

No 3

Proclamation~~The 29<sup>th</sup> March 1849~~

For many years in the time of Maharaja Ranjot Sing, peace & friendship prevailed between the British nation & the Sikhs.

When Ranjot Sing was dead and his wisdom no longer guided the counsels of the State, the Sardars of the Khalsa Army, without provocation & without cause suddenly invaded the British Territories. Their Army was again and again defeated; they were driven with slaughter and in shame from the Country they had invaded, and at the Gates of Lahore the Maharaja Duleep Sing tendered to the Governor General the submission of himself and his Chiefs and solicited the clemency of the British Government.

The Governor General extended the clemency of his Government to the State of Lahore. He generously spared the Kingdom which he had acquired a just right to subvert and, the Maharaja having been replaced on the Throne, treaties of friendship

were formed between the States.

The British have faithfully kept their word and have scrupulously observed every obligation which the treaties imposed upon them.

But the Sikh people and their chiefs have, on their part, grossly & faithlessly violated the promises by which they were bound

Of their annual tribute, no portion whatever has at any time been paid, and large loans advanced to them by the Government of India have never been repaid.

The control of the British Government to which they voluntarily submitted themselves has been resisted by arms.

Peace has been cast aside - British Officers have been murdered when acting for the State. Others engaged in the like employment have treacherously been thrown into captivity. Finally the Army of the State and the whole Sikh people, joined by many of the chieftains in the Punjab who signed the treaties, and led by a member of the Regency itself have risen in arms against us, and have waged a fierce and bloody War for the proclaimed purpose of destroying the British and their power.

The Government of India formerly declared that it desired no further Conquest;  
and

and it proved by its acts the sincerity of its professions.

The Government of India has no desire for conquest now, but it is bound in its duty to provide fully for its own security and to guard the interests of those committed to its charge.

To that end and as the only sure mode of protecting the state from the perpetual recurrence of unprovoked and warring wars, the Governor General is compelled to resolve upon the entire subjection of a people, whom their own Government has long been unable to control and whom (as events have now shown) no punishment can deter from violence; no acts of friendship can conciliate to peace.

Wherefore the Governor General of India has declared and hereby proclaims that the Kingdom of the Punjab is at an end, and that all the territories of Maharaja Duleep Sing are now and hence forth a portion of the British Empire in India.

His Highness the Maharaja shall be treated with consideration and with honor.

The few Chiefs who have not engaged in hostilities against the British, shall retain their property and their rank.

The British Government will leave to all the people, whether Mussulman, Hindu or Sikh, the free exercise of their own religions; but it will not permit any man to interfere with them in the observance of such

and customs as their respective religions may either enjoin or permit.

The Jagheers and all the property of Sardars and others, who have been in arms against the British shall be confiscated to the State.

The defences of every fortified place in the Punjab which is not occupied by British Troops shall be totally destroyed, and effectual measures shall be taken to deprive the people of the means of renewing either tumult or war.

The Governor General calls upon all the inhabitants of the Punjab, Sardars and people to submit themselves peaceably to the authority of the British Government which has hereby been proclaimed.

Ever those who shall live as obedient and peaceful subjects of the State, the British Government will rule with mildness and beneficence.

But if assistance to constituted authority shall again be attempted, if violence and turbulence shall be renewed, the Governor General warns the people of the Punjab that the time for leniency will then have passed away and that their offence will be punished with prompt & most rigorous severity.

J. H. Elliot

Secy to the Govt of India  
with the Govt Seal

I then handed one copy of the Terms to the Maharaja, and having thus fulfilled the object of my mission, I took my leave with the usual etiquette and dissolved the Durbar.

The whole ceremony was conducted with grave decorum - No sword was drawn. The costly jewels and gaudy robes, so conspicuous in the Durbar Court on other public occasions, were now thrown aside. I did not observe the slightest sign of wonder, sorrow, anger, or even dissatisfaction upon the countenance of any one present, except on that of Dewan Soond Nath; and from the nice enquiries he had made during the private conference respecting his own interests, it would not be uncharitable to suppose that his sadness arose <sup>more</sup> from the loss of the immense influence he possesses in every department of the State than from regret at the subversion of his Master's dynasty. But neither did I observe any signs of gladness. The whole announcement appeared to be received with a degree of indifference bordering on apathy, and not a word or whisper escaped to betray the real feelings pervading the hearts of that solemn assembly which had met to witness the ratified dissolution of the great Empire, established by the fraud and violence of Runjeet Sing.

As I left the Palace I had the proud satisfaction of seeing the British Colours hoisted on the Citadel under a Royal Salute from our own Artillery - at once proclaiming

the ascendancy of British rule and sounding the  
knell of the Khalsa Raj.

Camp Lahore } Signed / H. M. Elliot  
The 29<sup>th</sup> March 1849 } Secy. to the Gov<sup>t</sup>. of India  
With the Governor General

(True copy)

P. M. Elliot  
Under Secy. to the Gov<sup>t</sup>. of India  
With the Governor General

Compy. H. M. Elliot