

state, however, must hope that it may never fall to their lot to be swallowed up in the flood of British administration, and that they may have rulers of sufficient ability to preserve to the country its independence. While the state is ruled by one of the old reigning family, the British officers can exercise over it a useful and beneficial influence, give character to the people, and infuse vigour into them.

In October of the year 1894, after making a tour down from Mastuj, which had then become my head-quarters, to Chitral, in the company of Mr. George Curzon, I left the country thinking never to see it again. Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Mehtar, had given Mr. Curzon and myself the warmest possible welcome at his capital. We had played polo together, and dined together, and he rode up some miles with us to say good-bye. Everything seemed as quiet as it ever can be in these volcanic countries of Central Asia. But not three months had passed when Nizam was murdered by his own half-brother, and trouble after trouble followed, till the British agent was besieged in Chitral fort, two detachments sent up, and a relief expedition on a large scale had become necessary. I again visited Chitral, this time as special correspondent of the *Times*, and arrived there a week after the siege had been raised. But the history of these events has been treated of separately, and I will here close the narrative of my travels, adding only a chapter or two on a few general impressions I formed in carrying them out.