

expeditions for his personal aggrandisement, in which they have no interest, but which, on the contrary, by increasing his power, draw tighter the chains that he has put on them.

His triumphs seem in general to be bloodless. His uninterrupted success hitherto, and the large force which he carries with him, have the effect of preventing opposition. Where he sees an inclination to oppose, he appears to act with caution, and not to be too eager in attacking. Where he thinks the instant and complete subjection of a chief or place doubtful, he is willing to temporise; content with a small acknowledgment of his superiority as a beginning, leaves the completion of his plan to another time, and by degrees gains his ultimate object. He generally takes advantage at a favorable moment of any weakness or confusion in the petty states, occasioned either by internal dissensions, or the deaths of chiefs or other circumstances. In 1806 and 1807 he conquered the country called the Rae country, on the left bank of the Sutlej, the chief of which had died, and which was then in the feeble hands of the chief's widow. He has within the last few days taken possession of Umballa, which was exactly under the same circumstances. From Umballa he has proceeded to Shahabad with similar views, which was in the possession of the sons of Kurm Singh Nurumchi, who lately died. The Ranee fled from Umballa, and the sons of Kurm Singh fled from Shahabad at his approach.

I have occasionally mentioned the disaffection prevailing among the chiefs of this country.* This is almost universal, and if at any future period the ambition and encroachment of Runjeet Singh should compel the British Government to go to war with him, it might perhaps be taken advantage of to destroy effectually his power. Surdur Futteh Singh of Aloor has been supposed to be particularly attached to the Rajah, but he is in reality particularly discontented with him. Runjeet Singh and Futteh Singh entered into alliance in early life,

* The country afterwards known as that of the protected Sikh States.