

A Nineteenth Century Guerrilla War

HAMIDA KHUHQRO

The famous Hur insurrection took place in Sind during World War II, posing a serious problem for the British Government which was fighting for its very survival in Europe. At this critical juncture a full Division of the Army under General Richardson had to be deployed in Sind and half of Sind was put under Martial Law. These stirring events have largely gone unreported by historians and no authentic account of the insurrection has ever come before the public. The only full account is contained in the fictionalized version in Dr. H. T. Lambrick's *tour de force*, *The Terrorist*.

Though the information on the insurrection of the forties is scant, a previous Hur insurrection the British had to cope with in the 1890s is almost unknown.

The rebellion or more appropriately the guerrilla war of the forties began when the Late Pir Pagaro, Pir Sibghatullah Shah was tried and executed by the British in 1842. Pir Pagaro had been imprisoned by the British in the early 1930s at Nagpur where he came into contact with the Bengali Terrorists and the Nationalist movement. He was attracted by the vision of a free India and was confirmed in his hatred for British imperialism. When he returned to Sind he started training select groups of followers, the Hurs, in the art of warfare and collected money and arms in preparation for the day of confrontation with the British. The British came to know of the activities of Pir Pagaro and arrested him, he was duly brought to trial and executed thus igniting the flame of the Hur war which created great problems for the British administration and in fact remained unsubdued till the independence of the subcontinent was achieved in 1947.

Although a detailed historical account of the forties rebellion is still unwritten, a fair amount is known about it and eyewitnesses to these events are still alive. Much less however is known of the earlier Hur rebellion which lasted for over two years ending only when the then Pir Pagaro was induced by the British authorities to publicly ask his followers to desist from guerrilla activities. Hardly any simple narrative account of rebellion exists much less an analytical one. For instance, one of the remarkable features of the two rebellions is that many of the main characters of the '40s rebellion are the direct descendants of the leaders of the 1890s rebellion, in many cases bearing the same names i.e. Bachu Badshah and Piru Vazir. The fact that this historical episode has been practically forgotten is a sad commentary on our consciousness and duty towards our own history. We cannot even surmise as to the important events of our history which have been lost through sheer inertia and neglect. As a small gesture of atonement I would like to offer an important historical document which gives a brief outline of the Hur rebellion of the 1890s as seen by the British administrators.

This document is a letter written by Sir H. E. M. James, Commissioner in Sind to the Governor of Bombay Presidency of which Sind formed an administrative part. Sir Evan James as he was known, was one of the distinguished Commissioners of Sind in the tradition of Bartle Frere and William Mereweather. His interest in Sind went beyond mere administration and he took interest in its life, culture and history, writing a number of books on it. His description of Makhi Dandh in the letter quoted here is typical of the evocative style and acute perception that he has of the countryside. This document also reveals how early idea of "concentration camp" villages was developed and applied to Hurs. These villages continued till the 1940s as witnessed by Mr. H T. Lambrick in *The Terrorist*. The document includes some striking descriptions of encounters between the law enforcing authorities and the Hur rebels including examples of the skill of *paggts* the traditional trackers of Sind who can track not only human tracks but also animal tracks as easily. Here we also have the reason for settlement of the Bugti Baluch in Sanghar District and for the clearance and settlement of Makhi Dandh area by immigrant peasant groups. Thus from every point of view Sir Evan James report is an important source document for the modern history of Sind.

No. 1326 of 1896.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Commissioner's Office,

Karachi, 17th June 1896.

From

The Honourable Mr. H. E. M. JAMES, I. C. S.,

Commissioner in Sind.

To

His Excellency the Right Honourable

LORD SANDHURST, G. C. I. E.,

Governor and President in Council,

Bombay.

My Lord,

The extirpation of the band of outlaws who have successfully defied Government for so long in the Sanghar Taluka of the Thar and Parkar District and in the Shahdadpur and Sakrand Talukas of Hyderabad enables me now to place before Your Lordship complete accounts of the outbreak and the measures taken for its suppression. Ravages by a band of dacoits for an extended period are not uncommon in India. And from some points of view the recent out-lawry has been less disastrous than many similar outbreaks with which Your Lordship is familiar. During my own service, I have known three British officers killed in encounters with "Baharwatias" in Kathiawar. But in Sind organised crime of the kind is rare. In the southern part of the Hyderabad District, many serious dacoities (without much violence, however) were committed in the year 1889, but thanks to the Superintendent of Police (Mr. McIver), who arrested 45 of them, and to our having a strong sensible Judge like Mr. Horsley appointed in Government Resolution No. 1645 of 24th March 1890 for the purpose), the ring-leaders were all transported and the district remained at peace. It is not an uncommon thing, again, for dacoits to terrorise the inhabitants so as to prevent information being given of their whereabouts and so defer their capture. But the recent outbreak in the north of the Thar and Parkar District differs from ordinary raids by gang-robbers in several remarkable features. The religious element was largely present. The outlaws were fanatics as well, and

murder and revenge were more to their heart than mere plunder. And the sympathy of the great bulk of the zamindars and surrounding rural population, who, like them, were fanatic disciples of a Muhammadan Pir in the north of Sind, went entirely with them, and they were looked upon as a band of heroes and zealots, devoted to the cause of their master. It is a singular fact that, once a man becomes a member of the union of Hur, as the fanatical portion of the Pir's followers are called, he seems at once to become the type of a reckless desperado. The victims of the outrages were either Hindu shopkeepers, from whom they robbed the sinews of war, or Policemen, as representing the Government that was attempting to capture them. The mass of the people meanwhile overtly assisted the outlaws with shelter and supplies, and prevented their capture by concealing their lurking places. For two years and a half, the outlaws and their allies, the zamindars and cultivators, openly defied the Government, and the more vigorous the measures taken for restoring law and order the more atrocious the outrages that were committed. Thus, really, the Sind authorities had to deal not so much with the crimes of a band of brigands as with a fanatical rebellion on the part of the whole countryside. The Acting Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Lucas practically exhausted, but in vain, all the coercive powers of the law upon the population at large, with the aid of troops and largely augmented bodies of Police. And it was not until my *locum tenens* Sir Charles Ollivant insisted on the Pir himself ordering, in unmistakable terms, his followers to surrender the brigands, that brigands and people alike yielded. We have therefore seen the singular spectacle of the peace of the country depending on one single individual, not the representative of the Government, but a local "saint," though, but for the good judgment used by Sir Charles Ollivant in bringing his personal influence to bear on that "saint," the holy man could never have been constrained, or even dared, to use his remarkable powers. These characteristics of the outlawry seem so special as to merit a report to Government in rather more detail than usual. I should in any case have felt it proper to mention to Your Lordship the names of those officers whose prolonged exertions, under Sir Charles Ollivant, for the restoration of order appear to me to merit Your Lordship's favourable recognition.

2. I will describe *in limine* the physical features of the country

affected. The Makhi Dhand is situated to the north of Sanghar, the most northerly taluka in the district of Thar and Parkar. The Dhand consists of a very large depression, roughly about 12 miles by 10 in extent, into which the waters of the Eastern Nara discharge themselves on their way to the Mithrau, Thar and other canals. During the inundation, it is almost all under water, and forms a large swamp, filled with *lai*, i.e. tamarisk trees, babuls and coarse grass and reeds, though a few little dry oases are at all times to be found. After the subsidence of the water although there is a great deal of swamp and dense jungle, large areas of good grazing ground are exposed which gives pasture to thousands of cattle. Immediately south of the Makhi Dhand is the "unprotected area," i.e., a tract left bare between the Nara protective bunds for the passage of floods, about 10 to 12 miles across, and which for some 10 or 15 miles south of the Dhand proper (though it contains some cultivation) is also in many places covered with thick jungle. On the east lies the desert stretching away to Jodhpur, on the north the Khaipur State, and on the east the talukas of Sanghar in the Thar and Parkar District and Sakrand and Shahdadpur of the Hyderabad District. The Sanghar Taluka is the first area watered by the Eastern Nara irrigation system, from the Dim and Mithrau Canals. Some years ago, it was a desert inhabited by a wild population of nomad graziers, who also undertook sparse cultivation when it rained. These men have now, largely increased in numbers, settled down to agriculture, and become fairly well-to-do zamindars and peasant-proprietors. Many are still graziers, who bring their cattle in from the desert for the fine grazing that is to be had in the bed of the Makhi Dhand and along the course of the Nara.

3. The zamindars, cultivators and graziers in the Sanghar Taluka, and also in the adjoining parts of Shahdadpur and Sakrand, belonged originally to different Sindhi and Baluch tribes, but from a religious point of view, the majority are now known as "Hurs," a sect which it may be said has come into existence, or at any rate has grown, largely, since the conquest of Sind in 1843 and as their prosperity has grown so has their fanaticism. They bear to the Pir of Kingri (a village near Rohri, so that the Pir is often known as the Pir of Rohri) as devoted an attachment as do the Khojas to the person of the Aga Khan. So great is their reverence for their spiritual head that the present Pir was nearly slain by a Hur in his father's life-time

for going into his father's presence with his shoes on, and his life as heir-apparent was always in danger on the theory that he might try to murder and supplant his father. Recklessness in regard to human life is characteristic of the sect, and just as the worst Italian brigands may be also the most devout of Catholics, so the Hurs do not hesitate to put out of the way such of their own body, or of the Pir's khalifas or deputies, of whose influence they become jealous or who, in their opinion lead the Pir to treat themselves with disfavour. Apart from this fanaticism, they are ordinary hardworking cultivators. The present Pir is named Ali Gohar. His father, Pir Hazabulah Shah, a man of wealth and influence, was tried about 30 years ago (but acquitted) for instigating the murder of a cousin, a rival Pir, and though there can be but little doubt of his guilt, he lived down his offence and he was received by officials during the latter part of his life. His grandfather, who bore the same name as the present Pir, viz., Ali Gohar, was the person who assisted His Highness the late Mir Ali Murad in the forgery which cost him the best part of his dominions, and it was to his treacherous revelations afterwards that the forgery was proved against His Highness.

4. The leader of the late gang, a man named Bachu, is the son of a khalifa, or deputy, of the Pir, named Wariam. Wariam himself murdered one of the Pir's uncles who had made himself obnoxious to the Hurs by endeavouring to curb their fanaticism, and Bachu himself committed his first murder in broad daylight in 1888 on the person of another khalifa, of whom he was jealous, named Chutal Khan Laghari. Since that time, Bachu has been an outlaw, along with Piru, also a murderer, who, as the band enlarged, became his second-in-command. It is a singular thing, but at the time the recent series of outrages began, viz., in 1893, the band was already formed and the names of all were so well known that they were reported to me at the very commencement. It is quite evident that Bachu for the past eight years has been living amongst the Hurs, well known and unmolested—in fact, looked up to as a distinguished character,—that he gradually gathered friends round him of his own desperate character, and that finally, wearied perhaps of inaction and of living upon his friends as well as of occasionally having to evade the Police, he thought proper to commence open brigandage. Many curious things go on under the eyes of our officers in India, but the

fact that Bachu lived for years unmolested or unbetrayed is not the least remarkable.

5. The first outrages by Bachu's band began in September 1893 in the south of the Khairpur territory, not far from the Makhi Dhand. His late Highness Mir Sir Ali Murad, G.C.I.E., was then extremely aged and feeble, and his administration was controlled by corrupt and incompetent Munshis. A sum of Rs. 21,000 is said to have been carried off, and one man was killed. The object of the attack was one of Mir's most favourite servants. A second dacoity followed on the 25th September, when Rs. 82,000 are said to have been stolen. The sums are probably much exaggerated. Property and life had then become so insecure in Khairpur that I was seriously considering whether I ought not to recommend a regency to Your Excellency's Government, when His Highness the Mir died, and the new ruler, through his Vazir, Khan Bahadur Kadirdad Khan, C.I.E., and his Superintendent of Police (one of our best Police Inspectors whose services were lent) speedily took measures for securing order. Emboldened, however, by success, in the following spring the band came out into the open, in British territory, and in broad daylight paraded under arms along the high roads of the Shahdadpur Taluka. Endeavours were instantly made to track and arrest them, but unsuccessfully, and though other precautions were promptly taken, between the 5th and 13th May 1894 three serious dacoities occurred. Your Lordship will see, by comparing the list of dacoits known at that date with Mr. Lucas' report No. 496 of 25th ultimo, that the first 10 outlaws out of the 12 named by Mr. Cox remained with Bachu up to the end, and that out of these 10, all save two, who were murdered by their own companions, have been accounted for.

6. Special measures were taken. The District Magistrate, Mr. Woodburn, went out himself the moment that he heard trouble was brewing, and superintended the action of the Police, and Mr. Mountford, the Assistant Collector, also showed great activity. The Hyderabad Police was then unfortunately much under strength, a defect that has been rectified since by the reorganisation. The jagir of one of the leading sympathisers was sequestered, and leading zamindars were prosecuted and sentenced to long terms for harbouring (though the Sessions Judge, not Mr. Horsley, reversed their sentences on

appeal). Bad characters were called on to give security and sent to jail in lieu. Six punitive Police posts were imposed on the villagers who were found to have harboured the dacoits, and the roads were regularly patrolled. And a letter was written to the Pir of Rohri, inviting his good offices to procure the arrest of the robbers, but he replied ingenuously that he had expelled the offenders from amongst his followers.

7. Disturbed in the Hyderabad District and with plenty of loot to live upon, the outlaws withdrew to their fastnesses in the Makhi Dhand, there to deliberate on their further plans, and it became the duty of Mr. Steele, the Deputy Commissioner of Thar and Parkar, to try and forestall them and effect their arrests. On the 23rd May, the men were reported by a spy to have been seen in the Makhi Dhand, and Mr. Steele and his men followed up their trail so vigorously as to exchange shots with them, and one sowar was slightly wounded. But the outlaws escaped in the thickets, leaving, however, a good deal of miscellaneous property behind in their flight, containing *inter alia*, breech loading gun apparatus, bullet moulds, etc. On this occasion, Mr. Steele was more nearly capturing the outlaws than any one before or after, till they were finally shot down. The usual measures were taken. Roads were cut as far as possible through the Makhi Dhand. Those who habitually harboured the dacoits were known, and called on to give security, or else prosecuted. I append a copy of Mr. Steele's report No. 284 of 28th May 1894. But the outlaws still remained in the jungle, and on the 31st May they gave evidence of their presence by wounding two men with swords, taking away a little property, and also robbing another person.

8. From this time onwards, Mr. Steele was indefatigable in his endeavours to arrest the gang. He moved up all the Police he could spare from other parts of the district, coerced the Hurs and bad characters, and offered rewards. I sent to his assistance Mr. Penton, the District Superintendent of Police of the Upper Sind Frontier, with 15 selected Pathan Constables and sanctioned numerous punitive Police posts. For it was notorious that the gang were hand-in-glove with the whole population, except the Police and the Banyas. The presence of the Pathans was believed to have intimidated the gang, and it was thought they had dispersed into desert. At any rate,

no trace of them could be found, though very likely, as after-events showed, they were at that very time living openly with their friends in the Hyderabad District, and some few of them perhaps in the desert. At any rate, they disappeared, and at the end of July 1894, Mr. Penton and his Pathans returned to Upper Sind.

9. Six months elapsed before the gang again came out on active service. Early in 1895, news was received that armed men were again going about openly, and one Jawala Sing Naik (who had been formerly in the Native Cavalry and received the Order of Merit) was employed to hunt them. So active was he that the outlaws determined to finish him. Accordingly, on the 9th of February 1895, as the Naik and six other Policemen and two villagers were sitting outside the village of Bahrambari (where they had come to keep order at a fair), at about 10 P.M. (other Police being on duty elsewhere), the outlaws, aided, it is believed, by some local Hur zamindars, crept up behind a hedge and poured a volley into them. Jawala Sing, two other Policemen and a villager were killed, and all the rest of the party were wounded but three. Two other Policemen camp up, and running after the gang fired at them, and the shots were returned, one more Constable being dropped. The outlaws then returned to the Makhi Dhand. Three of their foot-prints were identified. Mr. Steele was then travelling on duty a long distance away in the desert, but he returned at once by forced marches, and at his request I sent for the Pathan Police again, 28 of whom were despatched to the scene of action. Mr. Hume, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Karachi, was also deputed to assist him, since, as Government are aware, the Deputy Commissioner, Thar and Parkar, is his own Superintendent of Police. Mr. Steele's report of 22nd April 1895 describes the state of the country at that time and the impossibility of coping with the 'Hur union'. His remarks on the Rohri Pir and his followers are acute and fully justified by after-events. He could not believe in the Pir's power to control his followers, as, though the Pirs's own person might be sacred, experience showed that his *entourage* would go in peril of their lives if they suffered the Pir to coerce either outlaws or zamindars. The outlaws had been, of course, proclaimed, rewards for their capture were offered, and Sir Charles Ollivant, who succeeded me on my leaving Sind early in the year, sanctioned large increases to the Police, to be paid for by the inhabitants. Assistance

in men was also rendered by the neighbouring district of Hyderabad. Patrolling the whole tract was constant.

10. Apparently, the band now dispersed again. For on the 24th of February 1895 a serious dacoity was committed by a band of seven men, described as Brahui Hurs, who looted a Banya's house in the north of Sind, in the Thul Taluka of the Upper Sind Frontier. They fired into the crowd which assembled, killed three men, and escaped after severely wounding five others, including two Policemen. Four men belonging to the district were arrested and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation under the Upper Sind Frontier Regulations, but it was found that three of the Sanghar outlaws, viz., Piru (Bachu's lieutenant), whose foot-prints had been recognised after the Bahrambari outrage, Pir Baksh Kasai, afterwards slain when he had murdered the Pir's khalifa (*vide* below, paragraph 14), and Khamiso, another leading outlaw, were engaged in this dacoity, and they were proclaimed by the Deputy Commissioner, Upper Sind Frontier. They returned to Thar and Parkar. The next crime reported was the murder on 31st July 1895 of a Hur who had quarrelled about a woman with Piru (the most important outlaw but one), and who was supposed to have given information to the Naik Jawala Sing, murdered the previous February. The outlaws crept up while the Hur was asleep, and, though he roused and took up his axe (with which he slept), he was shot and finished with sword cuts. His wife, who was completely undressed, was carried away by the murderers for some distance, and then released. Another possible motive for this murder was to intimidate those witnesses who were to give evidence against certain zamindars who were to be prosecuted as accessories before the fact in the Bahrambari murder case, and who were ultimately acquitted. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Yakub, in reporting on this case, mentioned that one Gulu Wasan, who had assisted the Police, had disappeared the year before and had undoubtedly been murdered by the outlaws.

11. Other crimes followed, of kidnapping and highway robbery. On 8th September, a Sawar, when patrolling, came up with some of the outlaws, whom he attacked. His horse, however, was shot, he was captured, severely wounded and mutilated, and his sword and carbine taken away. Bachu, the head of the gang, would have finished him, but another of the patrol party came up on hearing the shots, and fired at the outlaws, who decamped, leaving a number of cartridges, bullet

moulds and other things behind them. On the 26th September 1895, occurred another case of an unfortunate man, who had assisted the Police, being murdered after nightfall, and his horses and property stolen. The Commissioner in Sind again sanctioned extra Police, and Mr. Hume was replaced by Mr. Marston, but no success was achieved, and the heavy penalties payable by the Hur population proved no inducement to them to give the information which the law requires of them as to the outlaws' whereabouts.

12. On 31st October 1895, Mr. Steele, who in spite of continuous bad health had spared no exertion to keep his district in order, broke down entirely and had to depart to recruit. Mr. W.H. Lucas was deputed to act for him. He found, as natural, the Police dispirited, loyal zamindars and banyas panic-stricken and never moving out without guards, contributions levied from the Hindu panchayets, and the Queen's authority openly defied. His policy, briefly put, was to further coerce the Hurs, watch them and make their lives so uncomfortable that they would in the end give up the outlaws. He began by sweeping away all the outlying unauthorised hamlets, and compelled the Hurs to live in the large villages which could be watched. The Makhi Dhand was also cleared of graziers. Section 37 of Regulation XII of 1827 (fining of villages for connivance at robbery) was also rigorously enforced. Outrages, however, continued, a batch of five being reported in one letter about the close of the year 1895. They comprised highway robbery, the stopping of a mounted Camel Sawar who was unadvisedly being sent by himself with 500 rounds of ammunition, and the parading in front of them, on the high road, of the unfortunate Sawar himself (who has not since been heard of and was doubtless slain in cold blood), the firing at another sawar and the slaughter of a *pagi*. On the 3rd January 1892, these outrages culminated in an attack by the whole gang on three Police men at the Chotiari Station, two of whom were murdered with circumstances of special brutality while the third was carried off in triumph by the outlaws, kept with them while they looted the village, and then the whole band (said then to have been 14 in number) were pointed out in triumph to him by Bachu, who spared his life, as he belonged to Bachu's own tribe. Sir Charles Ollivant then arranged first for one company and afterwards two more of the 1st Baluch Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant Harold, and a squadron of Sind Horse,

under Captain Cartwright, to go to the district. These did excellent work. Lieutenant Harold with his men, in particular, searched the whole of the Makhi Dhand with unceasing pertinacity; Mr. Lucas worked incessantly, but could not lay hands on the outlaws, and the Hurs seemed to reck little of the pressure put upon them, in spite of the vast amount of extra Police employed, for which they had to pay, and of the severity with which the least infractions of the Arms Act or offences under Chapter VIII of the Criminal Procedure Code were visited. Two of the companies of infantry were in course of time sent away as well as the cavalry, *re infecta*. But at last, when matters seemed most hopeless, success was achieved.

13. I have mentioned above the Pir of Rohri. Mr. Steele's opinion about his power has been quoted. Mr. Woodburn and the Superintendent of Police, Hyderabad, had in May 1895 urged that pressure should be brought upon him by depriving him of his rank in darbar and other privileges. Mr. Woodburn wrote as follows to the Commissioner:—

“It is currently believed that the Makhi Dhand outlaws *are* disciples of the Pir. It is as certain as anything can be which cannot be absolutely proved that his disciples in the Shahdadpur Taluka, have harboured these outlaws. The Pir has the most extraordinary influence over his disciples. This is notorious, and as an instance it may be mentioned that during his tour in this district in the cold weather of 1893-94 he is believed to have collected about a lakh of rupees from his followers. Notwithstanding his enormous influence, he has given no assistance to the authorities in capturing the outlaws or punishing their harbourers. The District Magistrate hopes, therefore, that the Commissioner will act on Mr. Cox's recommendation, but if the Commissioner is not inclined to do so at once, the District Magistrate would suggest that all gun licenses of the Pir's retainers be cancelled, and that the Pir be told that, if the outlaws mentioned by Mr. Cox are not arrested within three weeks, the Pir himself will be deprived of his chair (*i.e.*, in darbar) and of his exemption under the Arms Act. The District Magistrate considers that the Pir's influence is so extremely prejudicial that he ought never to be allowed to enter the Hyderabad District. This, however, is a matter for consideration whenever the Pir proposes another tour”.

Sir Charles Ollivant, the Commissioner, however, considered that it would be best not to take drastic measures of that kind, and took the Pir in hand himself. On the 10th of August, when the Pir sent the Commissioner a letter and some fruit, Sir Charles Ollivant refused to receive the gift, and wrote to the Pir as follows :—

"As long as the Pir's professed followers in certain parts of the Hyderabad and Thar and Parkar Districts are notoriously abetting or sheltering persons who have committed and continue to commit outrageous crimes, it is unbecoming that the Commissioner should receive any complimentary offering from the Pir.

"2. The Commissioner's predecessors have recognised the Pir and his predecessors as persons of influence, and dignity. It is for the Pir to show by facts, not by words merely, that he continues to exercise that influence, and he will then have no cause to complain that the Commissioner treats him with any less consideration than his predecessors. But if his influence is not effectively exercised, or if it is no longer of any avail, the Pir must not wonder if his dignity is also impaired."

Later on, when Sir Charles Ollivant went to Upper Sind in the cold weather of 1805, he refused to receive the Pir, and this rebuff was keenly felt by the Pir. Afterwards, in the beginning of February, Sir Charles Ollivant consented to give him an interview, and explained to him and to his attendant khalifa—Haji Allah Nawazo—the necessity of really assisting the Government. At that time, the khalifa repeatedly said to the Mir Munshi of my office : "If the Pir exercises any coercion on the Hurs, they will kill me," and how truly prophetic was his instinct subsequent events will show. Mr. Dayaram Gidumal, C. S., also urged the Pir to take action, and numerous letters were sent by him to his disciples, and spies sent out, with the ostensible purpose of finding the outlaws. Nothing, however, came of all this. Then the Pir, who was and still is extremely ill with I fear, a mortal disease, came to Hyderabad for medical treatment, and was persuaded to address his disciples and explain to them—what they could not before credit—that he really wished the Hur outlaws surrendered. A step, therefore, in this direction was at last made by the Hurs. They promised to show the lair of the outlaws in the Makhi Dhand, and accordingly the Military officers, Mr. Lucas, and

a large detachment of troops and Police were taken by a spy into the Makhi Dhand towards nightfall, only to find that the outlaws were safely posted on the other side of the Nara, firing shots and hooting in derision. This proved at any rate that the Pir's followers could find the outlaws, if they chose. Mr. Lucas, therefore, again interviewed the Pir in Karachi, in the presence of Sir Charles Ollivant, where he had gone for further medical treatment, and on the Pir's proceeding to Hyderabad again a number of his followers were sent to him by Mr. Lucas, and he harangued them once more. The Hurs now recognised that they must, if loyal to the Pir, comply with his wishes and give up the outlaws. They, too, themselves were getting tired of the constant pressure put upon them and of the taxation for extra police, but what really impressed them most was the announcement that no canal water would be given for cultivation till the outbreak was at an end, as well as the dread that they might perhaps even find themselves expelled altogether from their lands. Apparently, therefore, they intimated to the outlaws that the time had come. Accordingly on the 2nd April three of the principal outlaws armed themselves and took up a strong position in a clump of babul trees, very difficult to access. Mr. Lucas believes that they were determined to fight to the last, but it is more probable that they meant to kill the English officers and as many others as they could, and then slip away down a nulla back to the Makhi Dhand. Then the same spy, who had previously taken the party on the fool's errand to the banks of the Nara, pointed the place out. Lieut. Harold marched out, and made so excellent a disposition of his troops that, though the outlaws evidently counted upon taking a large number of lives, they were shot down with the loss of only one sepoy killed and another severely wounded.

14. This accounted for Piru (the second-in-command of the gang), Gulu and Tagio, three of the worst and longest proclaimed dacoits. Another month's delay occurred, and the leader Bachu was still at large. Suddenly on the night of the 28th April, the Pir's khalifa, Haji Allah Nawazo, while standing in front of his master's residence at Kingri, was shot and afterwards hacked to death with a sword by three persons, who then escaped through the bazaar, defying anyone to arrest them, while one of them proclaimed himself to be Bachu. This, however, was not the fact. The leader was the pro-

claimed Khamiso. Fortunately, 1st Grade Head Constable Muhammad Yusuf of the Shikarpur Police and two Mounted Constables were at a village only two miles off, enquiring into a theft, and they were sent for. With a tracker and two of the Pir's servants, they followed the foot-prints by moonlight. They tracked all night through Khairpur territory, for over 22 miles, came up with the men at 8 A.M. (then a party of four) and, riding up, challenged them. The murderers replied by firing at the Police, who fired in their turn, killing two and securing a third who fought with a dagger but was knocked down. The fourth disappeared, and it is not known if he belonged to the gang, as only three took part in the murder. This crime, it is certain, was committed out of revenge for the Pir's having consented to the destruction of three of the gang by the Baluch Battalion, and the unfortunate khalifa had too well prognosticated his fate. One of the two assassins shot was Khamiso, belonging to the original gang and a proclaimed offender; the second was Piru Baksh Kasai, referred to in paragraph 9; the third was a man named Rahimtula, stated to be an outlaw for the murder of his wife and who was present and recognised at the great outrage at the Chotiari Police Station. He has since been sentenced to death. Pir Baksh Kasai, when killed, was wearing the carbine and badge of the unfortunate Camel Sawar referred to in paragraph 12, who was kidnapped and murdered.

15. Bachu, the leader, thus having lost all his best men, came in unarmed to the Deputy Collector Khan Bahadur Muhammad Yakub on the 7th May and surrendered. He refuses to give any information as to the remnants of the gang who are still alive or as to the whereabouts of their arms and ammunition. He has not yet been tried. Iso Dahiri, another of the original gang, surrendered himself on the 20th May, so that there remain but four known outlaws at large—Usman, Bhala, Masin and Wasand,—but all the original and principal men have been killed or are in custody. The present Deputy Commissioner has hopes that some of the rest will also surrender.

16. The results are so far satisfactory. The executive Government has conquered after two-and-a half years of rebellion on the part of this ultrafanatical and criminal sect, with the aid—the unwilling aid—of the Pir, the lending of whose influence cost him the life of his trusted servant. The question, therefore, remains, what measures

to adopt for coercing or persuading the Hurs to a better mode of life in future, and to obeying the Government rather than the Pir. I confess I am in the dark, and not very sanguine as to the future of the Hurs. They are obstinate to a degree, and even if cowed just now and disinclined for reprisals, an act of violent crime which the mildest of them is always ready for, may at any time be the signal for another reign of lawlessness. Were it not that I know the difficulties and delays attending such a proposal, I consider that a special Regulation should be passed under Section 1 of Act 33 Victoria, Chapter III, enabling District Magistrates to fine, banish or confiscate the lands of recalcitrants. The Criminal Tribes Act contains no section under which it could be extended to Sind, nor would it suit the case. For the Hurs are not ordinary criminals, and, as I said at first, they differ materially from the ordinary type of criminal classes in India, from the "Baharwatias" with their grievances, from the Meenas whose hereditary trade is plunder, from the Burmans, or from the old Baluch raiders of the frontier. The Hurs have a strong religio-fanatic element in their character, and their history recalls tales of agrarian outrage in Ireland where the assassins of an unpopular landlord are protected by the whole countryside, of Sicilian brigands, devoted to the Church and giving half the spoils to it, or the Thugs with their omens and special services before starting out to strangle and rob. The spy, so I am informed, gave all the reward he received (a large sum, because the Mir of Khairpur had also offered large rewards) to the Pir. The ordinary Baluchi or Sindhi can no doubt show ferocity and brutality on occasion, but—and it is not quite easy to account for it, evil companionship and comparative immunity from punishment hitherto may go some way to explaining it—when he joins the Hur union, these attributes become a part of his ordinary nature. For the outlaws, I must repeat, were not a mere fortuitous band of refugee criminals, but the mature fruit of Hur blood-thirstiness and fanaticism. *We must, however, do our best to keep the Hurs in order for the future, and after all Sind is non-regulation, so I hope that the ordinary law, administered without too many refinements, may be found sufficient to keep them cowed and check future beginnings of lawlessness.* The importation, too, into their neighbourhood of Baluchis, Cabulis and Panjabis, which I shall try and effect when the Jamrao Canal is opened, will help to frighten them into good behaviour, and mean-

while the appointment of a body of Nawab Shahbaz Khan's Bhugtis as part of the punitive Police has been a measure quite in the right direction. We still have 50 Baluchis under a Subedar in the district and large numbers of special Police. So for the present all is quiet. We cannot, of course, maintain punitive Police too long, for persecution only stimulates fanaticism, and the Hurs have shown that they care little for fines in that shape. The main difficulty will lie in endeavouring to make them fear the Deputy Commissioner and obey him rather than the Pir. It does seem a little undignified that, after two-and-a-half years' hard work, we should still have been baffled without the aid of the Pir. On the Upper Sind Frontier, no doubt, we habitually depend on the Chiefs of Baluch tribes to find and surrender criminals. Mr. Mules, Deputy Commissioner of the Upper Sind Frontier, tells me that several Chiefs readily procured the arrest of the Brahui Hurs, mentioned in paragraph 10, who had fled across the border, and it is contrary to all Sind traditions for headmen to oppose the Government as did the Hur zamindars of Sanghar and the neighbourhood. It is unpleasant to depend upon an ecclesiastic, so to speak, to restore order in the very heart of Sind. Further, although Government have wisely rewarded the present Pir with a title and a sword of honour, on the next occasion we may not be able to rely on the loyalty or courage of his successor. Again we may, by the accidents of the Service, have a timid Judge, who will weaken the Deputy Commissioner's hands by undoing his reasonable precautions and acquitting plain cases of murder, while even a strong Judge may sometimes be unable to convict on evidence that would quite satisfy a District Magistrate acting under Regulation on the spot. Besides, the natural tendency of the Sindhis to attach themselves to Pirs, and the fact that the more disciples he has the greater is the Pir's income, will surely increase the sect. There are little colonies of Hurs all over Upper Sind, and although a distinction may be drawn by the Pir between his well behaved and his murder-loving followers, I believe there is no real difference. It will be recollected that it was a Hur from the frontier who attempted to murder His Highness Mir Ali Murad. And ordinarily the Pir dare not, even if he pretends or even genuinely wishes to do so, excommunicate any bad characters. The outlook, therefore, is not altogether promising. However, every precaution will be taken, and I can only hope that no further outrages will occur while I am Commissioner in Sind. Should such

unfortunately happen, whether in my time or after me, I only hope they will be faced as wisely and as energetically as by Sir Charles Ollivant and his deputies, Messrs. Steele and Lucas, especially by the latter.

17. It is a source of gratification to point to the good work done by the *pagis* or trackers. In the recent Police organization, we provided for specially paid *pagis* as part of the regular Police. We have also arranged for Circle and Village *pagis* in the recent reorganisation of the Village establishments. These *pagis*' work in Thar and Parkar amply proves the wisdom of preserving for the use of the public the singular gifts of this class of men. Mr. Lucas' report mentions facts familiar to Sind officers—that the *pagis* can recognise the foot-prints of a man, it is not too much to say, as easily as his face, and they could tell after every outrage the names of some at least who had taken part in it.