul. Ghazni had been kept by a son of Dost Mohammad Khan and was well fortified and surrounded by a 70 feet-high wall and a ditch. An Afghan traitor gave information that most of the city gates had been built up, the Kabul gate had been left open and from that gate the British entered the town. The capture of Ghazni paralysed the resistance of Dost Mohammad Khan. He fled and the throne of Kabul was restored to Shah Shuja after a thirty years' exile.41

The British army along with Prince Timur managed to capture the Ali Masjid garrison in the Khyber Pass. With the fall of the Ali Masjid garrison, there was no further opposition, and on 3 September 1839, the British forces reached Kabul. After the restoration of the Afghan monarchy, the British sent detachments of troops to different parts of Afghanistan while a portion was sent back to India.42

The British passed an uncomfortable winter in Kabul, as the fortress of Bala hisar was not allowed to be used by the British army. The king himself had chosen to live in the fortress. The British army constructed barracks and

41 Sykes, n. 38, p. 11.
quarters on an open ground to the north-east of Kabul. The Afghans could not tolerate the presence of the British army near Kabul. While the year 1840 passed comparatively calmly, the death of Ranjit Singh materially affected the British position. Anglo-Sikh relations became so strained that Macnaughten proposed to the Government of India the restoration of the territory between Khyber and the Indus to the Amir of Afghanistan. Only two years before this had been the main stumbling block between the Government of India and Dost Mohammad Khan. It now appeared to the British envoy as essential to the consolidation of Shah Shuja's power. Macnaughten realized his mistake in supporting an unpopular figure like Shah Shuja who was never accepted by the Afghans in preference to a popular and intelligent ruler like Dost Mohammad Khan. After the surrender of Dost Mohammad Khan at Kohistan, Macnaughten pleaded with the Government of India that he should be treated with kindness, and added: "We ejected the Dost who never offended us, in support of our policy of which he was the victim."43

Though the principal challenge to Shah Shuja's power was no more on the scene, the pacification of the country was not yet in sight. By the beginning of 1841, the cost of the continued occupation of Afghanistan was causing much anxiety in Calcutta and London. This led to the reduction of British subsidies to the tribal chiefs. The continuous

43 Tytler, n. 13, p. 115.
presence of foreign troops in Kabul also increased resentment of the people which led to widespread disaffection all over the country. The eastern Ghilzais revolted and threatened the route between Kabul and Jalalabad which the British troops used while returning to India.

In November 1841, the house in which Burnes was living was stormed in the heart of the city and after a brief resistance, he was killed and the house burned. 44 A few days later the Commissariat fort, situated outside the cantonment, was captured by the Afghans. By mid-November, Pottinger, who was in charge of the Herat valley, reached Kabul with another wounded companion as the only survivor.

The freedom fighters in Kabul were getting continuous support from nearby districts and the countryside. Macnaughten did not realize the hopelessness of the situation. On 23 December 1841 he was killed while attending a conference convened to discuss the terms of peace. 45 One week later, the terms of evacuation were signed guaranteeing the safe retreat of British forces to India. These terms were affirmed by eighteen Afghan Chiefs. On 6 January, the British forces started their march back to India. The country was very cold and the ground was covered with snow. The retreat soon turned into a complete disaster in British military history. The British troops were under tribal attacks from Kabul up to Jalalabad and the entire army

consisting of 18,000 persons was killed and only one doctor, Briden, reached alive and narrated the story of the disaster.\textsuperscript{46}

Thus in bloodshed and disaster ended the first attempt of the British to gain control of the Hindu Kush. This disaster was one of the most traumatic experiences in the history of British imperialism. The confident Victorian Britain was plunged in gloom. The signal disaster of the first Anglo-Afghan war was accounted in endless British writings and even immortalized in paintings which depicted an utterly exhausted Doctor Briden reaching the British outpost to narrate his tale of woe.

It was imperative to restore British prestige in the colonial world. The British entered Kabul from Peshawar and Kandahar and burnt the great Charchatta Bazar. But after restoring British prestige, in their own estimation at any rate, the British left the country and allowed Dost Mohammad Khan to resume his interrupted reign, Shah Shuja having been murdered in the preceding spring.\textsuperscript{47} The Afghans became sworn enemies of the British. An eye witness, after describing the magnificence of the Kabul bazar before the arrival of the British, commented:

\begin{quote}
A few months rolled on and I again entered this mighty city. Great changes and terrible had taken place... none of my former friends
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{46} Rashtia, n. 29, pp. 115-17.

\textsuperscript{47} Elliott, n. 45, p. 28.
received me as before. Razed houses and blackened walls...met my view. No one appeared.... They fled and evacuated the city on our approach. 48

The British plan of controlling Afghanistan and maintaining their own protege as its ruler could not succeed. They were forced to allow the return of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan to Afghanistan. He, however, was able to control only one-fourth of Afghanistan after his return to Kabul; the petty chiefs to the north of the Hindu Kush were independent, or under the influence of the King of Bukhara. The Barakzai Sardars were independent rulers of Kandahar, and Wazir Yar Mohammad Khan held the province of Herat. The Amir, who was fully aware of the military might of the British, tried to consolidate his position in the country by bringing northern Afghanistan and Kandahar under his rule.50

With the outbreak of the Crimean War the attention of the British Indian Government again turned towards Afghanistan. A British representative, Herbert Edward, was sent to Peshawar where he signed a treaty containing three clauses with the Amir's son, Sardar Ghulam Haider Khan. This was a treaty of friendship and paved the way for the opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Subsequently, when Herat was threatened by the Persians, Amir Dost Mohammad Khan himself

48 Tytler, n. 13, p. 119.
49 Ibid.
50 G.P. Tate, The Kingdom of Afghanistan (Delhi, 1911), pp. 150-92.
came to Peshawar and signed a treaty with the representatives of the Government of India. The Amir was to get one lakh of rupees a month during his war with Persia.\textsuperscript{51} During the Indian Revolt of 1857, the Amir remained quiet and did not instigate the Pathans to invade the plains of northern India. For this reason, John Lawrence went so far as to advocate the restoration of the trans-Indus territories to the Afghans; but this suggestion was not accepted by Lord Canning. He thought that British influence over the tribes inhabiting this area was greater than ever before; he was unwilling to be a party to an arrangement which would enable the Afghans to use the tribes against British India.\textsuperscript{52}

The death of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan resulted in a war of succession which continued for sometime. John Lawrence, who had now become Viceroy, was happy to watch events in Afghanistan. "I do not believe we shall have any difficulties or complications with the Afghans if we only leave them alone. The greater the enmity between the two parties in Kabul, the less likely are they to meddle with us."\textsuperscript{53}

The British played a double role for a while and treated both Sher Ali Khan and Afzal Khan, sons of Dost Mohammad Khan, as independent rulers of Afghanistan. With the death of Afzal Khan, Sher Ali Khan assumed full powers. He

\textsuperscript{51} Tytler, n. 13, p. 124.


\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., p. 43.
was anxious to have talks with the British Indian authorities. Lawrence agreed but Sher Ali Khan was not able to leave Afghanistan in the winter of 1868. With the approval of the home government, Sher Ali Khan was presented with a sum of twelve lakhs of rupees and 6,000 muskets. The policy of non-interference in Afghanistan was followed till the close of Lawrence's Viceroyalty in 1869.

Lord Mayo, on his arrival in India in 1869, was advised by Lawrence to meet the Amir. A meeting was held at Ambala. Sher Ali Khan was ceremoniously treated as an equal. He sought a promise that the British would never recognize anyone but himself as Amir; he also wanted a fixed subsidy and a treaty of mutual assistance. All that he obtained, however, were 6,000 muskets and a letter of friendship and support. He was so eager to be on the right side of the British that he was satisfied with the Ambala agreement and considered the letter of friendship worth a crore of rupees. The Viceroy believed that without spending too much the British had got a friendly ally who would safeguard British interest in Central Asia. Mayo was not much worried about the Russians. He was of the opinion that if the Russian troops tried to advance beyond the

54 Ibid., p. 45.
55 Ibid., p. 46.
56 Tytler, n. 13, p. 131.
57 Gopal, n. 52, p. 46.
58 Ibid.
Oxus and were so demented as to attack India, they would be driven back in one summer campaign. A few British agents and a few hundred thousand pounds could incite the Afghans against Russia throughout Central Asia. An envoy of Yakub Beg, the ruler of Yarkand, told the Viceroy that if he gave the signal, such a war would be proclaimed from the Caspian Sea to the frontiers of China. Mayo believed this to be true.\footnote{Ibid., p. 70.}

The Russians were consolidating their position in Central Asia by establishing the province of Turkistan and the Khan of Khiva was reduced to vassalage in 1873. Sher Ali Khan was in an embarrassing situation, because now only Merv and the Oxus were left between him and the Russians. The Amir sent a mission to Simla. He asked for a definite statement of British policy in the event of Russian aggression. He was assured that the Russians had agreed to respect the northern boundaries of Afghanistan. Moreover, the Viceroy, Lord Northbrooke, further suggested to the Amir that if he unreservedly accepted his advice in all external relations, he would get British help in money, arms and troops, if necessary, to expel unprovoked aggression.\footnote{Tytler, n. 13, p. 135.} But the home government, which was still under the influence of Lord Lawrence, rejected Northbrooke's advice; all he was allowed to tell the Amir was that such important questions would be discussed at a later date. The mission sent by the Amir returned to Kabul disappointed.
At the beginning of 1874 the British cabinet, which had supported Lord Lawrence's non-intervention policy in Afghanistan, was replaced by a Government led by Disraeli which pursued a forward policy. There was, in addition, the growing menace of Russia in Central Asia. Lord Salisbury, the new Secretary of State for India, pressed for the establishment of a British Agency in Herat so that first-hand information about events beyond the Afghan border could be obtained. Northbrook, however, pursued his non-intervention policy; he thought that it was not advisable to take up the matter with the Amir, who would most probably turn down the proposal.

At the beginning of 1876, Northbrook resigned and was succeeded by Lord Lytton; this facilitated the home government's plan for intervention in Afghanistan's affairs. The first move was to re-establish direct contact with Sher Ali Khan by the despatch of a British Mission to Kabul. When the Commissioner of Peshawar informed the Amir about the proposed mission, the Amir firmly refused to receive it on the ground that the Russians would insist on a similar mission, thereby compromising Afghan independence. The Viceroy persisted and finally Sher Ali Khan sent his Prime Minister Sayed Nur Mohammad Shah to meet the Viceroy's representative Sir Lewis Pelly in Peshawar. The first meeting took place on 30 January and the third and last on 19 February 1877. The negotiations

61 Ibid., p. 137.
broke down on the question of the establishment of British offices on the Afghan frontier to watch events in Afghanistan. Moreover, the death of Sayed Noor Muhammad Shah at Peshawar ended the negotiations. 62

Meanwhile, the flow of correspondence continued between the Russians and the Amir. The Russian captured Khokand and Khiva and sent their forces to the Turkoman city of Merv. The outbreak of war between Russia and Turkey in the summer of 1877 further alarmed the British Government. In the meantime, the Russians moved towards Afghanistan and despatched a diplomatic mission to Kabul. The Amir reluctantly received Stolietoff in July 1878 carrying a letter from General Kaufmann, the Russian Governor of Central Asia. 63 A response of the Government of India to the news of the Russian mission was swift. On 14 August Lord Lytton wrote to the Amir informing him that General Sir Neville Chamberlain was proceeding immediately to Kabul to discuss the affairs arising from the Russian overture.

On 21 September Major Cavagnari with an escort met the Afghan outpost at Ali Masjid where the entry of the British envoy was refused. 64 The Government of India started making preparations for a forcible entry into Afghanistan via Khyber, Kurram and Bolan leading to Jalalabad, Ghazni and

62 Ibid., p. 140.
64 Gopal, n. 52, p. 86.
Kandahar. As the British forces entered Afghanistan, the Amir asked for Russian help, on the basis of a recent alliance concluded between Stolietoff and the Afghan Government. General Kaufmann, however, refused assistance. Though the Amir was disappointed, he left Kabul for Russia on 22 December 1878, but was advised by his allies to return to Afghanistan and make peace with the British. On his return to Mazar Sharif, he died on 21 February 1879.65

The Amir, before leaving for Russia, handed over the government of the country to his son, Yakub Khan, who had been in jail. The British, who entered Afghanistan with little opposition, started negotiating with Amir Yakub Khan the Treaty of Gandamak. The British conditions were the stationing of permanent British representatives at Kabul and other places, the annexation of the Khyber pass and the districts of Kurram, Pishin, and Sibbi, and the payment to the Amir of £1,600,000 (£60,000) a year as a subsidy.66 Moreover, Afghanistan could establish contact with foreign powers only through the British Government.

General Roberts considered the Pishin Valley strategically very important. From Pishin all the chief routes led to Kandahar, Ghazni and Kalat. He wrote:

> As the Khojak pass would be in our possession, descend on the plains of Kandahar, or advance to meet our adversary in the open field. We would securely hold the command of all the southern passes leading to the Punjab and Sind,

65 Singhal, n. 63, p. 40.
66 See Appendix II.
and from Dera Ismail Khan to the sea, a
distance of nearly 700 miles, our frontier would
be securely guarded. 67

He asserted that the military possession of Pishin and Quetta
would secure Sind and Baluchistan from aggression.

Lord Lytton was delighted with the success of his
policy and the home government also shared his delight,
thinking that they would be successful in Afghanistan in their
future plan. The new Amir accepted all the proposals made by
the British, which were refused by his father and grand-
father. The British mission led by Cavagnari decided to stay
in Kabul in July 1879. This was a great blunder. After two
months, the mission was attacked by the Afghans and the entire
staff, including Cavagnari, was massacred and the building of
the mission was set on fire. So ended the second British
attempt to dominate Afghanistan.

The British authorities in Simla and London felt
that the blow to the British prestige required to be avenged.
Even the Liberals were of this view and Lytton reported that he
was anxious but not discouraged. "We have fresh difficulties
to face, but they are only difficulties, not impossibilities;
and the recess gives a time to deal with them more energetically
than might otherwise have been possible."68 Once more British

67 Thomas Henry Thornton, Sir Robert Sandeman: His Life and
Work on Our Indian Frontier, a Memoir, with Selections
from his correspondence and Official Writings (London,

68 Gopal, n. 52, p. 90.
armies were ordered to advance. The home Government had no clear idea as to what their policy should be in the changed circumstances. The Secretary of State for India, Lord Cranbrook thought that the disintegration of the country after a long period of British occupation was almost inevitable; but the Cabinet was unwilling to accept Lytton's proposal for annexation of Kandahar and the neighbouring districts. It preferred to transfer Herat to Persia and to hand over Kandahar to a ruler loyal to Britain. 69

The Viceroy thought that the Gandamak Treaty procured a 'scientific' frontier for British India. Negotiations over Herat were begun with Persia and for the rest of Afghanistan and Kandahar the search for a suitable ruler continued. The Russians advised the Shah of Persia that acceptance of Herat on the terms offered by the British would make him practically a vassal of Britain. The Shah, therefore, turned down the British offer. The province of Kandahar was declared an independent state under British protection, with a local chieftain Sher Ali as its ruler.

The British were convinced that Yakub Khan could not consolidate his position in Afghanistan. The Secretary of State suggested Abdur Rahman Khan, who had returned to Afghanistan after a long exile in Russia. Though it was generally recognized that Abdur Rahman Khan was sent by the Russians, there was no other suitable candidate and the

69 Ibid., p. 91.
Viceroy accepted Cranbrook's advice and offered to hand over unconditionally Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan except Kandahar to Abdur Rahman Khan.

The Conservative Government had not yet settled the Afghan problem when they lost the election of 1880. Gladstone had raised the Afghan question during the election campaign. The newly-elected Liberal Government was keen that all British troops should be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of the year and every effort be made in establishing a government acceptable to the Afghans. Abdur Rahman Khan was the best candidate and he should be assisted with arms and money and not by troops. Moreover, it was not needed to insist on a British national as an envoy in Kabul; an Indian Muslim could perform that role.

Abdur Rahman Khan, who had long been a refugee in the Russian territory, had already collected forces in northern Afghanistan, and was planning to cross the Hindu Kush, was informed that he could establish his authority all over Afghanistan except Kandahar, and that there would be no interference in his internal administration. As regards external relations, he was to have no political relations with any other foreign power, and was to accept British advice in this sphere; in return the British would help him, if he were attacked. 70

Under instructions from Lord Ripon, the new Viceroy, Sir Lepel Griffin, the Chief British Political Officer in Afghanistan, communicated the following assurance in the course of a letter to Abdur Rahman Khan on 20 July 1880:

.... If any power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of your Highness, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid you to such extent and in such manner as may appear to the British Government necessary in repelling it, provided that your Highness follows unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to your external relations. 71

Abdur Rahman Khan accepted these terms.

The home government was anxious to withdraw from Afghanistan as early as possible. General Stewart, who commanded British forces in Kabul, also wished to return to India. He wrote:

The people are sick of us and I am sure we are sick of them, and as we have publicly avowed our determination to withdraw this autumn, I am wholly unable to understand how any one can advocate our clinging to Cabul a day longer than is necessary for our own purposes. 72

The British, however, suffered a severe defeat. Their forces in Mewand, between Kandahar and Herat, were severely defeated by Ayub Khan, younger brother of Yakub Khan.

72 Gopal, n. 52, p. 132.
The British forces sought refuge in Kandahar. General Roberts, after settling with Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, started for Kandahar with a strong force and defeated Ayub Khan.

Gladstone was anxious that the British troops should be immediately withdrawn from Kandahar. He was willing to restore Kandahar to Ayub Khan, but the Government of India did not agree and in April 1881 Kandahar was transferred to Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. He was disliked by the people of Kandahar on the ground that he was a British stooge. Even when he asked the Chiefs of the city to discuss their grievances with him and explain why they were opposing him and supporting Ayub Khan, Habibullah Akhunzada asserted that as he was a representative of the British Imperialists, Muslims could not support him. Amir Abdur Rahman Khan attacked him and killed him with his own sword. 73

The Khyber and Kurram districts were also evacuated and left independently under British protection, but the Viceroy desired to keep Sibbi and Pishin districts of Kandahar. Sardar Abdul Qadus Khan, Governor of Afghan Turkistan, advanced on Herat and seized the place on 4 August 1881. With the restoration of Herat and Kandahar, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan became the independent ruler of Afghanistan under the British patronage. 74

73 Interview with Professor Abdul Hai Habibi, grandson of Habibullah Akhunzada.

74 Tate, n. 50, p. 183.
The steady advance of Russia in the direction of Merv and the Turkuman country caused the British Government to suggest the demarcation of the Afghan boundary. Numerous communications passed between the two governments, but without any result. In February 1884 official information of the occupation of Merv was received by the British. In a memorandum to the Russian Government it was pointed out that the occupation of Merv was inconsistent with the assurance of the Russian Government that they had no intention to occupy that district. In their reply in March 1884 the Russian Government explained their action by asserting that the Turkmans had made their submission to Russia and the Tsar had determined to accept them as his subject. Further, the Russian Government desired to demarcate the boundary between Afghanistan and Russia.

The British Government accepted the proposal and suggested that the work should start in the autumn of 1884. General Sir Peter Lumsden was appointed British Commissioner. He was to meet General Zelenoi, the Russian Commissioner, at Sarakhs on 13 October 1884. Lumsden, along with his escort, reached the place but the Russian Commissioner failed to turn up. In the meantime, Russian troops had already advanced and occupied Pul-i-Khatun, on the Hari Rud. On 30 March 1885 the Russians attacked Afghan troops and forcibly occupied Panjdeh.

75 Ibid., p. 184.
The Panjdeh area, according to the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1873, was in Afghanistan territory. At this critical juncture, the Amir was with the Viceroy at Rawalpindi. Feelings in Britain ran high. Gladstone obtained from the Parliament £11,000,000 for war preparations. He was afraid that the Russians would advance on Herat.

The crisis was resolved when the negotiations between Russia and Britain started in London, Panjdeh was declared a neutralized region until the demarcation of the northern boundary of Afghanistan. In September 1885, Lord Salisbury, who had succeeded Gladstone as Prime Minister, reached an understanding regarding the Afghan future with the Russian Ambassador in London. For the delimitation of the northern frontier of Afghanistan on the spot, Colonel Ridgeway was appointed in place of Lumsden and the Russians replaced Zelenoi with Colonel Kuhlburg. The Commission jointly started its work from Zulfiqar pass on the Heri Rud at the end of the year 1885 and continued till mid-1886, when the group reached near Khojah Saleh on the Oxus. But they could not reach an agreement on the exact location of the frontier. The two Governments decided to withdraw their Commissioners and decided to settle matters through direct negotiations. After resolving the differences, a final protocol was signed by Colonel Ridgeway and M. Zinovieff at St. Petersburg on 22 July 1887. The

77 Singhal, n. 63, p. 107.
remaining task of local demarcation on the spot was completed by Colonel Yate and Captain Komorov and the agreement was sealed with the exchange of notes between the Russian and British Governments on 1 June 1888. 78

In the meantime, the unhospitable area of Wakhan, between Victoria Lake (Zar Kul) and the Chinese border, still remained undefined and the Russians were active in that area and an exploration party was endeavouring to annex Wakhan. Moreover, the rumours of a projected violation of the Panjdeh boundary by General Komarov caused the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg to issue a warning. A declaration of specific intentions by both sides led to a relaxation of tension and in 1891 attention was switched to the Wakhan frontier. In the subsequent negotiations, adjustments were made and Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, persuaded the Amir to surrender certain lands across the Oxus in exchange for an outlying portion of Bukhara territory on the southern bank of the Oxus. 79 But the boundary between China and Lake Victoria had still to be defined.

An exchange of letters in March 1895 between the Russian Ambassador and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs embodied the agreement for the demarcation of the region. It was specifically mentioned that neither Government should

78 Bilgrami, n. 25, p. 212.
exercise any political influence or control across the line from their respective territories.\(^{80}\) The demarcation by a joint Commission on the spot started in the summer of 1895. The completion of the Wakhan boundary demarcation marked the end of the demarcation of the entire length of the northern boundary of Afghanistan.

The extensions of British control over the tribes was considered a strategic necessity by the British; but for this very reason the Amir sought to make use of the bonds of tribal and religious unity to put hurdles in the way of the consolidation of British force at his doorstep. The Afghan tribes posed a threat to the British rule in the North-West Frontier. Moreover, the Amir thought that the tribes were a part of Afghanistan as they had much more in common with the Afghans than with the people of India. The Amir thought it prudent to get his long frontier with the British Empire demarcated.\(^{81}\) In July 1888, he had requested Lord Dufferin to send a mission to Afghanistan to settle the boundary question along with other important issues, and Durand was nominated to proceed to Kabul. The underlying idea behind the Amir's move for the demarcation of the Indo-Afghan boundary was to check further British advance. Due to the internal disturbances in Afghanistan and the Amir's illness, however, the mission was postponed. The new Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne,

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\(^{80}\) Tytler, n. 13, p. 169.

\(^{81}\) Sykes, n. 38, p. 172.
revived the old forward policy which created tensions between Afghanistan and the British India. The Quetta railway was extended to Qilla Abdullah Khan and was continued through Khwaja Amran to New Chaman. The Amir considered the extension of the railway to New Chaman a violation of the treaties between the two countries.\(^{82}\) The ruthless suppression of the rebellion led by Ishaq Khan elicited Lansdowne's objections which were bitterly resented by the Amir as an interference in his internal affairs. The Amir stated in his autobiography:

> Lord Lansdowne was not satisfied with creating unpleasant anxieties for me, but went further still, even so far as to stop the guns which I had bought with my own private money in India, not allowing them to be brought to Kabul. More than that the frontier officials stopped the private goods of the Afghan merchants, iron, steel, copper, etc., on the excuse that such goods were required to make war materials.\(^{83}\)

Though the Amir felt humiliated, he had no option but to control his emotions in his dealings with the British. Lord Roberts, who was the main exponent of the forward policy, was then Commander-in-Chief in India. The Amir avoided giving any excuse for British interference in his affairs. Discontented with the attitude of the British Indian authorities, he tried to open negotiations with the home government in London. He also expressed a desire to visit London, but was advised to

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\(^{82}\) Hamilton, n. 71, p. 407.

meet the Viceroy first; he obviously did not want to meet Lansdowne.

Meanwhile, in July 1892, the Viceroy proposed to send Lord Roberts on a mission with a powerful escort of 10,000 armed men. The Amir very sharply reacted to the proposal by saying: "I consider the position very critical, to receive 10,000 soldiers, whom I was expected to receive as my guests. I had therefore to prepare 100,000 to receive them." Lansdowne's choice of Robert was unfortunate; he should not have expected the Amir to receive with due honours the very officer who had ruthlessly massacred his people in the Second Afghan War.

Meanwhile the situation became more complex when the Amir's munition, which he had ordered from Europe, was detained by the British. The Amir sent his trusted British engineer, Pyne, to Simla. He narrated in details Amir's grievances. Pyne's mission was successful and on his return he removed the Amir's anxieties regarding British intentions. The Amir now accepted the British proposal to despatch a mission to Kabul led by Durand.

The Durand Mission was received on the frontier by Chulam Haidar Khan, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, and was cordially received by the Amir in Kabul. Durand succeeded in inducing the Amir to agree to the evacuation of the trans-Oxus districts of Roshan and Shighnan in return for the

84 Sykes, n. 38, p. 172.
dists not in his possession on the south of the Oxus. Regarding the tribes, the Amir fought hard for his point of view. Even in his letter to the Viceroy he predicted the unreliable behaviour of the tribes and warned the Viceroy:

If the tribes were included in my dominions, I shall be able to make them fight against the enemy of England and myself.... I will gradually make them good friends of Great Britain. But if you cut them out of my dominions, they will neither be of any use to you nor to me: You will always be engaged in fighting and troubles with them, and they will always go on plundering.... 85

After many interviews, Durand was successful in persuading him to accept his proposals, in return for retaining Asmar Valley. The Amir agreed not to interfere in any way with Swat, Bajaur and Chitral. The British Government ceded the Birmal tract of the Wazir country to the Amir, who, on his part relinquished his claim to the rest of the Wazir country, Dawar and Kurram valley. He also renounced his claim to Chagai. With reference to Chaman, the Amir withdrew his objection to the British cantonment at New Chaman and conceded to the British Government the necessary water-rights, which he had himself purchased. Finally the British agreed to increase his subsidy from 12 lakhs to 16 lakhs, so that the Amir might be able to increase his army. 86 The boundary agreement was signed between Amir Abdur Rahman Khan and

85 Sultan Mohammad, n. 83, p. 158.
86 Sykes, n. 38, p. 176.
Mortimer Durand on 12 November 1893.87

The British Government continued to interfere in Afghanistan's affairs. The forward policy school dominated the thinking of British Indian administrators. This led to the Second Afghan War. After a brief interval, the policy was revived by 1884 and three successive Viceroy's, Dufferin, Lansdowne and Elgin, adopted its basic tenets. Lord Curzon followed the policy, but with certain changes.

On the death of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, Sardar Habibullah Khan was proclaimed as Amir of Afghanistan. On 10 October 1901, a week after his proclamation, he informed Lord Curzon that he was accepted as Amir by the people and the armed forces of Afghanistan and added: "I will behave in the same manner as my revered father used to do, and I will be a friend of his friends and avoid his enemies."88 Lord Curzon thought the agreement with the late Amir was personal and could not be ratified by exchange of letters. There were certain difficult questions, and for this purpose the Viceroy invited Amir Habibullah Khan to India. Due to the dictatorial attitude of Lord Curzon, Habibullah did not visit India until the arrival of a new Vicerey. This is clearly shown by the statement made later by the Amir at a durbar held on 21 August 1907. On this occasion, he declined Lord Minto's invitation

87 See Appendix III.

88 Sykes, n. 38, p. 216.
to visit India in 1906 and added: "Before this, Lord Curzon also invited me to India but his letter was not really a letter of invitation; it was a threat that the subsidy would be stopped if I did not obey the summons."89 Declining the invitation, the Amir told visiting Lord Curzon that the agreement with his father covered all important aspects related to the relations between British India and Afghanistan. It is also possible that the Amir could not leave Afghanistan, fearing that his absence would shake his position.

During the course of further correspondence and negotiation it was agreed upon that Louis Dane would be despatched on an official mission to Kabul. Dane entered Afghanistan in November 1904 along with a draft treaty which repeated the substance of the old engagements.90 The object of the mission was to arrange a settlement of the outstanding differences between India and Afghanistan, and to conclude a treaty reviewing the arrangements, with certain alterations, which had existed between India and the late Amir. In fact, Dane wanted his draft treaty to be agreed upon but Amir Habibullah Khan refused and offered his own draft treaty. After lengthy discussions and bargaining, Dane's point of view was not accepted. He wanted to obtain a few additions and alterations. The Amir saw no reason for the suggested

89 Ibid., p. 217.
90 Ibid., p. 219.
changes. He was prepared to accept the obligations undertaken by his father and rejected Curzon's view that the engagements with the late Amir were personal.\(^91\) On 21 March 1905 a treaty was signed between Amir Habibullah Khan and Louis Dane.\(^92\)

The treaty was of the same nature which was concluded between the British Indian Government and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. However, the Amir agreed to demarcate the Mohmand boundary which could not be demarcated due to geographical difficulties and the opposition of the tribes. The extension of the railways to the Khyber Pass and Kurram valley was also not objected to by the Amir. The best result that the British achieved was the improved status and treatment of the British agent at Kabul, and of the news writers at Kandahar and Herat. The Amir succeeded in obtaining the title of an independent King of Afghanistan and its dependencies.\(^93\)

While Dane was negotiating with the Amir in Kabul, Prince Inayatullah visited India in December 1904 and met the Viceroy. His visit had no political significance but it was a gesture of friendship and goodwill on the part of Habibullah. Two years later, in 1907, the Amir visited India. Senior members of the Viceroy's Council like Lord Kitchner, the Commander-in-Chief, did not wish to address him as His Majesty,

\(^91\) Singhal, n. 63, p. 172.
\(^92\) See Appendix IV.
\(^93\) Sykes, n. 38, p. 223.
though it was a violation of the treaty of 1905 concluded by Louis Dane. However, the dispute was finally settled when King Edward VII greeted the Amir by a telegram as "Your Majesty". During the Amir's stay in India no political problem was discussed, but the visit led to better understanding between the two countries.94

Tsarist Russia attempted to open direct communication with Afghanistan and the Russian officials communicated with their Afghan counterparts. But the Amir, like his father Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, discouraged the Russians from dealing directly with Afghanistan. The Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5 transformed the international scene. Anglo-Russian relations improved and the two rivals in Asia composed their differences. The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 represented a comprehensive effort to deal with Anglo-Russian rivalry in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet.95 The British were given concessions in Afghanistan and Tibet, but made sacrifices in Persia. The Russians for the first time officially recognized that Afghanistan was outside their sphere of influence and their relations with Afghanistan would be conducted through Britain. Moreover, Britain agreed that local problems would be settled between the local officials of Afghanistan and Russia.96 The Amir was informed by the

94 Singhal, n. 63, p. 173.
95 See Appendix V.
96 Sykes, n. 38, p. 236.
Viceroy that the Convention reaffirmed the sovereignty of Afghanistan. The Amir, on the contrary, was of the view that it amounted to an abridgement of sovereignty. Lord Minto, however, was of the opinion that the Amir himself did not object to the Convention but was not strong enough to override the anti-British party headed by Sirdar Nasrullah Khan. 97

97 Ibid.