

**MEMOIR OF THE FIRST  
CAMPAIGN IN THE HILLS  
NORTH OF CUTCHEE, UNDER  
MAJOR BILLAMORE, IN 1839-40**

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Memoir of the first campaign in the hills north of Cutchee, under major Billamore, in 1839-40 by  
Anonymous

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HILLS NORTH OF CUTCHEE,  
UNDER MAJOR BILLAMORE, IN 1839-40.



By One of his Surviving Subalterns.

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THE author of the history of Sir Charles Napier's administration in Sind, including the hill "campaign," not contented with such exaggerated praises of his hero and of his exploits as make his book no more resemble sober and true history than do Gulliver's travels, has thought proper to assert that no troops had ever before entered those hills without disaster. The following account of the *first* hill campaign in Cutchee, in 1839-40, is given to the public, and will perhaps a little enlighten the historian of Sind.

In the year 1839, after Lord Keane and his army had passed through Cutchee *en route* to Afghanistan, the predatory tribes inhabiting the eastern part of that province, namely, the Doombkees and Jekranees, with others of less note asso-



ciated with them, infested the road from the neighbourhood of Shikarpoor to the mouth of the Bolaun in such numbers, and with such boldness, that a whole regiment was required to escort a convoy in safety from Shikarpoor to Dadur. The matter was of serious importance, for the safety of the army in Afghanistan might depend on the supplies forwarded to it from Sinde; while the number of troops in Upper Sinde was totally inadequate to the furnishing, for a continuance, the strong escorts required. The heat also in this part of the world, from April to October, is more deadly than the sword of a human enemy, and scarcely an escort at this time marched through the country without losing many men from this cause alone.

Mr. Bell, the political agent, in vain made every effort to obtain a free passage through Cutchee by negotiation and pecuniary arrangements with the plundering tribes; their chiefs were deaf to all persuasion, and scorned every offer.

It may be well to observe here, as the matter has been greatly mystified by the historian of Sir Charles Napier's conquest of Sinde and hill campaign, that the Doombkees and Jekranees are not hill tribes; they resided wholly in the plain of Cutchee, and possessed the towns of Lahree,

Pooljee, and Chuttur, with some villages in that neighbourhood and the adjoining lands. Their fighting men were all mounted; they were, indeed, tribes of horsemen. The Murrees and Boogtees inhabited the neighbouring hills; the chief town of the former, Kahun, of the latter, Deyra. These mountain tribes were nearly all footmen, and seldom or never ventured in hostile guise into the plain country. While the Doombkees and Jekranees were in power, the horsemen were far too strong for them in the plain, while, on the other hand, they were safe in their mountain fastnesses from the attacks of the lowlanders. Such being the respective positions, these warlike tribes, with occasional exceptions, were usually on friendly terms, and afforded each other mutual support.

The head of the whole Doombkee tribe by birth was, and is still, Belooche Khan, of Lahree, but he being of a quiet, peaceable disposition, preferred a life of ease at home to one of stormy adventure and predatory warfare; he never joined in any plundering excursion, and quarrelled with nobody, but lived like a quiet country gentleman in the midst of his turbulent brethren. He was on this account held in contempt by the warlike part of his tribe; and Beejar Khan, in power, in-

fluence, and all else but name, had, long before we entered the country, made himself the real head, not only of the Doombkees, but also of the associated tribe of Jekranees. Beejar Khan was a man of considerable ability; he not only kept his wild riders completely under his authority, but was far-famed for his justice and excellent civil arrangements. His ryots, from being oppressed, were protected and made much of; his lands were well cultivated, and the traders, as well as the peasantry of the whole country, were safe and contented under his rule. He paid his revenue regularly to his feudal lord, the khan of Kital, who therefore seldom troubled himself with regard to his other proceedings. All this internal good management enabled the Doombkee leader to carry on his predatory excursions systematically, and on an extensive scale, against any of his neighbours offering a fair prospect of a valuable booty. Beejar had at this time under his control from one thousand to one thousand five hundred horse, the best and boldest in the country; and incited by his prince, Mehrab Khan, as well as by inclination and habit, he now directed all his efforts against the valuable British convoys, &c., passing within his reach through Cutchee. This was the state of the people. It may be well also