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Mark Bence-Jones
(Constable 1974) pp 303 + Notes etc 377.

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Clive of India

monarch in front of all the crowds could have had a lasting effect on a self-conscious and highly-strung boy of nine, which would have been his most likely age at the time of the incident, if it actually happened. For when Clive was this age, his Aunt Bay died; so it is very possible that he went to stay with his parents in London. To the shock and sense of loss occasioned by the death of his aunt, who was then more like his mother, would have been added the traumatic experience of exchanging the rural peace of Manchester for the noise, the jostling crowds and the smells of the London of Hogarth; a large city even by present-day standards.

His dislike of London in later life may well have stemmed from this first visit. It is clear, too, that he regarded Hope Hall as more of a home than his parents' house; yet this is only to be expected, since he spent his most impressionable years there, and does not necessarily denote that he was in any way unhappy when living with his parents. He was somewhat in awe of his father, but so were most boys in those days; his subsequent generosity to him would indicate that he did not suffer any undue harshness from him in his childhood or boyhood, for he was never quick to forgive a past injury. Like most of the Clives, his father was short-tempered; but his mother, who was the stronger character, is said to have been good at smoothing him down.⁹ Indeed, the influence of Clive's parents' house is likely to have been predominantly feminine; for while five of the seven daughters borne by his mother lived to be grown up, only two of her six sons survived, apart from himself; and of these two, one was about fifteen and the other twenty years his junior. It is, of course, possible that Clive had a brother closer to him in age whose death may have been a factor in transforming the cheerful if pugnacious little boy of Hope Hall into the reserved and at times melancholy youth; but more probably his three other brothers died in infancy, so that for most of the time which he spent in his parents' house he would have been the only boy among a bevy of girls. His sisters doubtless hero-worshipped him, which may not have been good for him as he already tended to be arrogant. And perhaps it was through this feminine influence that his character developed its strangely feminine twist, making him impulsive and irrational yet at the same time giving him the intuition that was frequently to stand him in good stead.

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that Clive lacked the companionship of other boys. In Manchester he had a cousin with whom he was very close; and from an early age he experienced the rough-and-tumble of school—first at Dr Eaton's at Lostock in Cheshire,¹⁰ then, after

9. Melstom - Clive I, p. 38
10. Biographia Britannica
11. " (also Melstom - unrecalled)
12. A. M. Dances
13. 55.

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the death of his aunt, at the grammar school at Market Drayton in his native Shropshire. The stories of his wildness at Market Drayton, how he climbed on to a gargoyle at the top of the church tower, and how he led a gang who terrorized the local shopkeepers, though unreliable in detail, since they are not based on contemporary sources, can at least be taken to indicate that as a schoolboy he was still the extrovert he had been as a child of six.¹¹

Macaulay built on these stories the image of Clive as a madcap delinquent, and assumed, because he went to four different schools, that he was 'a dunce, if not a reprobate'. But as a twentieth-century biographer of Clive rightly points out, his progress from private school to grammar school, then to public school—Merchant Taylors'—and finally to a sort of business school, kept by a Mr Sterling at Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, was perfectly normal and does not necessarily mean that he was at any time expelled.¹²

Without being either a dunce or a reprobate, Clive may not have been much of a scholar.¹³ Nevertheless, he was to show, in later life, a knowledge of the classics and a talent for writing and speaking excellent English, as well as an immense capacity for hard work. It seems only fair to allow Merchant Taylors' and the other establishments a little of the credit. One can, moreover, assume that Clive's schooldays were relatively happy from the fact that he sent his own sons to school, instead of educating them privately, which would then have been quite normal for the sons of someone as rich as he had become. And whatever may be said about the brutalizing effects of boys' schools in the old days, Clive's schooling does not seem to have had any such effect on him. On the contrary, he was surprisingly humane, given the age in which he lived, the circumstances of his career and his own autocratic and neurotic temperament.

From the legend of Clive's wildness, it has naturally been assumed that his father shipped him out to India because he was good for nothing else. Far more likely he was sent there because it seemed the best opportunity. He had to make his way in the world, even though he was the eldest son; and of the limited choice of careers open to an impoverished young gentleman in those days, the East India Company service would have been one of the most attractive. For it would be hard to exaggerate the importance of the East India Company in mid-eighteenth-century England. Since its foundation in 1600, and its reconstitution in 1709, it had grown into far and away the largest and most complex trading company in the land; its annual sales of East Indian goods amounted to some

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£2m. sterling, at a time when the total annual imports of Great Britain were not worth much more than £10m. As well as trading, it had territorial powers over the settlements in India; the Governors of its three Presidencies of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay held more lucrative posts than did the Governor of any Crown colony. It was the first of the few joint-stock companies then in existence; its stock was pre-eminent on the London market, the nearest thing in those days to a gilt-edged security. As a supporter of the public credit, both by lending money directly to the State, and by helping in the arrangement of State loans, the Company occupied a position in the City comparable only to that of the Bank of England; and, like the Bank, it was in close alliance with the Government.

It was fortunate for Clive that his father knew one of the Directors of this mighty organization. On December 15, 1742, he was summoned to East India House in Leadenhall Street, the Company's City headquarters, where he was formally admitted to the juniormost rank of 'writer', and assigned to Fort St George, Madras. Before being ushered into the presence of the Honourable Chairman, he was kept waiting for an hour or two in a lobby full of other young candidates. One wonders if any of them noticed him. We have no picture or description of him at seventeen, but from what we know of his appearance later in life—he was regarded by smart society in general as of 'very mean appearance', and by the critical Horace Walpole as 'a remarkably ill-looking man'¹⁴—he cannot have been very prepossessing, though he was on the tall side of middle height. Even at this age he may have had some of the fullness of flesh above the eyelids,¹⁵ which made his brow seem heavy and gave him an unattractive expression, 'gloomy, sullen and forbidding' as his enemies were later to describe it.¹⁶ In him, the characteristic Clive features, large and broad nose, determined eyes and mouth, thick, dark eyebrows, were arranged a little lopsidedly, as though to illustrate his own candid admission later in life, 'irregular was in my very nature'.¹⁷ They were also crowded together, making his face seem pinched, ample though it was—like a terrestrial globe with eyes, nose and mouth forming a compact archipelago in the southern hemisphere.

Now that Clive was virtually a man, he can no longer have been the extrovert he was as a child and boy. Already that reserve, which made him seem 'awkward and unmannerly',¹⁸ would have hindered him from striking up casual acquaintances. Yet one at least of the young men in the lobby was no stranger to him, his cousin, William Smyth King. And he

14. Lady Mary Coke - Journal, Walpole.
15. BB.
16. C. Conze - Clive I 11-12
17. P. Russell. Box IV C to Rams Hunt 3. 2. 1762
18. C. I 11-12

may have brought himself to converse with two of the others, John Walsh and John Pybus, who were to become his close friends.

To Walsh, India was a second home; he had friends and relatives there, and had himself spent his early childhood with his parents at Madras. They were now dead, and he had inherited his patrimony of £2000—great riches for a youth of sixteen. It may have been on account of his wealth that Walsh established an ascendancy over Clive, which he was to maintain even after the roles had been reversed and Clive was far and away the richer and more important of the two. Clive would listen to Walsh when he listened to nobody else, so that Walsh, whose principles were more clear-cut than were his own, became, in a manner of speaking, his conscience. Walsh's orderly and logical mind—which seemed to match his spare frame and ferret face—served as a sheet anchor for Clive's wayward temperament. Unfortunately he was inclined to be quarrelsome, so that under his influence Clive was more than ever ready to take offence.

On March 10, 1743, Clive sailed from the Thames in the East India Company's vessel *Winchester*. To his homesickness at leaving England, parents and family, were added the terrors of the voyage, and the uncertainties of life in a strange and distant land. Yet we are apt to regard a passage to India in the mid-eighteenth century through our own rather than through contemporary eyes. We think of how the unhealthiness of India in those days cut short the lives of so many young hopefuls; forgetting that the not-so-very-much-better sanitary conditions at home meant that a young man of Clive's generation was far more inured to the likelihood of an early death than his twentieth-century counterpart—just as he grew up with a much stronger resistance to disease.¹⁹ Again, the India to which Clive set sail may seem to us infinitely remote; but even before he met Walsh, he must have known people who had been there, having spent so much of his boyhood in the upper-middle-class world of London where the East India trade loomed large. Such apprehensions as he may have had were offset by the feeling of adventure. He was going to regain the family fortunes; that he might just as likely have ended in a far-away grave or, more likely still, returned home poorer than he had left, having failed to shake the proverbial 'pagoda tree', probably did not occur to him as he boarded the great East Indiaman, as fine a ship as any afloat, of 500 tons and only on her third voyage; with the red and white striped ensign of the Honourable Company flying proudly from her stern.²⁰

Clive did not suffer from seasickness; but he had to resign himself to many weeks of cramped conditions, of stink from the bilge, of cold on

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the matter being heard at Fort St David. Fordyce was summoned, and spoke insultingly to the Governor and Council, who promptly dismissed him from the Company's service. Reporting the affair to the Directors, they stated that Clive was 'generally esteemed a very quiet person and no ways guilty of disturbances'.^{29*}

The affair tells us a thing or two about Clive at this time. That he was regarded as 'a very quiet person' would indicate that even if there is any truth in the stories of his wildness as a schoolboy, he did not grow into a rowdy or a swashbuckler; though for all his reserve and his periods of depression, he must have had a considerable store of high spirits to become the boon companion of the gay extrovert, Dalton. That he alone, of all those whom Fordyce slandered, actually tackled the obnoxious clergyman, shows that, however quiet he may have been, he was not the sort of man to take things lying down. Again, the fact that Fordyce chose to slander him, at the same time as he slandered the Governor and Council, shows that Clive was already a somebody, though only twenty-three and still very junior.

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Macaulay compares the state of India following the death of the Emperor Aurungzeb in 1707 with that of Europe after the death of Charlemagne. Charles the Bald, Charles the Fat and Charles the Simple have their counterpart in the later Mogul Emperors 'sunk in indolence and debauchery' who 'sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing *bang*, fondling concubines and listening to buffoons'. Just as the Count of Flanders and the Duke of Burgundy became independent, yet still 'acknowledged the superiority of the most helpless driveller among the later Carolingians', so did the Nizams and Nawabs of India make themselves into independent sovereigns while still sending presents to, and obtaining charters from, the Mogul. And in the same way as Europe suffered from

* Clive's statement at the inquiry was slightly at variance with those of Dalton and two more of his friends. This would indicate that he had a bad memory for detail, for he had no reason for contradicting Dalton and the other two, who were wholly in his favour. At various times in later life, Clive seemed not to have a strict regard for the truth; it could have been carelessness and forgetfulness, as on this occasion.

- 29. Dinto E. Genl. 2.11.1749.
- 30. Macaulay - Clive
- 31. Camb Hist p 117.
- 32. Chanderpuri wasa Muslim.
- 33

the invasions of Vikings, Magyars and Saracens, so was India, in the first half of the eighteenth century, invaded by Persians and Afghans.³⁰ The sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739, when, symbolically, the celebrated Peacock Throne of the Moguls was carried off as a prize, marked the end of effective Mogul rule.

Eighteenth-century India was also at the mercy of plunderers from within: the Marathas. This once-peaceful people from the hill country behind Bombay had, towards the end of the century before, turned into a race of warriors, of fierce freebooting horsemen. They established kingdoms at Poona, at Gwalior, in Berar, even in Tanjore in the far south; no part of India was safe from their raids. Nawabs and even the Emperor himself paid them an annual tribute as protection-money; while the English at Calcutta dug what was long afterwards known as the Maratha Ditch as a defence against them. As well as freebooting, the Marathas acted as soldiers of fortune, hiring themselves to one side or the other in the wars between potentates and rival claimants to provinces which were the natural result of 'the political decay that had eaten into the heart of the Indian state system'.³¹

At the time when the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle put an end to open warfare between the English and the French, there were rival candidates for the thrones of both the Deccan and the Carnatic. The Nawab of the Carnatic was in theory subordinate to the Nizam of the Deccan, but by this time he was as independent of his overlord as the Nizam himself was independent of the Emperor. In the Deccan, following the death of the powerful Nizam-ul-Mulk in June 1748, there was rivalry between the late Nizam's second son, Nasir Jang, and his grandson, Muzaffar Jang. In the Carnatic, the Nawab, Anwar-ud-din, the father of Mohammed Ali, was in fact a usurper; his position was threatened by a relative of the previous ruling family, Chanda Sahib,³² a chivalrous and colourful adventurer.

The story of these rival princes is remarkable in that to the normal Oriental confusion of wars, murders, bribery and intrigue was added a new factor, the intervention of the French and the English. There were various reasons for this fishing in troubled Indian waters. The recent war had left both nations with more troops than were necessary to defend their settlements in peacetime. By putting troops at the disposal of one or other Indian potentate, it not only meant that the expenses of these troops would be paid, but there was also the chance of large gains, both for private individuals and for the Company concerned, should their side win.

The next stage was for the French and English to use the wars between

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the rival Indian princes as a cloak for carrying on a war between themselves, even though they were officially at peace. Thus the French supported Chanda Sahib, the English supported Anwar-ud-din and after his death, Mohammed Ali; the French supported Muzaffar Jang, the English supported Nasir Jang. The principals in these conflicts became little more than puppets in a struggle as to whether the French or the English should enjoy the lion's share of Indian trade.

How far the ambitions of Dupleix went beyond trade to empire-building is uncertain. According to a distinguished French historian,³³ there is no evidence of a systematic attempt on his part to establish a French empire in India; although as early as 1749 the English suspected him of such designs. Clive believed that Dupleix originally aimed at no more than the control of a district round Pondicherry, but that once engaged in the politics of the country his successes opened a scene of great power to him.³⁴

It was in fact the English who first played the game of intervention in the smaller sphere of Tanjore, a kingdom of rich fields studded with pagodas some thirty miles south of Fort St David. The former ruler of Tanjore, who had been driven out in 1739, wanted help to regain his kingdom. The English agreed to send him troops in return for their expenses and a grant of Devikottai, a fort at the mouth of the Coleroon river.

The first Tanjore expedition, which set out in March 1749 under the command of Captain James Cope, was a fiasco. When, after being held up on the way by a storm, the English troops reached Tanjore, they failed to make contact with the reinforcements which had been sent by sea, though separated from them by a distance of only four miles. There was nothing for it but to retreat, and as a final mishap they lost most of their baggage and 400 of their coolies were drowned when crossing a deep *nullah** under fire. Clive, recently promoted to lieutenant, went with the expedition in charge of a company. He afterwards recalled how he and his comrades were 'a little staggered, when the hostile Tanjore army suddenly appeared in full view; it was the first time most of them had been confronted by so vast a host.'³⁵

To redeem this failure, the whole of the Company's forces at Fort St David, under the command of Stringer Lawrence, were shipped to the mouth of the Coleroon and landed, together with heavy artillery, on an island close to Devikottai. When it came to storming the Fort, Clive asked if he could lead the assault party. Lawrence agreed, and gave him a platoon

* Watercourse.

33. Prosper Caltra - Dupleix... (Imms 1901) p. xi.

34. Clive - letter to pro. 1764 p. 4.

35. Orms MSS Vol I p. 219-25.

36. Ibid

of thirty Europeans and 700 sepoy. Clive led this force across a *nullah*, losing four or five of his Europeans by enemy fire. He then advanced towards the flank of the enemy's entrenchment, without first making sure that all his sepoy had crossed the *nullah*. In fact only some of them had got across, and these failed to keep close to the platoon and protect its rear. Thus unprotected, the platoon came close to the enemy and was about to open fire, when it was attacked in the rear by a body of enemy cavalry, who charged from only forty yards away, having been hidden between the projecting towers of the fort. In an instant all but the front three or four men of Clive's platoon had been cut to pieces. Clive himself narrowly escaped death by stepping aside as one of the horsemen came at him, his sword raised ready to cut him down.³⁶

He ran back to the *nullah*, where he found his sepoy drawn up in good order. Lawrence then led his whole army against the Fort, which the enemy quickly abandoned. There is some uncertainty as to whether Clive had first checked the Tanjore cavalry with his sepoy or whether Lawrence saw him in difficulties and came to his rescue. If the latter, Clive's attempts to storm the fort would have done nothing to facilitate its eventual capture. One cannot help feeling that it was his youthful impetuosity which caused the loss of most of his platoon.

Fortunately for Clive, Lawrence thought otherwise. 'This young man's early genius surprised and engaged my attention', he wrote later, 'as well before as at the siege of Devikottai, where he behaved in courage and judgement much beyond what could be expected from his years.'³⁷ Whatever his judgement on this occasion, Clive certainly showed courage; and it was courage that was needed to rout Indian armies. When, from the ramparts of the fort, he saw the Tanjore army of fifteen or twenty thousand retreating across the plain, it was impressed upon his mind how easily a small but determined European force could put an Indian host to flight.

The English made peace with the actual ruler of Tanjore, who ceded Devikottai to them, paid the cost of the expedition and pensioned off the pretender. Lawrence's next job was to act as one of the English Commissioners for the handing back of Madras by the French. He took Clive with him as his quartermaster. They went in August 1749 to Pondicherry. At last Clive saw the place from within and was able to admire and perhaps envy its broad streets and handsome buildings: the Tour de l'Horloge with its fluted pilasters, the baroque churches and Dupleix's still unfinished palace, its colonnades reminiscent of the Louvre, rising above

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the storm, heedless of the omens of heaven. This to them denoted superhuman courage, so they reckoned it was no good trying to resist such a foe.¹⁴

An advance party hoisted Mohammed Ali's colours of white and green on the Nawab's palace, which stood next to the fort. At ten that morning the main part of Clive's force marched in, complete with field-pieces, ammunition and—as a French agent noted—two chests of liquor.¹⁵ As they made their way along the narrow streets to the fort, they were watched by the city's hundred thousand inhabitants.

By such gestures as returning valuable merchandise left in the fort for safe keeping to its owners, Clive won many of the inhabitants over to his side.¹⁶ This was in accordance with Saunders's injunction 'not in any shape to molest or distress the inhabitants'¹⁷—words dictated as much by policy as by humanitarianism, for he asked for special care to be taken of the houses of bankers.

Clive learnt the lesson that it pays to treat the populace well. He might so easily have lost his head at finding himself the master of a rich and teeming city. Saunders did his best to bring him down to earth: 'It is with pleasure I observe the reception you met with, but when you consider that those people were entirely in your power, 'tis nothing extraordinary.' And: 'If the merchants have a mind to make you a present I have nothing to say to the contrary, but take care there be no compulsion.'¹⁸ Clive was never to use compulsion—despite what his enemies may have insinuated to the contrary—in order to get 'presents' from those in his power.

Saunders also took care to instil in Clive the importance of legitimacy, of maintaining the pretence that the English were only acting as auxiliaries. He reminded him to hoist the Mogul's and Mohammed Ali's colours and to proclaim, by beat of tom-tom, that the place had been taken in the name of the Mogul, who in theory was Mohammed Ali's overlord.¹⁹ Clive, who in a burst of patriotism had asked Prince to send him a Union Jack,²⁰ heeded Saunders's words so well as to abide by the fiction of Mogul legitimacy for the rest of his life.

Having hoisted the flags and beat the tom-toms, Clive was faced with the task of raising revenues for Mohammed Ali. He brought pressure to bear on two or three *killedars*,* but could never stay long enough to produce any effect. No less urgent was the question of what to do when

* Commandants of forts or garrisons.

14. Orme. History I p 184.
15. Anand Sampal... VIII. p. 60
16. Orme - History. I p 184.
17. Orme MSS Vol 257.
21. Orme MSS Vol 257.
22. Orme MSS Vol 257.
23.
24. Orme 257

the enemy recovered from their surprise and attempted to regain the city.

At first, Clive was uncertain whether to make a stand at Arcot, whether to retire to the neighbouring fort of Timiri or divide his troops among a number of different forts, or whether even to go back to Madras. He was not alone in his ignorance of the political value of holding the capital; even the knowledgeable Prince advised him to withdraw when it was reported that Chanda Sahib's son, Raza Sahib, was coming with 2000 horse.²¹ Saunders, however, urged him to hold Arcot if it was in any way tenable. Pigot, who never lacked courage, added his word: 'There is a good deal in the name of the place, and I like the sound of Arcot.' He expressed his faith in Clive's 'noddle', and jokingly called him a Nawab—pointing out that to retire to Timiri would demote him to being merely 'Faujdar' Clive.²²

Clive had 'noddle' enough to stay at Arcot, and set to work preparing the fort to stand a siege.²³ Provisions had to be got in, and paid for by bills on the Company. There was the need for a safe water supply. It was all very well for Clive to report cheerfully that the water tasted good; it might still have given his men fluxes, as Prince pointed out.²⁴ Attempts were made to burn down some of the houses overlooking the walls, but with no success, for they contained little that would burn. Being closely surrounded by houses was not the only disadvantage of the Arcot fort. The walls were a mile in circumference, too long to be comfortably held by a force as small as Clive's; the towers were so tumbledown that few of them could carry cannon; the moat was dry or fordable in many places.

After two unsuccessful attempts to dislodge the former garrison of Arcot, which was encamped a few miles away and impeding the bringing-in of provisions, Clive refrained from any more sallies while putting the fort to rights. The enemy, who had grown in number to 3000, took this as a sign of fear and moved up close to the city. Clive waited until two hours after midnight on September 14, then marched silently with most of his force and attacked them while they were asleep. They fled in confusion, hardly troubling to fire a shot while the English force went right through their camp firing continuously. The English then retired, having lost not a single man. Terrible shrieks and groans from the camp told of the havoc they had wrought. Next morning, none of the enemy remained

* Local governor.

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One thing they did not suffer was hunger, even though the siege lasted fifty days; Clive having laid in provisions for more than three months.*

The garrison's chief hardship, as Clive himself said, was fatigue.³⁴ To man such lengthy walls with such small numbers meant that nobody had enough sleep. The enemy kept up a continual musket fire from the houses, which were so close that people were actually hurt by stones thrown from them; and in the words of Doctor Wilson, 'a man could not show a nose over the parapet without being shot'.³⁵ Yet some of the garrison had always to be patrolling the ramparts, to make sure that there was not a surprise attack. On three occasions Clive had a sergeant shot dead beside him while going his rounds.³⁶ One night, Lieutenant Glass and a couple of men were let down over the wall by ropes and tried to blow up the houses from which the fire was most troublesome; but their attempt failed, and as Glass was being hauled back again the rope broke and he fell and was injured.

Meanwhile, Saunders and Prince were trying to get a relief force to Clive. There was the hope of Gingens coming, of Mohammed Ali sending a force, of help from the Regent of Mysore. But neither Gingens nor Mohammed Ali was willing to reduce the garrison at Trichinopoly; the Mysoreans were too much intimidated by the French to do anything. Prince was continually being promised troops by this *poligar* and that *zemindar*. Some of Raza Sahib's allies—one of them, nicknamed 'the Dog', was supposed to have attempted to poison Raza Sahib—started to intrigue with Clive, who trusted them no more than Prince did, but spun out the correspondence in the hope that it would keep them inactive.³⁷

Saunders scraped together a force of 130 Europeans and 100 sepoy, his position having been slightly improved by the arrival of some recruits from Europe. He promised this force at the beginning of October, but it was another three weeks before it actually set out from Madras on the road to Arcot, under the command of Lieutenant Innes. Having waited all this time, the weary garrison must have expected it from day to day,

* The well-known story of the sepoy's offering to let the Europeans have all the rice, and saying that they themselves would be content with the water in which it had been boiled, must be regarded as a myth. It was first told by Sir John Malcolm, *Life of Robert, Lord Clive* (London 1836), and made into an epic by Macaulay, who ends with the peroration: 'History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.'

34. *Fort & Damben* 21.10.1751

35. Orme MSS vol 14.

36. Orme Hist. vol I - 189

37. *Ibid.* Russell.

38. *Fort & Damben* 21.10.1751

39. *Virginius Thompson* - p. 299 - *Dupleix* (New York 1933)

hour to hour. And then the news came that Innes's force had been intercepted by the enemy and obliged to retire.

In any case, Clive reckoned the enemy were now so strong that it would take no less than 1000 Indians and 200 Europeans to relieve him.³⁸ But the constant talk of English reinforcements kept Du Saussay, the commander of the French force with Raza Sahib, in a state of alarm. Dupleix had no faith in Du Saussay,³⁹ and replaced him with another officer, Goupil, who was himself about to be replaced at the time when the siege ended. These changes did not give the Indians a high opinion of the French commanders. As for their own general, Raza Sahib, his incapacity was notorious.

Clive held out hopes to Saunders that he could defend a breach should the enemy make one. It was now the middle of October and the French heavy artillery had arrived from Pondicherry. A battery was opened to the north-west of the fort. The first few shots disabled one of the English eighteen-pounders and dismounted the other; which was afterwards only used where it was not exposed to heavy metal. The French cannon continued their bombardment for six days, by which time the entire wall between two towers had fallen. But the garrison quickly made an inner defence of trenches, palisades and rubble, the officers working side by side with the men.⁴⁰

To show Raza Sahib that they were not all that hard pressed, Clive indulged in a schoolboy prank. The fort contained a huge old cannon, said to have been sent by the Emperor Aurungzeb, complete with its seventy-two-pound iron balls. This ancient gun was hoisted on to a mound of earth built on top of the tallest tower of the fort, and fired so that its shot went through the palace, which was Raza Sahib's headquarters. Once a day for three days, Clive saluted Raza Sahib in this manner, at the hour when he knew all his officers would be with him—but on the fourth day, the old gun burst. The enemy, as though to retaliate, built a mound on top of a house so as to be able to fire on to all parts of the fort. The English waited till it was finished and the cannon duly perched on it, together with a crew of fifty. They then toppled the mound over with the remaining eighteen-pounder.

These diversions did not stop the enemy from setting up a battery to the south-west of the fort, and although their gunners were frequently driven away by English musketry, they made a breach even larger than the first. Once again the garrison toiled at digging a trench and throwing up a breastwork.

40. Orme Hist I p 190

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into Bengal—which they seemed about to do, having for some months been improving the fortifications of their settlements. On becoming Nawab, he ordered them to demolish these new works. The French satisfied him by explaining that they were merely repairing the damage done by lightning; but he refused to believe the English when they assured him—without, as it happens, much truth—that the fortifications of Calcutta were against the French, rather than himself.³ His mistrust of the English was exacerbated by reports that they had been intriguing with his aunt, Ghasiti Begum, and with his cousin, the Nawab of Purnea, both of whom he suspected of disputing his succession. These reports gained substance when the English gave sanctuary to Krishna Das, one of Ghasiti's clique who had embezzled the Nawab's revenues.

If the Nawab was ill-fitted for handling a crisis of this sort, so was the English governor, Roger Drake, a weak-minded and rather decadent young man with a reputation for vice that stemmed from his having married his deceased wife's sister. Like Siraj-ud-daula, he was unsure of his position, which had not yet been confirmed by London, and so was touchy and arrogant. He treated Siraj-ud-daula's envoy with contempt, which caused the Nawab to make his celebrated remark: 'What honour is left to us, when a few traders who have not yet learnt to wash their bottoms reply to the ruler's order by expelling his envoy?'⁴

Siraj-ud-daula occupied the English subordinate factory at Cossimbazar near Murshidabad and then marched on Calcutta. The English felt confident that they would be able to repel him. But their defences—despite the new works—were as inadequate as their garrison. After a few days it was resolved to abandon the town and the fort and take to the ships in the river. There was panic; the ships moved off carrying the women and children and some of the men—including Drake, who showed little courage on this occasion⁵—and leaving the rest of the garrison to the mercy of the Nawab.

Then followed that celebrated horror, the Black Hole,^{*} which, like the character of Siraj-ud-daula, has been embellished with the years.† It is

^{*} Its name alone is infinitely sinister, though in fact the room in Fort William where so many English died of heat and suffocation during the night of June 20, 1756, was known as such even before the event—'black hole' being the recognized name for the detention cell in a military barracks until a century ago.

† Thus it was popularly believed that there were women and children shut up in the Black Hole, as well as men, whereas there is only contemporary evidence of there having been one woman—the brave Portuguese half-caste Mary Carey, who refused to be separated from her English husband.

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4. Karam Ali p. 63
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founded almost solely on the writings of John Zephaniah Holwell, one of Drake's Council who was himself a survivor of the tragedy and who is known to have been a talented but not always truthful propagandist. Holwell's assertion that 146 people, of whom 123 died, were shut up in the Black Hole has been proved mathematically impossible by present-day Indian scholars, who put the total number of those incarcerated at between 39 and 69, with between 18 and 43 deaths.* Yet even for this lesser number it would have been horror enough to spend one of the hottest and most sultry nights of the Bengal June crowded together in a room fourteen feet by eighteen, unventilated but for two small barred windows giving on to a deep verandah.

More than anything else, the Black Hole has rendered Siraj-ud-daula hateful to posterity, though he was not directly responsible for it. In contemporary Madras, however, it does not seem to have caused any more of a sensation than the rest of the news from Bengal. When, on August 16, it was learnt that Calcutta had fallen, Clive was immediately summoned from Fort St David to attend the Council and the Select Committee.† After six weeks of wrangling, it was decided to go all out to recover Calcutta, even though it meant denuding Madras of troops. This policy—a brave and far-sighted one, in view of the imminence of war with France, when Madras would have been in danger from Pondicherry—was Pigot's; he was supported by Clive, who offered his services to command the expedition. Of the possible alternative candidates, Pigot himself stood down through lack of military experience, and Lawrence was too asthmatic for the damp heat of Bengal. But Colonel John Adlercron, commander of the King's Regiment—a pompous little parade officer of Huguenot descent—pressed his claim with such persistence that for a time it looked as if the command would go to him.‡ Then he overstepped himself, and refused to give the required assurances that he would return to Madras if needed and reserve a share of the plunder for the Company. So

* It seems that Holwell's figures were arrived at by deducting the number of persons assumed to have been killed in the fighting, or to have escaped in the ships or at other times, from the total number of Europeans in the garrison. But it is possible to account for more persons killed, or who escaped. As well as thus getting his figures wrong, Holwell probably embroidered as to the alleged cruelty of the guards. The Black Hole was not a deliberate outrage but a tragedy resulting from a mistake on the part of one of Siraj-ud-daula's officers, who seems to have been unaware of the smallness of the room.

† There had been a Select Committee or inner council at Fort St George since 1754.

‡ Adlercron had the power to withdraw the King's troops altogether from the expedition, if he was not given the command.

the so-called Island of Cossimbazar. With the river only fordable in one place, it would have been easy enough to ferry the troops across to the island in the boats; but not nearly so easy to get them back again should by any chance the conspiracy have collapsed and the English suffered defeat.

With its success wholly dependent on the intentions of Mir Jafar and the other conspirators, Clive's march to Plassey seems more like the Jameson Raid than a rational military enterprise.¹ Not only did Clive stake everything on Mir Jafar's promises, but he also seems to have been far from clear as to what exactly *had* been promised. All Mir Jafar is recorded as having said he would do was to join the English in the event of an actual engagement between them and the Nawab's army, and perhaps seize the person of the Nawab.² But Clive, on his march north, seems to have been under the impression that Mir Jafar would join him with a large body of troops at Katwa, *before* there was any battle.³ Unless such a promise was conveyed verbally by Omar Beg when he brought the signed treaties, it would seem like wishful thinking on Clive's part. Certainly the letters which Clive and Mir Jafar exchanged during the march northward—one of them sent in a slipper—suggest that the two men were not, so to speak, on the same wavelength.

If Clive took a risk in marching, he was encouraged to do so both by the Committee and by Watts, who reckoned it was now or never. The possible consequences of his defeat have been exaggerated. Clive might have lost his army and his reputation; certainly even a small setback would have destroyed the psychological advantage over the Nawab which he had built up during the past few months. But whether, as is frequently stated, such a defeat would have led to the loss of Calcutta a second time and perhaps even to the loss of Madras, which needed Clive's troops to protect it against the French, is doubtful. True, Calcutta was only garrisoned by a handful of invalids, artillerymen and sepoy; but it was also defended by the guns of the squadron. As for Madras, Clive's troops never went back there anyhow; and yet the settlement managed to hold out.

Clive's misgivings after he had marched were not simply on account of Mir Jafar's failure to do something which he does not seem to have promised. He heard reports that the conspiracy had been exposed and that the Nawab and Mir Jafar were reconciled.⁴ The Nawab had in fact attempted to regain Mir Jafar's friendship, and the two had sworn amity on the Koran.⁵ Mir Jafar admitted in the first of his letters to Clive that there had been a reconciliation; but added: 'what we have agreed on must

2. *ibid.* II p. 399.

3. *ibid.* III p. 316.

4. *ibid.* VI

5. Scrafton. p. 84-5

6. *ibid.* VI II p. 411.

7. Watts *ibid.* p. 109.

8. Scrafton. *ibid.* p. 84.

9. *ibid.* II p. 419.

10. *ibid.* VI p. 417-20.

11. *ibid.* VI p. 421-3. *Orme MSS V.*

be done'.⁶ On the 20th, a messenger sent by Watts to Murshidabad returned having seen Mir Jafar and his son, Miran. He brought news that was scarcely encouraging. Mir Jafar would promise no more than that he would 'stand neuter'. Having sworn friendship to the Nawab on the Koran, he now felt he could not act against him.

Watts, who had never thought Mir Jafar would do much more than 'stand neuter', tried to convince Clive that his 'backwardness' was nothing to worry about.⁷ Clive, once again more cautious than his colleagues, was not so sure. Supposing he crossed on to the Island of Cossimbazar only to find that Mir Jafar and the other conspirators had really made it up with the Nawab, he would have to face an army many times stronger than his own. This fact alone was nothing new to him; nor was he necessarily thinking in terms of facing an army of 70,000 as Scrafton and others talked about after the event⁸—reports reaching him at the time put the Nawab's available forces at as little as 8000, the rest of his troops being on strike for want of pay.⁹ But the Nawab's army, whatever its strength, had the protection of the entrenched camp at Plassey. Clive would risk being cut off on the Island of Cossimbazar with the ground becoming hourly more impassable owing to the Rains.

In this critical situation, with so much depending on the doubtful word of Mir Jafar, Clive's resolution failed him. On the 17th and 19th, he wrote to the Committee, which consisted only of Drake, Manningham and Becher, asking their opinion as to what he should do next: 'I am really at a loss how to act at the present situation of our affairs.' He was, he said, unwilling to risk his force on the other side of the river unless Mir Jafar could be prevailed upon to join him; failing this, he proposed waiting at Katwa until after the Rains. There was enough food here, and his presence so close to Murshidabad would quite likely scare the Nawab into granting the English 'an honourable peace'.¹⁰ It was typical of Clive's impulsiveness that having previously come to the conclusion that no such thing as an honourable peace was possible with Siraj-ud-daula, and that the only course was to dethrone him, he now should suddenly return to his way of thinking at the time of the February Treaty. It was also a sign of how far he was from being himself that he should have suggested calling in the Marathas as an alternative, knowing as he did the dire consequences of such a step.

The Committee advised him to give battle, provided there was a good chance of success;¹¹ their reply did not reach Clive until after he had acted and been victorious. Self-confident once again, he remarked sarcastically

This was the boast that inspired Clive's most famous piece of oratory: 'When I recollect entering the Nawab's treasury at Murshidabad, with heaps of gold and silver to the right and left, and these crowned with jewels, by God, at this moment, do I stand astonished at my own moderation.'¹⁰ From what we know of the prosaic realities of the financial transactions after Plassey—haggling between the English, the Seths, Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh—we can take this as little more than an example of Clive's gift for imagery. Some years before he spoke these words, he wrote in an offhand manner of the Nawab's treasury that he 'was never there but once out of curiosity'¹¹—which sounds more like a visit to the strong-room of one's bank than to Aladdin's cave.

One can also be cynical about his boast that he refused all presents from the 'Hindu millionaires', knowing that he was offered, and accepted, a personal gift of sixteen lakhs or £180,000, from Mir Jafar, in addition to what he received as Commander-in-Chief and a member of the Committee. Having been made rich beyond all expectations by the monarch, he did not have to demean himself by accepting the money of mere subjects. And his remark about the Seths being 'anxious for their fate' is rather dubious, seeing they were his allies.

In the afternoon of the day of his arrival at Murshidabad, Clive went in state to pay his respects to Mir Jafar. He was accompanied by the son of the new Nawab, Miran, whom he knew to be one of those alleged to have plotted his murder. All the rajahs and great men of Durbar awaited him in the audience hall of the palace. Finding that Mir Jafar declined to seat himself on the *musnud* or carpet of state, Clive handed him to it, and saluted him as Nawab. He then made his submission to him by proffering the customary *nazar*, a token tribute of a few pieces of gold, and all the assembled magnates followed suit. It was, as Clive reported to the Committee, a ceremonial visit, at which no business was discussed. Perhaps this was just as well, for according to gossip Mir Jafar was in a stupor, having been roused too soon from his afternoon nap, before which, as was his habit, he had taken *bang*.^{12*}

The really important business took place on the day after the new Nawab had been seated on the *musnud*. Mir Jafar paid a return visit to Clive, and the two of them went together to the palace of the Seths, where four thousand people were employed and where the family temple was adorned, somewhat incongruously, with Dutch tiles of Old and New

* A drug made from a plant like hemp or flax which also forms the basis of an intoxicating drink.

10. Powis coll. box VI, pichmezmet Macaulay-Clive.

11. Clive to P. W.

12. Ghalib to Husain p. 128.

13. Powis coll. 1723.

Testament scenes. Since the treasury did not contain nearly enough for him to fulfil his obligations under the treaty and also pay his troops and meet other expenses, Mir Jafar suggested that the Seths should mediate between him and the English. This suited Clive, although he suspected Rai Durlabh, who was now the Nawab's chief minister, of keeping large sums hidden away. The Seths settled that the Nawab should pay half of what he owed immediately, two-thirds in money and one-third in jewels, plate and goods; and the rest in instalments over the next three years. Clive regarded this as better than he had hoped for; but neither the Committee nor Watson was satisfied. In the end, it was decided that the Company should advance the other half of what the Nawab owed the soldiers and sailors.*

The Nawab's first payment made an impressive showing when it was loaded on to a fleet of native boats during the week following the conference. Each of seventy-five boats carried a lakh of rupees in a large chest; so that almost a million sterling was thus embarked. When the boats entered the Hughli, they were joined by an escort of naval craft, and they headed downstream to Calcutta, music playing, drums beating and colours flying, past the envious eyes of the Dutch at Cinsura and of the remaining French at Chandernagore.

* The conference at the Seths' palace was, according to Orme, followed by a dramatic scene when Omichand, who had accompanied Clive to Murshidabad, learnt that he would not be receiving the twenty lakhs. 'Scrafton said to him in the Hindostan language, "Omichand, the red paper is a trick; you are to have nothing." These words overpowered him like a blast of sulphur; he sunk back, fainting, and would have fallen to the ground had not one of his attendants caught him in his arms.' It is, however, doubtful if the scene recounted by Orme ever took place. Scrafton, writing three days after it was supposed to have happened, stated that Omichand still had not found out about the two treaties, although he knew by this time that he was not going to get his money (Powis Collection, Vol. 23, Scrafton to Drake, July 3, 1757). Clive's testimony before the Select Committee of the House of Commons would seem to confirm Orme's account—'when the real treaty came to be read, the indignation and resentment in that man's countenance bars all description'. But based as it is on Clive's uncertain memory, it is less valuable evidence than Scrafton's letter which was written at the time. One suspects Clive of having taken such pleasure in tricking Omichand that he wished to present the affair in as spectacular a light as possible. Orme goes on to say that the shock drove Omichand out of his mind—a statement which, while eliciting much posthumous sympathy for him among the British public, is not true. During the eighteen months or so that remained of his life, Omichand had various dealings with the Company, the records of which make no mention of his having been insane. Clive even wrote of him to the Directors as 'a person capable of rendering you great services', though this did not prevent the old Sikh merchant from attempting to sue Clive and the Committee in the English courts.

army to flight near Condore; and in the following April, he captured the important French coastal settlement of Masulipatam. This victory led to an alliance between the English and Salabat Jang, who like his subordinate, the raja, was tired of Bussy's domination.

More immediately important than the end of French supremacy in the Deccan was the fact that Forde's expedition, by depriving Lally of reinforcements, probably saved Madras. On December 14, Lally's troops entered the Black Town, and for the next two months Fort St George stood siege. A fierce and prolonged bombardment opened a breach, and reduced much of the settlement to ruins. But Pigot and Stringer Lawrence led a gallant defence, and though the English casualties amounted to 468 killed and wounded, the Fort held out until February 16, when the appearance of the ships bringing the long-awaited reinforcements from Bombay caused the French to retire. The defence of Madras by his old friends stirred Clive's emotions. 'I would gladly have given some of my riches to have shared some of your reputation,' he told his friend Henry Vansittart. 'I know it has been a conceived opinion among the old soldiers in England that our exploits in India have been much of the same nature as those of Hernando Cortes; but your foiling such a man as M. Lally, and two of the oldest regiments of France, will induce another way of thinking.'^{6*}

2

'Every person is your friend,' wrote Mr Justice Clive to his cousin in the autumn of 1757, when the news of the recovery of Calcutta and the capture of Chandernagore reached England.⁷ But he added that popularity was 'uncertain and fluctuating'—a truism that applied only too well to Clive, whose achievements were always to meet with a mixed reception.

* One at least of Clive's Madras friends did not share in this 'reputation', and that was Orme. When Lally's success at Fort St David put Madras itself in peril, he sold his effects, wound up his affairs and booked a passage home. He gave ill-health as the reason for his departure, which in the event was postponed until after the siege; but it led to his being charged with cowardice. He was also accused of trying to extort money from Mohammed Ali (Powis Collection, Box I) and so he resigned the service and returned to England as a relatively poor man.

6. Clive MS 63 - c 10 Vansittart 20.8.1759
 7-11 Miscell.
 12 loc cit.
 13 I was
 14 loc cit.
 15. BM 29132 Scrafton to WH. 30.11.1758

The news sent Richard Clive hurrying up to Town to distribute the letters from his son among the 'Great Men'. Everyone he met said: 'Why is not the Colonel sent for home, then we may have success in England.'⁸ But when he canvassed Clive's idea of being made Governor-General, the response was unfavourable,⁹ and he found the Directors slow in proposing any concrete reward—on the contrary, Payne dissuaded the Duke of Newcastle from getting Clive an honour.¹⁰

To make up for this disappointment, Clive was praised both by the King and by the most popular English statesman of the day, William Pitt, then Foreign Secretary and Secretary for War, who had a personal interest in India, being the grandson of a Governor of Madras. The King was talking to the Commander-in-Chief, who asked if a certain young nobleman could go as a volunteer to the army of either the King of Prussia or the Duke of Brunswick. 'Pshaw!' replied the King. 'What can he learn there? If he want to learn the art of war, let him go to Clive!'¹¹

Pitt's tribute came in his speech in Parliament on the Mutiny Bill. Having referred to the disgraces that had recently attended British arms, he said: 'We had lost our glory, honour and reputation everywhere but in India. There the country had a heaven-born general who had never learned the art of war, nor was his name enrolled among the great officers who had for many years received their country's pay. Yet he was not afraid to attack a numerous army with a handful of men, and overcame them.' 'Name him!' cried the House, and Pitt went on: 'Everyone knows that I mean Colonel Clive.'¹² He then proceeded to give Clive the highest possible character, saying that to read of his exploits gave him as much pleasure as reading Quintus Curtius, the historian of Alexander the Great.¹³

But even at this moment of triumph—witnessed from the gallery by Clive's Cousin Harry—a sneer was heard. Alderman William Beckford, the West Indian millionaire, spoke of Clive as having raised himself from 'a dirty writer' to a commander-in-chief. 'Dirty writer,' exclaimed another member. 'The gentleman was a member of this House!' 'Yes!' retorted Beckford. 'For a day.'¹⁴

One is struck by how few people wrote to congratulate Clive, either in the autumn of 1757, or in the spring of 1758, when the news of Plassey reached England. In fact, Plassey seems to have made only a moderate impact on the British people. This was apparent to Scrafton from the letters he received at the end of 1758: 'Our successes here have not made the éclat that was expected,' he told Hastings, regretting that Clive himself

had not followed the news back to England, as its publicist.¹⁵ English military circles were sceptical as to whether the 'Heaven-born General' – a sobriquet that was to stick to Clive for the rest of his life, but used mainly in irony – knew anything about war, any more than did the King of Prussia.¹⁶

Such accounts as there are of Clive's fame being universal come from his family, who in the nature of things would have received many compliments about their distinguished relative. His father was in raptures. 'May Heaven', he exclaimed to his son, 'preserve you safe to Old England, where not only your friends and relations, but strangers who never saw you, will congratulate you for the glorious actions you have done your country. With what joy shall I embrace you! Oh, may I live to see that day! Your mother and sisters are sitting with me round the fire, drinking to your health and safe voyage.'¹⁷ Nine months after the news of Plassey, he still could not read the letters of his wonderful son without bursting into tears.¹⁸

Clive's son Ned, now aged four, 'a fine, upright, lively child, not handsome but a very sharp little fellow', every day drank the health of Papa, Mamma and Mir Jafar.¹⁹ It might have been of some consolation to the Nawab, among all his troubles, to know that he had made an honest English family really happy. Brother Dick and Sister Nanny, who had both been about to sail for India, in search of a fortune and a husband respectively, could now stay at home. As for Cousin Sally, Clive had promised to bring her back an Eastern prince. 'I have a taste to be a princess,' she told Margaret. 'Pray, is he a black in the Othello taste and I to be his Desdemona?'²⁰

3

'Whilst you are employed in watching the motions of a vigilant and active enemy,' wrote Clive to Admiral Pocock, in 1759, 'we are employed in bullying and keeping under the black fellows.'²¹ Chief among the 'black fellows' in question was no less a personage than the Shahzada or Crown Prince, son of the Mogul.²² At this time, the Imperial family were little more than state prisoners in the hands of their Vizier, but the Shahzada

16. HMC Lotinian C Brumfiel to Sir T. Durny 15.2.1758.
17. Pans, coll
21. Pans II Aug 1758.
22.
23. O. M. H. S. X
24. Pans I.

had managed to escape and was, as Clive put it, 'fishing in troubled waters'.²³ Having gathered a following of soldiers of fortune, he planned to invade Bihar and Bengal, overthrow Mir Jafar and assume the government of the provinces himself. He had the approval of Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oudh, who gave him troops and a useful sum of money. By February 1759, he was approaching Bihar, his army having grown to 40,000.

The Shahzada chose an opportune moment. Mir Jafar's troops were still on the point of mutiny for want of their arrears; Clive was not much better off, with the greater part of his army away in the Sarkars. Nevertheless, he was determined to give Mir Jafar the utmost support. 'Rest assured', he told him, 'that the English are your staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part.'²⁴ Meanwhile, the Shahzada addressed 'the High and Mighty Protector of the Great, Colonel Sabit Jang Bahadur', in the hope of winning him over to his side. Clive sent an answer in which, as an Imperial Commander, he pleaded that he could do nothing without the Mogul's orders.²⁵ To the Nawab, he gave a highly coloured account of the Shahzada's overtures: 'They made me offers of provinces upon provinces, with whatever my heart could desire; but could he give, as well as offer me, the whole empire of Hindostan, it would have no weight with the English.'²⁶ The popular belief that Clive resisted the temptation of becoming an independent Indian potentate may stem from this remark.

Clive's letters alone could not drive the Shahzada away, so at the end of February he had to march, taking with him all his European troops – they amounted to no more than 450 – and leaving Calcutta to be guarded by volunteers and militia. Halting at Cossimbazar, he met the Nawab and lectured him on 'his treacherous behaviour and non-payment of the people in his service'.²⁷ The two of them rode on the same elephant together with Omar Beg; there was 'more dust kicked about them' than Major John Carnac – Clive's aide-de-camp and secretary, who was down below in his palanquin – could bear.*

Clive then headed for Patna as quickly as he could, by forced marches and by river. He was joined by Miran, with a considerable army, the

* Margaret did a childish sketch of Clive, the Nawab and Omar Beg on their elephant, with Carnac far below in his palanquin. Her note on the back reads: 'This proof of my folly should not have come with so serious a letter, but for the sake of comparing the Aide-de-Camp under his master to the Laurel of Parnassus, she could not forbear sending it. Let no one see it' (Sutton Court Collection, Box I).

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II (5)

Correspondence of The Earl of Chatham, 3 vols, 1758-67.

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B XIX/2

again to your excellency the King's great anxiety for the property of his subjects concerned in the Antigallican's prize, which, from the known equity of his Catholic Majesty, the King trusts will receive a decision agreeable to justice and the friendships subsisting between the two crowns.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.
W. PITT.

MR. PITT TO THOMAS PITT, ESQ.

St. James's Square, August 28, 1757.

MY DEAR NEPHEW,

Nothing can give me greater pleasure than the approaching conclusion of a happy reconciliation in the family. Your letter to * * * is the properest that can be imagined, and, I doubt not, will make the deepest impression in his heart. I have been in much pain for you during all this unseasonable weather, and am still apprehensive, till I have the satisfaction of hearing from you, that your course of sea-bathing has been interrupted by such gusts of wind as must have rendered the sea too rough an element for a convalescent to disport in. I trust, my dearest nephew, that opening scenes of domestic comfort and family affection will confirm and augment every hour the benefits you are receiving at Brighthelmston from external and internal medical assistances. Lady Hester and Aunt

Mary⁽¹⁾ join with me in all good wishes for your health and happiness. The duplicate * * * mentions having addressed to me, has never come to hand.

I am, with truest affection, my dearest nephew,
Ever yours,
W. PITT.

THOMAS POTTER, ESQ. TO MR. PITT.

Ridgmont, September 11, 1757.

DEAR SIR,

You have received from the Duke of Bedford particular accounts of the disturbances which have happened in this county from the attempts to carry into execution the militia act.⁽²⁾ You have a right to expect from me information of all important circumstances which come under my observation, but when I know that you receive the information from those whose situation gives them

(1) Mr. Pitt's youngest sister, who died in December 1787 unmarried.

(2) "The new militia bill occasioned great disturbances. Riots were raised in several counties; the lists were forced by violence from the magistrates; Lord Robert Sutton was in danger of his life at Nottingham; the Duke of Bedford's house, near Bedford, was threatened to be demolished; the Duke of Dorset was attacked at Knowle; the Speaker himself was insulted at Guilford, and menaced in his own house at Ember-court, and could not disperse the insurrection but by promising no further steps should be taken till the next session of parliament. Under these difficulties did Mr. Pitt begin to exert his newly acquired power, and to give symptoms of more vigorous government."
— *Walpole's Geo. II.* vol. ii. p. 233.

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a right to send it, it misbecomes me to trouble you with unnecessary packets. The Duke of Bedford has left the country, Lord Ossory⁽¹⁾ is gone with him, and Lord Royston, who is the lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, has declined attending the meetings of the deputies and magistrates of this county. Considering the stake I have in this county, and the very active part I have found it necessary to take for the restoring the public peace and keeping the people within the bounds of their duty, it will not, I believe, be thought presumption, either by you or my neighbours, if I now take upon myself the further conduct of this business, and the execution of any commands which Government may think proper to give, in relation either to the past or future transactions.

Nothing can exceed the terror and apprehensions which the militia act has occasioned. Murmuring and uneasiness would have arisen from the particular provisions of the law, and the hardships which might have happened from it to individuals; but the foundation of the violence used to prevent the execution of the act was a persuasion that every man, the moment he was enrolled, would be, or was liable to be draughted out into the King's forces, and sent abroad. It was in vain to urge, in answer to this, the express words of the act of Parliament; it was in vain that men, the most respected and most beloved in their country,

⁽¹⁾ John, first Earl of Upper Ossory, member for the county of Bedford. He died in the following year.

offered to engage their private faith, that no militia-man could or would be sent out of England. The reply constantly was, and it was in the mouths of the women and children, "We cannot believe in this particular, for in this particular even the King's word has been broke; soldiers were raised in Huntingdonshire last year for Abercrombie's regiment, and we hear that the same happened in many other counties; the word and honour of the gentlemen of the country was given in the King's name that they should not go abroad, but were only to be soldiers at home, to fight against the French, and the moment they had taken the oaths they were hurried away from their country, we know not whither."

This is now the universal language, not only of the meaner people, but of the substantial farmers and yeomen of the country, under whose encouragement, and even in whose pay, the inferior people now rise in rebellion. Yet in this county, though the discontent was universal, the violences, I verily believe, would not have rose to any height but from the unparalleled timidity of those who were the objects of the first attempts. I speak this from what has happened to myself. If I had flown from the country and sent away my family, encouragement would have been given to those who were disposed to commit violences. The contrary conduct has kept every thing quiet in these parts; I have rode alone and unarmed into every assembly, and my presence and my persuasions, or

at least my threats when they were necessary, have soon dispersed the meeters.

The Duke of Bedford has acted as became him, and has shown great spirit and activity, joined to great prudence and consideration. On Friday last he met the deputy-lieutenants and magistrates at Bedford: great apprehensions were entertained by the timid, of the violences to be committed that day, and there were found men of rank who confined themselves to their houses, lest, by coming to the meeting, they should be the objects of resentment. Yet the only insurrection of that day I quieted with my own servants, the high sheriff, and ten of his javelin-men, and a party of ten light horsemen from Hawley's dragoons. It being, however, impossible to drag every man from his home to enroll him, and it being the general resolution of the persons on whom the lot had fallen not to come till compelled by force, it was judged expedient not to give up the execution of the law, as was done in other counties, but to postpone the meetings of the magistrates for the enrollment to the end of November. In the meantime, we circulate a paper signed by the lieutenant, the high sheriff, and such magistrates as dare to set their names, in order to explain the true meaning of the act; and we have engaged in our respective divisions to use our influence with the individuals who will hear reason, and to explain the true meaning and intention of the law. We have taken this method, not from an imagination that this law, as it now

stands, can ever be executed, but in order to save the honour of Government, and to quiet the minds of people, which this unhappy event has very much disturbed.

We had another point under our consideration at Bedford. The mob which insulted Sir Roger Burgoyne and Colonel Lee not only committed violence to the public-house at Biggleswade, the landlord of which spiritedly refused to deliver up the lists of men left in his custody, but they extorted money from several persons, and in particular from a clergyman, who was no magistrate, nor concerned in the execution of the law, but it seems had from his pulpit recommended obedience to the laws. In this mob it is said there are men of substance, and their names are known, and there is sufficient evidence for their conviction. We thought it not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, that public examples should be made from among the most guilty of these men; but as the same offences may have been committed in other counties, and perhaps have been general, we thought it our duty to delay further proceedings till the King's ministers should come to some resolutions about the measures to be taken.

It is on this head that I shall be ready to receive and execute the commands of Government; and I take the liberty in this manner to offer my services, because it is possible that those commands may fall into hands which are liable to be affected

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concern for this misfortune, makes us hope for better success hereafter.

You have a melancholy task indeed, affected as you justly are with this public and private sorrow, to communicate the death of Lord Howe to a brother that most tenderly loved him. No man living could do it with so much gentleness and affection; with so much honour and credit, both to the dead and to the living; and yet, perhaps a more unfeeling hand, even that of a common express or clerk of an office, would be less felt. Every circumstance of praise, every honourable testimonial of grief and of affection, must augment his present sense of this cruel blow.

I cannot go on with this subject, my dear Pitt; the unhappy resemblance touches me too nearly, and renews a pang which no time can erase.⁽¹⁾ I trust in God that Colonel Bradstreet will succeed⁽²⁾; and if General Amherst can proceed up the river, this campaign may end as gloriously as it has begun with Louisburg. We wish, most earnestly we hope, but we do not depend upon seeing you here; but if we do not, I shall endeavour to see you in London.

Adieu, my dear Pitt. I have a visitant just come

(1) Mr. Grenville alludes to the death of his brother Thomas, who was killed in the action with the French fleet off Cape Finisterre. See p. 23, note.

(2) On the 27th of August, Colonel Bradstreet did succeed in taking Fort Frontenac, on Lake Ontario, and that without the loss of a man.

in, which puts me in mind that I have already writ four sides of paper. I am ever

Your most affectionate brother,

GEORGE GRENVILLE.

COLONEL CLIVE (1) TO JOHN PAYNE, ESQ.

Calcutta, August 24, 1758.

DEAR SIR,

My letters to the committee concerning the great and happy event lately effected in this kingdom are so very full, that any thing I can write on that subject will be but a repetition of what is therein contained. I must therefore refer you to them for a particular detail of the late revolution.

I have already hinted my intention of coming home to the committee, on account of my indifferent state of health; and I may further add to you,

(1) Afterwards Lord Clive. This letter was addressed to the chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India company, and by him forwarded to Mr. Pitt; who, in the debate on the army estimates, had burst out, according to Horace Walpole, into an Eastern panegyric:—"There he found Watson, Pococke, and Clive:—what astonishing success had Watson had with only three ships, which had been laid up for some time on land! He did not stay to careen this, and condemn that, but at once sailed into the body of the Ganges. He was supported by Clive, that man, not born for a desk—that heaven-born general,—whose magnanimity, resolution, determination, and execution, would charm a King of Prussia, and whose presence of mind astonished the Indies!"—Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 276.

Sir, it is so bad this rainy season, that nothing less than the absolute necessity of your affairs can induce me to stay any longer in this unhealthy climate. Indeed, my health has been so much affected for these two months past, I have not been able to give that attention to your interest I could wish. [The new Subah's generosity has put me in a condition of enjoying my native country; and the solicitations of all my friends here to return in the squadron is so agreeable to my own wishes, that I should not hesitate one moment accepting their offers, if the interest of my benefactors was not at stake. I do not think of leaving Bengal till the Nabob is more firmly established in his new kingdom. We must again take the field in conjunction with him, sometime in October, and march to the north as soon as he is confirmed from Delhi, and acknowledged by the Mahrattas.] I shall then return to the coast with such a part of the forces as may give us the superiority over our enemies in the Carnatic.

It is with great grief of heart I see the civil branch of your affairs carried on with so little economy, diligence, or regularity. Want of capacity in some, and of attention in others, has left this once flourishing settlement in a most deplorable condition. The great power of the mayor's court has introduced, what is falsely called, the spirit of liberty here; which spirit of liberty has degenerated into anarchy and confusion, and been productive of profligacy and idleness. [A kind

of levelling principle reigns among all the inhabitants of this place. The indolence and meekness of spirit of your present governor (1) has put him below the meanest inhabitant of Calcutta. His opinions, good or bad, are overruled, his orders disobeyed, and himself despised. Without a due subordination no government can subsist. Indeed, Sir, strong words in paragraphs and threats of resentment will be of no signification here. The most speedy and vigorous steps must be taken by the Company, if they mean to effect thorough reformation in Bengal; for without it, all the great advantages, so lately gained by the sword, will be again put to the risk.

All England should be ransacked for a man of integrity and abilities to come out as supervisor-general; and, for fear of accident, he should have a second, little inferior to himself. Let temptation be put out of his reach, by confining his reward to England, and India will become a source of riches and grandeur to the Company and the nation.

Messieurs Manningham and Frankland are the only men of rank here, whose diligence and abilities can be depended upon. The integrity of the former is proof against the strictest inquiry. I cannot answer for his resolution. Courage is the gift of nature, and I do not think that any civilian can be made answerable for what was never in his possession. The ill effects arising from want of

(1) Drake.

resolution in any of your servants in time of danger, may easily be remedied by investing your president and a certain number of officers with the sole power of defending your garrisons when attacked, and rendering them responsible for their conduct to a general court-martial. Let it be a standing order in all your principal settlements, that no fortification be given up to your enemy without a breach made, and standing one assault (a want of provision and ammunition only excepted). In time of peace, Mr. Manningham will always be a credit and honour to his employers; in time of war, the above restriction will leave your succeeding presidents without a power of injuring or discrediting your affairs.

It would give me much concern to have an arbitrary construction, proceeding from my present profession, put on these general remarks. My turn of mind is so very different, and I have the liberty of an Englishman so strongly implanted in my nature, that I would have the civil all in all, at all times and in all places (cases of immediate danger excepted); where your principal settlements are attacked, I would then have those who are paid for defending your properties and estates, made answerable for the consequences.

[Be persuaded, Sir, the above are the sentiments of one whose thoughts are upon England; of one made independent by the Nabob's generosity, who has no friends or relations to serve, or any interest to promote but that of his masters and benefactors.]

Captains Fowler and Macleod deserve the Company's favour, by the zeal they have shown for the Company's interest during the present expedition.

Dear Sir, I am, with great esteem,
Your most obedient humble servant,

ROBERT CLIVE.

THE HON. GEORGE TOWNSHEND TO MR. PITT.

Bristol, August 27, 1758.

DEAR SIR,
BEFORE I enter upon the few lines of business which occasions me now to trouble you, I cannot omit presenting you with my warmest congratulations upon the possession of Louisburg; and I most sincerely rejoice that you and my friend Lord Ligonier have found officers equal to the important and decisive work you intend for their execution. As far as I can judge, the nation is as ready to support, as the army is ambitious to be employed in measures, so replete with glory and every solid advantage to this country; at least, that part of mankind with which I am acquainted is thus disposed. This, Sir, is a national spirit, in a great measure of your own raising, and those who feel they possess it promise themselves that it will, under your auspices, be carried to perfection, and to the fulfilling that good work which it is necessary for the security and honour of this country should be performed.

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venez encore, en dernier lieu, de vous expliquer au parlement sur mon sujet. (1) J'apprends de tant d'endroits les soins que vous vous donnez pour mes intérêts, que je n'ai pu me refuser la satisfaction de vous en remercier moi-même.

L'Angleterre et La Prusse se trouvent accablés par un nombre d'ennemis, qui ont conspirés contre elles. Dans un tems où l'on voit les liens forcés des Français et des Autrichiens, et l'alliance plus bizarre des Russes avec les Suédois, il falloit, pour mettre un contrepoids à tant d'entreprises, que les nœuds qui nous unissent fussent rendus indissolubles; et il n'y avoit de moyen de nous soutenir, que par une intelligence inaltérable.

Je sais, Monsieur, combien vous y avez contribué. La nature, qui m'a refusé d'autres talens, m'a donné un cœur reconnoissant, et une âme sensible, et de laquelle les services ne s'effacent jamais. Continuez, Monsieur, à soutenir comme vous le faites avec éclat les entreprises de vos compatriotes, et à montrer au monde que les intérêts de la politique sont réconciliables avec la probité et la bonne foi. Vous devez compter sur mes suffrages, et sur la résolution dans laquelle je suis de vous donner, dans toutes les occasions, des marques de mon amitié, et de mon estime.

FREDERIC.

(1) "November 23. The parliament was opened by commission. Universal approbation of all that has been, and of all that will be done. The King of Prussia's victories worth all we have given; and those he will gain worth all we shall give. Thus this country seems to think at present." — *Dodington's Diary*, p. 367.

COLONEL CLIVE TO MR. PITT.
Calcutta, January 7, 1759.

SIR,

SUFFER an admirer of yours at this distance to congratulate himself on the glory and advantage which are likely to accrue to the nation by your being at its head, and at the same time to return his most grateful thanks for the distinguished manner you have been pleased to speak of his successes in these parts, far indeed beyond his deservings. (1)

The close attention you bestow on the affairs of the British nation in general has induced me to trouble you with a few particulars relative to India, and to lay before you an exact account of the revenues of this country; the genuineness whereof you may depend upon, as it has been faithfully copied from the minister's books.

(1) Mr. Pitt, in his speech on the mutiny bill, in December, 1757, after adverting to the recent disgraces which had attended the British arms, said, "We had lost our glory, honour, and reputation every where but in India: there the country had a heaven-born general, who had never learned the art of war, nor was his name enrolled among the great officers who had for many years received their country's pay; yet was he not afraid to attack a numerous army with a handful of men." This extract of Mr. Pitt's panegyric was conveyed to Colonel Clive by his father, who concludes his letter in these words: "thus you are, with truth, honourably spoken of throughout this nation: may you continue to be so, till you return to your native country, and to the embraces of an aged father." — See *Malcolm's Life of Lord Clive*, vol. ii. p. 157.

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The great revolution that has been effected here by the success of the English arms, and the vast advantages gained to the Company by a treaty concluded in consequence thereof, have, I observe, in some measure engaged the public attention; but much more may yet in time be done, if the Company will exert themselves in the manner the importance of their present possessions and future prospects deserves. I have represented to them in the strongest terms the expediency of sending out and keeping up constantly such a force as will enable them to embrace the first opportunity of further aggrandizing themselves; and I dare pronounce, from a thorough knowledge of this country government (1), and of the genius of the people, acquired by two years' application and experience, that such an opportunity will soon offer. The reigning Subah, whom the victory at Plassey invested with the sovereignty of these provinces, still, it is true, retains his attachment to us, and probably, while he has no other support, will continue to do so; but Mussulmans are so little influenced by gratitude, that should he ever think it his interest to break with us, the obligations he owes us would prove no restraint: and this is very evident from his having very lately removed his prime minister, and cut off two or three of his principal officers, all attached to our interest, and who had a share

(1) The application is here limited to the government of Bengal.

in his elevation. Moreover, he is advanced in years; and his son is so cruel and worthless a young fellow, and so apparently an enemy to the English, that it will be almost useless trusting him with the succession. So small a body as two thousand Europeans will secure us against any apprehensions from either the one or the other, and in case of their daring to be troublesome, enable the Company to take the sovereignty upon themselves.

There will be the less difficulty in bringing about such an event, as the natives themselves have no attachment whatever to particular princes; and as, under the present government, they have no security for their lives or properties, they would rejoice in so happy an exchange as that of a mild for a despotic government; and there is little room to doubt our easily obtaining the mogul's sannud (or grant) in confirmation thereof, provided we agree to pay him the stipulated allotment out of the revenues. That this would be agreeable to him can hardly be questioned, as it would be so much to his interest to have these countries under the dominion of a nation famed for their good faith, rather than in the hands of people who, a long experience has convinced him, never will pay him his proportion of the revenues, unless awed into it by the fear of the imperial army marching to force them thereto.

But so large a sovereignty may possibly be an object too extensive for a mercantile company; and it is to be feared they are not of themselves

able, without the nation's assistance, to maintain so wide a dominion. I have therefore presumed, Sir, to represent this matter to you, and submit it to your consideration, whether the execution of a design, that may hereafter be still carried to greater lengths, be worthy of the government's taking it into hand.

I flatter myself I have made it pretty clear to you, that there will be little or no difficulty in obtaining the absolute possession of these rich kingdoms; and that with the mogul's own consent, on condition of paying him less than a fifth of the revenues thereof. Now I leave you to judge, whether an income yearly of upwards of two millions sterling, with the possession of three provinces abounding in the most valuable productions of nature and of art, be an object deserving the public attention; and whether it be worth the nation's while to take the proper measures to secure such an acquisition, — an acquisition which, under the management of so able and disinterested a minister, would prove a source of immense wealth to the kingdom, and might in time be appropriated in part as a fund towards diminishing the heavy load of debt under which we at present labour.

Add to these advantages the influence we shall thereby acquire over the several European nations engaged in the commerce here, which these could no longer carry on but through our indulgence, and under such limitations as we should think fit to prescribe. It is well worthy consideration, that

this project may be brought about without draining the mother country, as has been too much the case with our possessions in America. A small force from home will be sufficient, as we always make sure of any number we please of black troops, who, being both much better paid and treated by us than by the country powers, will very readily enter into our service.

Mr. Walsh, who will have the honour of delivering you this, having been my secretary during the late fortunate expedition, is a thorough master of the subject, and will be able to explain to you the whole design, and the facility with which it may be executed, much more to your satisfaction, and with greater perspicuity, than can possibly be done in a letter. I shall therefore only further remark, that I have communicated it to no other person but yourself; nor should I have troubled you, Sir, but from a conviction that you will give a favourable reception to any proposal intended for the public good.

The greatest part of the troops belonging to this establishment are now employed in an expedition against the French in the Deccan; and, by the accounts lately received from thence, I have great hopes we shall succeed in extirpating them from the province of Golconda, where they have reigned lords paramount so long, and from whence they have drawn their principal resources during the troubles upon the coast.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts made

by the French in sending out M. Lally with a considerable force the last year, I am confident, before the end of this, they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic, unless some very unforeseen event interpose in their favour. (1) The superiority of our squadron, and the plenty of money and supplies of all kinds which our friends on the coast will be furnished with from this province, while the enemy are in total want of every thing, without any visible means of redress, are such advantages as, if properly attended to, cannot fail of wholly effecting their ruin in that as well as in every part of India.

May your zeal, and the vigorous measures projected for the service of the nation, which have so eminently distinguished your ministry, be crowned with all the success they deserve, is the most fervent wish of him who is, with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most devoted humble servant,

ROB. CLIVE. (2)

(1) These predictions were verified to the very letter.

(2) Mr. Walsh, by whom the letter was sent, gave to Colonel Clive, on the 26th of November, an account of his interview with Mr. Pitt, of which the following is the substance: — "Mr. Pitt received me with the utmost politeness, and we had a tête-à-tête for an hour and a quarter. He began on the subject of your letter. I said I was apprehensive that he looked upon the affair as chimerical: he assured me, not at all, but very practicable; but that it was of a very nice nature. He mentioned the Company's charter not expiring these twenty years; that upon some late transactions it had been inquired into, whether the Company's conquests and acquisitions belonged to them or the Crown, and the judges seemed to think to the Company. He said the Company were not proper to have it, nor the Crown, for such

ANDREW MITCHELL, ESQ. TO MR. PITT.

(Private.)

Breslaw, January 8, 1759.

Sir,

It is to me matter of the greatest satisfaction to be able to assure you, that his Prussian Majesty is highly pleased with the measures pursued by the King's ministers, and with the fair, candid, and honest manner in which they have behaved to him. If any thing could add to the joy I felt on this occasion, it was to hear the King of Prussia make the parallel between his former ally and the present, and a comparison between the behaviour of the French and of the English ministers.

But, Sir, amidst general applause it would be unjust to conceal from you the very particular and distinguished approbation with which that monarch has been pleased to honour your conduct; the Prussian ministers at London having transmitted to their master an account of what you said in the House of Commons, when it was proposed to address the King not to deliver up Louisburg to

a revenue would endanger our liberties; and that you had shown your good sense by the application of it to the public. He said the difficulty of effecting the affair was not great, under such a genius as Colonel Clive; but the sustaining it was the point: it was not probable he would be succeeded by persons equal to the task." — See *Malcolm's Life of Lord Clive*, vol. ii. p. 127.

that I could not suppose that any difficulty was made by him to accept the post, on the footing his Majesty had been so gracious to tell me and the rest of his servants that he meant he should hold it. To which his Majesty directly replied, "Not in the least. I have thoroughly explained to him, that he holds the office detached of every ministerial power whatever;" and that he could not conceive from whence could arise any reports of doubt on the subject, and that it could come from no good wisher to his affairs. Thus, my Lord, having heard the King repeat again the conditions on which he held it, and his assuring me that Mr. Mackenzie was well informed of it also, I concluded that there never had been a doubt, or, if there was, that it had immediately been stopped in the closet. He kissed hands, and in his behaviour was very civil to me. (1)

(1) When Mr. Stuart Mackenzie first received the privy seal of Scotland, in 1763, he was assured by the King that his appointment was for life: the Duke of Bedford, however, in 1765, apprehensive of being considered under the influence of Lord Bute, deprived him of the situation. Lord Chatham, regarding this removal as a flagrant violation of the royal promise, unmindful of the odium which might attach to the measure, made this reparation of the King's private honour one of the first acts of his new ministry. For this measure of justice he was assailed with all the virulence of party malice; and though he had recently declared in parliament, that he would not submit to be minister where he felt an over-ruling influence, and that his objection to Lord Bute was personal and not national, he was decried as the dupe of that noble lord, and told, that "as he had been caught in a Scotch trap, he must get out of it as well as he could." See "An Enquiry into the Conduct of a late Right Honourable Commoner."

The East India chairman and deputy are desired to be at my house to-morrow at seven o'clock, where Lord Chancellor and the two secretaries are to dine. I mean also to invite Charles Townshend. I have enclosed the words which Lord Shelburne had from your Lordship. After having repeated the substance of them, I mean to deliver it in writing to them, as a fuller justification of the King's servants, if you approve of it. Though I look upon it as a certainty that this matter must have a parliamentary enquiry, would your Lordship have the word *certainly* or those *in all likelihood* inserted in the place of the other? (1)

(1) When the news reached England of the re-establishment of the East India Company's affairs, and of the immense acquisitions that had been gained for them by the various treaties concluded by Lord Clive, the price of stock rose, and there was a clamorous demand for an increase in the dividends; which, during the war, had been reduced from eight to six per cent. This was opposed by the directors, on the ground that though many advantages had been acquired, great debts had been incurred, and that the payment of debts ought to precede the division of profits. Not convinced by this reasoning, at the next general quarterly court of the proprietors it was carried by a majority of 340 against 231, that the yearly dividend should be increased to ten per cent. It was at this time that the government sent the message to the directors hinted at in the above letter, importing, "that as the affairs of the East India Company had been mentioned in parliament last session, it was very probable they might be taken into consideration again; and therefore, from the regard they had for the welfare of the Company, and in order that they might have time to prepare their papers for that occasion, they informed them that the parliament would meet in November."

I shall be happy to hear that your Lordship is better; and beg leave to assure you that I am always, with the most profound respect,

Your Lordship's

most faithful

humble servant,

GRAFTON.

THE KING TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Richmond Lodge, August 29, 1766.
5 m. past 4, p. m.

LORD CHATHAM,

I was much pleased at learning this day from Lord Bristol that your gout is diminishing. When it is quite removed, a journey to Bath will, I make no doubt, secure you from any fresh attack during the winter.

The enclosed letter from Sir Andrew Mitchell⁽¹⁾ has given me great pleasure, as he seems very thoroughly to enter into what is proposed, in the very light it is viewed here.

GEORGE R.

(1) Sir Andrew Mitchell's letter to Mr. Conway, of the 21st of August; an extract of which is given at p. 46.

THE HONOURABLE THOMAS WALPOLE TO THE
EARL OF CHATHAM.

London, September 9, 1766.

MY LORD,

THERE is good reason to believe the treaties concluded in Bengal by Lord Clive, will be productive of a clear yearly revenue of two millions sterling. An object of this importance would, in a few years, ease this country of the burden it labours under; and therefore our whole wills should be set to make this revenue as durable as possible.

All other speculations should give way to this consideration of permanency; even the existence of the India Company, the benefit of whose trade, from the beginning of their charter, is not to be compared to a few years' preservation of the present object.

Such a balance in favour of this country, whether managed by a particular body of men or by the public treasury, may be matter of pure speculation, in comparison to securing it, one way or the other; but if the East India Company is unequal to the task, their legal rights can be only considered as they combine with the good of the whole; and government would be blamed for trusting so great an acquisition in hands too weak to hold it.

The annual choice of directors may very well serve the temporary purposes of trade, which is

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Second Son of Horatio, first Lord Walpole of Wolterton. He was an eminent merchant and banker in London, in partnership with Mr Joshua Vaneck, whose daughter he married. He sat in various parliaments; and died in 1803.

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always fluctuating, and the circumstances of which they must rather follow than direct; but such a floating and uncertain authority can never be equivalent to a steady system of government over distant countries, where those trusted with the executive parts are doubtful how long their authority may last, and only intent on the speediest methods of enriching themselves. Their riches are afterwards successfully employed here to prevent any scrutiny into their conduct, either by intimidating the directors, or choosing in their stead a sufficient number of their friends to prevent all enquiry. Hence have arisen all the wicked policy, mischiefs, and dissensions, which have annually brought the East India Company to the brink of ruin.

The present constitution, therefore, of the Company seems very inadequate to their situation; and whether it can be so framed as to give it proper energy is beyond my conception. If not, it is absolutely necessary government should take the charge of that which is too unwieldy for a subordinate body of merchants; allowing them such a compensation as may be equitable, all things considered.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ By a reference to Vol. I. p. 389., it will be seen, that Lord Clive, so early as the year 1759, had drawn the attention of Mr. Pitt to this important question, and had expressed his conviction, that so large a sovereignty was an object too extensive for a mercantile company. In a letter from Mr. Walsh to Lord Clive, written in May 1766, shortly after the news had arrived of his lordship's negotiation with the vizier, and of the

What this ought to be will gradually open itself, in the progress of examination into the Company's affairs; and probably in that discussion many circumstances will contribute to favour whatsoever plan government shall think wisest to adopt. In the meanwhile, it seems necessary to induce Lord Clive to continue in Bengal till this important business is settled here, and some person appointed to succeed his Lordship, with sufficient means to preserve what his Lordship's astonishing influence in that part of the world has so happily acquired.

The wise step already taken by your Lordship's advice is gratefully felt by every honest and disinterested person in the city. It has given a new bias to the minds of men; cooled the inflamed hopes of some, relieved the fears of others; and added weight to those who have no further views than the just security of their property, and to see the India trade preserved in the degree of credit it

subsequent peace, that gentleman says, "I am very sorry you did not write a few lines to Mr. Pitt, to conciliate him to your negotiations. He has left us for Pynsent, where he is doing great things. I spoke a few words to him, just as he left the House of Commons, telling him you had, in great measure, carried into execution what I had once the honour of laying before him; to which he answered, that he had heard of the great things you had done; that you had acquired great honour; but that they were too vast: for some time he had been dissatisfied with our proceedings there; however, he was very glad to hear that Lord Clive was well, and that he had not gone up to Delhi. This was all that passed between us, whilst he was getting on his great coat. One word from him would go far in making or unmaking the Company." — See Malcolm's Life of Lord Clive, vol. iii. p. 189.

deserves, by bringing fairly before the proprietors and the public the state of their affairs; which may now be settled upon a solid foundation, and not proceed any longer under a concealment, which nothing but a desperate state could justify. I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient and
most humble servant,
THOMAS WALPOLE.

THE RIGHT HON. HANS STANLEY TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Gentlemen's Hotel, King Street, St. James's,
September 11, 1766.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAD the honour of seeing his Majesty yesterday; though the hour was late, on account of a council, and several other audiences which preceded mine, he was pleased to enter into the business of my commission, with his usual goodness and affability. I had an opportunity of observing, what I had before more than once admired, the great accuracy of his Majesty's memory in recollecting the various parts of so involved, so long, and sometimes so contradictory a correspondence, as that which I have lately perused; and I had the satisfaction of finding his better judgment concur with my poor opinion, in all the material inferences and deductions drawn from thence, many of which he was pleased to

suggest to me before I had mentioned them. He is convinced not only of the prudence, but the necessity of following one plain, direct, and simple path in the negotiation upon the line of the alliance actually subsisting between Russia and Prussia. I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your most obedient
and most humble servant,
H. STANLEY.

THE REV. EDWARD WILSON TO THE COUNTESS OF CHATHAM.

Weymouth, September 13, 1766.

MADAM,

I HAVE the pleasure to inform you, that all my pupils⁽¹⁾ are very well and very good. Lady Hester and Mr. Pitt still continue to surprise and astonish as much as ever; and I see no possibility of diminishing their ardour, either by too much business or too much relaxation. When I am alone reading, Mr. Pitt, if it is any thing he may attend to, constantly places himself by me, where his steady attention and sage remarks are not only entertaining but useful; as they frequently throw a light upon the subject, and strongly impress it on my memory.

(1) Of Lord Chatham's three sons, John, William, and James-Charles, the respective ages at this time were ten, seven, and five. Lady Hester had nearly completed her eleventh, and Lady Harriet her eighth year.

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execute what the King desires in Portugal; and Sir Joseph Yorke still declining Spain, through a persuasion that he can regain Prince Lewis to favour, a civil note from whom he encloses to General Conway, I have sent to Lord Buckingham (1) to come to town, and expect to find him on my return.

I shall be glad to have your Lordship's advice, at your leisure, in regard to a governor of Jamaica. It is most material that a fit person should go there, and soon; for the lieutenant-governor has to gain the favour of the people there. Your Lordship may, perhaps, at the same time, make this appointment assist other arrangements. I know Mr. Fitzherbert (2), at the board of trade, in general looks that way.

vernor of South Carolina; in 1760, governor of Jamaica; and in October 1766, envoy-extraordinary to the King of Portugal. In 1776, he was created Baron Westcote of Ballymore, in the county of Longford; and in 1794, a British peer by the title of Lord Lyttelton, which had become extinct in 1779 by the death of his nephew, the second lord. He died in 1808.

(1) John Hobart, second Earl of Buckinghamshire. In 1762, he was appointed ambassador to the court of Petersburg; and in 1776, lord-lieutenant of Ireland. He died in 1793.

(2) William Fitzherbert, of Tissington, esquire, at this time member for Derby, and one of the lords of trade, which situation he continued to hold till January 1772, when he terminated his own existence; "owing," says Dr. Johnson, "to imaginary difficulties in his affairs, which, had he talked of with a friend, would soon have vanished." The whole tenor of his life is acknowledged to have been a constant series of public and private acts of beneficence. In parliament, he distinguished himself as the promoter of every measure tending to advance the internal prosperity of the community. In him originated

Nothing can be so satisfactory as the state of India business is become. Notwithstanding the communication of government, the advice of the directors and of the honestest proprietors, they came to a declaration of increase of dividend by a great majority, composed of factious sets of men, and appointed the Thursday after to go greater lengths as to Lord Clive, &c.; but though the majority was very great, the public confidence did not follow it, and the stock stood; till they have been obliged, to prevent its falling, to retreat, and join the others in a general language of entire confidence in parliament. (1)

Your Lordship's
most faithful servant,
SHELBURNE.

many of the legislative provisions which have so materially contributed to the embellishment of the metropolis, and to the health, safety, and comfort of its inhabitants.

(1) The following account of a conversation with Lord Chatham on the affairs of the East India Company, which took place at Bath a few days subsequent to the date of the above, is contained in a letter from Mr. Walsh to Lord Clive:—

"Soon after the new administration was formed, the chairman and deputy chairman were sent for to the cabinet council, and were acquainted that, as the affairs of the India Company were likely to be taken into consideration by parliament, it would be proper for them to be prepared. An intimation of the kind could not fail to alarm, and affect the stock greatly. The quarterly court being over, I made an excursion to Bath, where Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, and Lord Northington were assembled. My private motive for this journey was to discover their disposition towards the Company; and, by means of my intimacy with Lord Camden, to endeavour to put you

P.S. There has been a large correspondence of the Duke of Choiseul's deciphered, which shows

on a good footing with Lord Chatham, who, there was some reason to apprehend, was not the best disposed either towards you, the present direction, or the Company. I recollected Lord Chatham's discourse to me (see p. 62.) about your acquisitions being too vast, and saw Shelburne, Barré, and the enemies of the present direction in the highest employes. Lord Camden immediately removed my apprehensions as to any thing hostile being intended against the Company. I told him that I was ignorant whether the directors had given the administration full information concerning the affairs of Bengal; but whatever their conduct might have been in that respect, I, as acting for Lord Clive, should use no kind of reserve with the administration; that Lord Clive, though a zealous servant of the Company, ever considered his duty to his country to be the first and greatest obligation upon him; that he had formerly submitted to Lord Chatham's consideration, whether the Bengal acquisitions were an object for the state or the Company (see Vol. i. p. 389.); and that, though the Company had in a manner been left to pursue their own measures in that respect, yet it was reasonable that, in such great prosperity as theirs, they should contribute liberally to the exigencies of the state; that your friends would readily concur in such a measure, and that I wished for an opportunity of assuring Lord Chatham of this; but as I knew him, particularly in his present ill state of health, to be inaccessible, I requested his lordship to report it to him. He advised my writing a note to see Lord Chatham, which I accordingly did, and was admitted; though it was then a favour, as I understood, he had only granted to Lord Camden. I should have mentioned that, before I left town, I waited on General Conway; made him the same offer of information; gave him a state of the revenues, and pointed out to him some of the means by which the commerce of the Company might be greatly advanced. He appeared quite unacquainted with these affairs, but very desirous to be informed.

It was the 11th of October that I saw Lord Chatham. I told him the occasion of my visit in almost the same words I had used to Lord Camden: in answer to which, after complimenting me on the purity, as he styled it, of my intentions, and

his sentiments very much at large. The Spaniards are in the same situation, in all appearance much embarrassed about Falkland's Islands; the ambassador seems to wait the return of his last courier.

of the liberal way in which I had considered this matter, he told me that all *matters of fact* relating to India would be very acceptable to him, though he did not wish to receive *propositions* on that head, as the affair was of too extensive and too difficult a nature for ministers to determine; that they could not undertake to decide, between the state and the Company, what was precisely proper for each; that the consideration must of necessity come into parliament; that by the means of so many gentlemen coming from different parts of the kingdom, and turning the subject different ways in their minds, many new lights might be gathered; that the crown had nothing to do in the affair, and that its ministers could only interfere in preventing unreasonableness and oppressions on one side or the other; and that the Company, in all cases, must subsist. On my giving him the state of the revenues, he seemed much surprised at the smallness of the amount, saying that Holwell and common report had made it much larger. He spoke very handsomely of you; said that he heard with concern of the virulent publications against you; that it was incumbent on the Company to support you strongly, and likewise to reward you. I mentioned how greatly the Company's commerce might be extended with the assistance of government; hinted the necessity there was of excluding foreigners from being stockholders, and sharing in our benefits; and concluded with observing, that every thing I had heard from him gave me the highest satisfaction, except the impracticability that he intimated of any arrangement between the administration and the directors before the meeting of Parliament.

"This is the substance of my conversation with this great man, who is certainly not only the most vigorous, but the most comprehensive and judicious minister this country ever had. I hope, in consequence of what I before wrote to you, that you have taken steps to conciliate and attach him. He has a greatness in himself, which makes him feel and assert the great actions of others."

very adequate abilities to the important work, will also carry another necessary ingredient to a foreign minister, I mean a cheerful and zealous attachment to the great business with which he is charged. He did indeed express at first some doubts, more of modesty than disinclination; though as to wishes, they certainly did not lead him again abroad: but I must do him justice in saying, that a very commendable sense of duty to the King and true zeal for his Majesty's service soon determined his resolution; and he obeys the King's gracious commands with becoming cheerfulness and devotion to that duty. The continuation of the pension granted as a reward of past services seems very unexceptionable, and I understand has been already favourably received when your Lordship mentioned it.

I am happy to hear that the special commission was ready for signing, and I will trust that no delays can happen in your Lordship's power to prevent. My Lord Chancellor will not fail to cooperate in expediting this necessary and much desired measure. Accept, my dear Lord, my best acknowledgments for the trouble you have allowed me to give you, with regard to the intended offer of the embassy; in which matter Mr. Conway has been very obliging to drop his intention. Your Lordship's goodness in facilitating my wishes for Lord Cardross claims likewise many warm thanks. As I hope to have the pleasure of embracing your Lordship by the middle of next week, I will not

touch on business, foreign or domestic, further than to say, I wish either topic were more inviting. I am, with truest esteem and respect,

My dear Lord, your Lordship's
most obedient and affectionate
humble servant,
CHATHAM. (1)

(1) The parliament met on the 11th of November. The scarcity formed the principal topic of the King's speech. The address was opposed in both Houses, and amendments moved, importing an intention to bring in a bill to indemnify those who had advised the embargo. No details of the debate have been preserved in any collection; but the speech of Lord Chatham, who was sufficiently recovered to take his seat this day in the House of Lords, will be found ably reported in the following letter from Mr. Henry Flood to the Earl of Charlemont:— "Opposition began with Lord Suffolk. It was urged, that the matter treated of being illegal, a bill of indemnity would be necessary to indemnify the persons concerned, and the constitution: it was added, that parliament might and ought to have been called sooner, and that if it had, perhaps this illegal act might have been avoided.

"Lord CHATHAM (who began with a very eloquent description of his feelings, from the new situation in which he spoke, in an unaccustomed place, before the most knowing in the laws, in the presence of the hereditary legislators of the realm, whilst he could not look upon the throne without remembering that it had just been filled by majesty, and by all the tender virtues which encompass it), allowed, that it was physically possible to have called the parliament a fortnight or three weeks sooner, consistently with the order of prorogation subsisting at the time when the alarm was first suggested; but that this, instead of being of service, would have been detrimental, for that it would have deprived the country, in the very article of danger, of the presence of the principal persons of it, whose authority had been of so much weight in suppressing these tumults. That this was the fact certainly; and though it could not be pretended that this was exactly foreseen, yet he could not but rejoice that

THE RIGHT HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY TO
THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Little Warwick Street, November 22, 1766.

MY LORD,

I HAD the honour of your Lordship's note, acquainting me with the intention of dismissing Lord

nothing was done to deprive the country of such an effectual interposition: that parliament now met earlier than usual, and that it was not in itself desirable to hurry away upon every rumour all the principal persons of the nation from every extremity of the kingdom, and to crowd them into the metropolis. That such a conduct would be a mark of weakness and temerity, especially in a country in which sudden distresses are so liable to be created and aggravated, either from lucrative views, or from a factious spirit. That had he advised the calling of parliament upon the first intelligence he received, (which was but a suggestion of apprehended scarcity, and could be no more, as the harvest was not threshed out or known) he would justly have been censured for the alarm to the public, and the inconvenience to individuals, which a precipitate convention of parliament must have occasioned; a step which would have created an imaginary scarcity, though a real one had not existed. That these considerations determined his Majesty, with the advice of his council, to issue that order of prorogation under which parliament now met: that under the former prorogation parliament could not meet consistently with usage, for that it was always usual in the last proclamation of prorogation preceding the session, to declare the parliament to be prorogued to a certain day, then to *meet for the despatch of business*, — a material notification not inserted in the former, because it was not decided to meet then. That a new prorogation therefore was necessary, and that the usage was never to give less than forty days' notice. That this was a very salutary custom, and that nothing could be so perilous as sudden and surreptitious conventions of parliament. That it might well be considered as the law of usage and of parliament, though not perhaps of the land, that

Edgecumbe, on account of his having refused the bed-chamber in lieu of the treasurership of the house-

not less than forty days' notice should be given; that therefore the prorogation could not properly have been for less than forty days. That indeed parliament was by this last proclamation prorogued for somewhat more than forty days; but that this was done when only a surmise of scarcity had been suggested before the threshing out of the harvest, and whilst the danger had only been talked of, not expected. That it was some time after this prorogation before the conjecture of scarcity was verified, and the riots began: and that then the time for meeting of parliament was publicly fixed, and the interval could not be shortened except by calling parliament suddenly, contrary to proclamation, and with a stretch of power, and a precedent infinitely more dangerous than the delay of their meeting, and the issuing of the embargo. That this indeed was so illegal, that the legislature had thought it necessary, by a particular clause in the militia bill, to empower the crown to call parliament, in the particular cases of actual invasion or rebellion, in fourteen days, notwithstanding any prorogation to the contrary. That this delay therefore arising from parliament's being prorogued for somewhat more than forty days was not faulty at the time, no danger being in probable expectation then which could require an earlier meeting: that after the proclamation the delay was unavoidable; and that, in fact, it was so far from being detrimental, that it had been advantageous. He ridiculed the stress which had been laid upon the possibility of calling parliaments fourteen or fifteen days sooner, and of setting every member of parliament in the kingdom upon a horse to ride post up to London: and having thus defended the time of calling parliament, he proceeded to defend the issuing of the embargo during the interval of parliament by legal authority, as an act of *power, justifiable* before parliament on the ground of necessity; and read a paragraph of Mr. Locke to show, that though it was not strictly speaking *legal*, yet that it was *right* in the opinion of that great friend of liberty, that constitutional philosopher and liberal statesman.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Conway moved for leave to bring in a bill for protecting the persons acting under the

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THE EARL OF BRISTOL TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM⁽¹⁾

St. James's Square, December 29, 1766.

MY LORD,

The purport of my writing at present is to acquaint your Lordship, that Mr. Flood was with

⁽¹⁾ Lord Chatham was at this time at Bath; the two houses having, on the 13th of December, adjourned till the 16th of January. "We have had a busy month," writes Horace Walpole to Mr. Montagu, "and many grumbles of a state-quake; but the session has, however, ended very triumphantly for the great Earl. I mean, we are adjourned for the holidays for above a month, after two divisions of 166 to 48, and 140 to 56. It is to be regretted, that no reports of the proceedings of this "busy month" should have been preserved. The following brief sketch of what took place in the House of Commons on the 25th of November is contained in a letter from Mr. Henry Flood to Lord Charlemont:—

"The affair of the embargo, aggravated by the multitude of private discontents which mingled with it, produced a ferment, and encouraged all the parties that are unsatisfied to join against Lord Chatham on Tuesday last. Beckford was chosen by him to make a motion for examining into the state of the East India Company. This motion contained offensive matter, and was offensively introduced. Our friend Burke rose first in opposition, and acquitted himself very honourably. Yorke, G. Grenville, Thurlow, Rigby, Dowdeswell, Wedderburne, all joined. Charles Townshend stated the matter quite new; disclaimed all the offensive parts, and made a very artful, conciliating, able, and eloquent speech. Barré, Conway, the attorney-general, the master-of-the-rolls, Hans Stanley, &c., spoke in favour of the general ground of the motion; upon the whole, however, there was little concert, and not much ability in the defence. The opponents were more successful upon the whole, though no one person near Townshend. He is the orator; the rest are speakers. I have heard him frequently this time, and always well: one remarkable speech of his I missed, but I went to see him the day after; I lamented the loss I had sustained by my absence, and he remedied it by speaking excellently on the same subject to me in his room. The ques-

me this morning to take his leave of me, as he is obliged to return to Dublin; but he said he had so

tion was carried in favour of the resolution, amended by Conway, by 129 to 76. The Bedfords, Rockingham, Portland, Devonshire, Temple, Grenville, Yorke, and the friends of the Company all united. Some of Lord Bute's were against administration, some went away, and Oswald and Elliott were silent. Hamilton voted with the minority, but did not speak."

Sir Matthew Fetherstonehaugh, member for Portsmouth, and a considerable proprietor of India stock, in a letter to Lord Clive of the 30th of December, thus describes some of these debates:—

"In a question like this, about the right of property and the forfeiture of a charter, one would have thought that the opinion of almost all the lawyers in the house might have been attended to; but they were called by Colonel Barré 'a sort of heavy artillery, which did little execution; for which the master of the rolls called him, instead of the honourable gentleman, the valiant gentleman. Mr. Grenville, on both days, defended the Company's rights with a force that was unanswerable, always declaring that, if the Company wanted the renewal of their term, or any other favour from the public, they should be made to pay for it, in the best bargain which could be made for the public; but protesting against extorting money from them by the terror and threats of parliamentary power. But the finest piece of oratory was Mr. Burke's, late secretary to Lord Rockingham. After pointing out the ill effects which so violent a measure might have on the public credit,—'But perhaps,' said he, 'this house is not the place where our reasons can be of any avail: the great person who is to determine on this question may be a being far above our view; one so immeasurably high, that the greatest abilities (pointing to Mr. Townshend), or the most amiable dispositions that are to be found in this house (pointing to Mr. Conway), may not gain access to him; a being before whom "thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers (waving his hand all this time over the treasury-bench, which he sat behind), all veil their faces with their wings;" but though our arguments may not reach him, probably our prayers may!' He then apostrophised into a solemn prayer to the Great Minister above, that

great a desire of paying his respects to your Lordship, that instead of setting forward to go by Chester directly, he would go down to Bath, on purpose to visit the Earl of Chatham. I imagine he will be at your Lordship's door on Thursday next. He was so much hurt before at not having been with your Lordship, that I really must entreat it as a very great favour that you will be so good as to have some conversation with him. I have reason to hope he is well inclined; but I know not how great a disservice it may be to me in Ireland, if any unexpected course should make him go back without being admitted to your Lordship. I believe his sentiments about the septennial bill coincide with your Lordship's; but I told him very truly, that as I had flattered myself to the last moment you would have found time to talk with him, I never opened upon business with him; choosing rather he should know from the fountain-head what system was intended, and what measures would be pursued, as the whole would come to him with more dignity, propriety, and clearness from your Lordship than it could be suggested by me; that I had done enough to

rules and governs over all, to have mercy upon us, and not to destroy the work of his own hands; to have mercy on the public credit, of which he had made so free and large a use. 'Doom not to perdition that vast public debt, a mass seventy millions of which thou hast employed in rearing a pedestal for thy own statue.' Here Augustus Hervey called him to order, to the regret of many."

evince my own disposition to him, to the Earl of Tyrone, and to all their connections; that as I had no commands from the King, but such as were for the general good, nor any purpose to serve for myself or my family, I meant not to govern by any faction or party, but would rely on the support of those who had the national interest at heart, and should seek to distinguish those who were eminent for their integrity and their abilities; and therefore I would hope to have him my friend.

This is, as nearly as I can recollect, what passed between us; but he will explain himself more fully to your lordship. I shall not presume to add my own wishes or opinions more minutely at present; you, my Lord, can secure him to government by your weight. I shall be convinced whatever turns out will be for the best. I have the honour of being, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged, most
devoted, and most humble servant,
BRISTOL.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO HENRY FLOOD, ESQ.

Bath, Friday, January 1, 1767.

LORD CHATHAM, who is just returned to Bath, presents his compliments to Mr. Flood, and will be very glad of the honour of seeing him to-morrow evening, at seven o'clock, if that hour be convenient to Mr. Flood.

HENRY FLOOD, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Saturday Evening.
[January 3, 1767.]

MY LORD,

EVER since I had the honour to pay my respects to your Lordship at Bath, I have continued to labour under a severe feverish disorder, which at that time lay so heavy on me, that I am conscious I was wholly incapable of explaining myself with any degree of exactness or propriety. I wished to have acquainted your Lordship with the sentiments of some gentlemen, who have done me more honour than I deserve in permitting me to do so, and to whom, therefore, I think myself responsible; on which consideration alone I presumed to trouble your Lordship with any such explanation. But as I am sensible that, in the state in which I then was, I must have been wholly unequal to so delicate a task, I think it my duty to express my sense of it to your Lordship, inasmuch as I should not wish, by so imperfect a detail, to be the possible instrument of the smallest misconception either as to men or things, with respect to any person, and least of all, with respect to that person for whom I have the highest reverence. I have the honour to be, my Lord, &c. &c.

HENRY FLOOD.⁽¹⁾

(1) That the result of this meeting was not entirely satisfactory to Mr. Flood still further appears from the following passage in a letter addressed to him by Lord Charlemont, on the 13th:—

THE RIGHT HON. CHARLES TOWNSHEND TO THE
EARL OF CHATHAM.

Downing Street, January 1, 1767.

MY LORD,

I DID not trouble your Lordship with any letter upon the conclusion of the last general court, because there was nothing, neither in the passages of that meeting nor in the result of it, material enough to require a particular communication: the result your Lordship must have heard before you left London; and it was difficult to form any probable expectation of any man's future conduct from the part which he took in a day circumstanced as that was; for the same reasons, I have not judged it necessary to write to your Lordship since, being very apprehensive of becoming in any degree answerable for events, which turn upon so great a

“Your interview with the Patagonian has turned out pretty much as I expected. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, or for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than for a politician to lay aside disguise, or for a minister *here* to think as we would wish, with regard to our affairs. A great deal was, no doubt, to be expected from *his* peculiar character; but that characters, even the highest, almost always vary with a change in situation, the difference between this and your former conference is, I think, an incontestible proof. Indeed, my dearest Flood, we must depend upon ourselves alone. Firmness, as you well observe, may gain, or the want of it lose, every thing. I am, however, extremely glad that you have seen and conversed with him, and highly approve of every thing you said: his being made acquainted with what I am proud to call *our* way of thinking may be of the greatest advantage.”

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variety of persons, influenced and changed every hour by such a succession of views, passions, and interests, and in which a man of any experience in life must see the danger of authorising any sanguine ideas whatever.

But, my Lord, in the general court of yesterday a motion was made to empower the directors to treat with administration, and it passed without a division, in a fuller court than the last: it was moved by Mr. Franks, a person of excellent character and a great proprietor, supported by Sir James Hodges and Mr. Wedderburn, Mr. Walpole, and others; opposed by Mr. M'Intosh, Mr. Dempster, and Mr. Johnston. I enclose a copy of the motion⁽¹⁾, and also of another made by Sir James Hodges⁽²⁾, and soon after withdrawn by him,

(1) "That it is the opinion of this court, to empower the directors to treat with administration upon all such points in the general state of the affairs of the Company as they shall judge to be most requisite and conducive to the extending their commerce, securing their possessions, and perpetuating the prosperity of the Company, in order to endeavour to bring about an amicable conclusion." — N.B. Mr. Walpole moved to insert *recommend* instead of *empowered*; which was carried, upon the distinction that the directors had the power, by the constitution of the Company, though they might not care to exert it without a recommendation. The word *amicable* was left out, at Mr. Wedderburn's motion, because it might be construed to imply a past disagreement; and some words were added, ordering the directors to report the issue of whatever negotiations should pass.

(2) "That it is the opinion of this court, that the chairman and deputy chairman be desired to wait on administration, and acquaint them that the court of proprietors, conscious of having done every thing in their power for the honour of the Com-

upon Mr. Walpole's objections. The sense of the court, and the argument of the whole day, was that the directors should treat upon all points taken together for the accomplishment of an agreement upon the ground of reciprocal advantage; and no persons were so explicit or so warm in supporting the doctrine and the measure, in this sense, as Sir James Hodges and Mr. Wedderburn.

A doubt having been expressed in the former court, and left unanswered, whether, if they should empower the directors, administration would concur, the same thing was thrown out again yesterday; upon which the chairman rose, and said, that he had reason to believe *that if the court should think proper to empower the directors to treat, the administration would hear and receive them:*

pany and the benefit of this country, after having for many years encountered difficulties almost insurmountable, at an immense expense to themselves, and at the same time conveyed through an uninterrupted channel one of the best streams of supply to the public revenue (whilst they have been contented with small dividends, very inadequate to their risk), cannot help being impressed with much concern, that their right to the first opening dawn of advantage, from which they hoped to receive adequate amends, should admit of a doubt; and, though they have nothing to fear from inquiry, do nevertheless think it their indispensable duty to wait on administration by a recommendation, in order to endeavour to settle on principles of equity and moderation such matters as may effectually secure their rights and possessions, and promote the extension of their commerce, for the mutual benefit of the public and the Company; whose interests, they apprehend, always have been, and must continue, reciprocal."

upon which, as I am informed, the day instantly took a turn favourable to the proposition.

It must be some time before the directors can, in their committee, either name the persons out of their own body who are to act for them, or prepare for the opening of the business; but if it were not so, I should certainly decline all intercourse, separate from your Lordship, and wait the return of his Majesty's servants.

It is my sincere and earnest wish, for every motive public and private, which ought to influence an honest man, that this very important matter may come to a good issue; because, independent of my natural anxiety for my little chance of reputation which I may have dependent upon it, I see nothing so sure to establish the lustre of his Majesty's councils, and to give vigour and authority to every measure and plan of government at home and abroad, as the natural consequences of an amicable and happy conclusion of this vast subject.

I am, with the greatest regard, and most perfect consideration, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged
and most faithful servant,

C. TOWNSHEND.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE RIGHT HON.
CHARLES TOWNSHEND.

Burton Pynsent, January 2, 1767.

SIR,

THE honour of your letter followed me to this place from Bath, whither I return to-morrow morning. I am impatient to express how sensibly I am obliged to you for so early a communication of the resolutions of the last general court. I need not tell you how entirely this transcendant object, India, possesses my heart and fixes my thoughts. It will not be hard, then, to judge of my sensations, on a dawn of reason and equity in the general court, so long delivered up to the grossest delusions of a mistaken self-interest, and shutting their eyes to the clearest principles of justice, and to a series of the most incontestible facts.

I can call it hitherto only the dawn, waiting anxiously for the more perfect day. The motion, (discreet enough in itself,) is so worded, that it may contain all that is right and desirable; it may also conceal, within a specious generality, certain narrow notions, that would frustrate national justice and public prosperity. I will, however, hope for the best side of the alternative, and am fully persuaded, my dear Sir, that you and I shall equally share the honest joy, if the desired success crowns the great work; and, indeed, by one and the same act, to do the nation justice, and to fix the ease and pre-emi-

nence of England for ages, are plentiful sources of manly and noble joy.

Allow me then, with the addition of one descriptive epithet, to pray (in your own words) for all the natural consequences of an adequate, amicable, and happy conclusion of this vast subject. I am, with the greatest regard and consideration, dear Sir,

Your most faithful and obedient
humble servant,
CHATHAM.

THE RIGHT HON. CHARLES TOWNSHEND TO THE
EARL OF CHATHAM.

Downing Street, January 4, 1767.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAVE this moment received the honour of your letter, and I flatter myself you will forgive me if I trouble you a second time, in consequence of some observations in your letter, which seem to me to call for an answer from me, and of proceedings which have since followed the resolution of the general court.

I cannot help thinking, that the words of the motion were conceived with great prudence, propriety, and judgment; because, in my opinion, they clearly extend to every consideration which one could wish to include in the result of the negotiation. Under the expression of "enlarging their

commerce," will naturally be considered every measure which the directors have to propose for the relief of their trade at home and abroad: under the next words, of "securing their possessions" (your Lordship will observe that it is possessions, not rights), will be introduced whatever they want, in recruiting their military, governing their servants, and establishing the revenue itself: and under the last general phrase of "perpetuating the prosperity of the Company," may be classed a variety of other points not yet started; all which, amicably given, will be so many reasons with the general court finally to acquiesce in an issue advantageous to the Company and adequate to the public.

Your Lordship will recollect, that in my letter I had the honour to assure you, that the motion was opened, supported, and carried in this extensive sense. I am now to inform you, that the directors have been with me to communicate the resolution; and from them I learn, that they receive their power and construe it in this manner, and that they will, without delay, collect every information, in order to prepare themselves for waiting upon your Lordship and the servants of the crown, upon their return to town; till which time, I told them I could not venture to advance one step. I have also seen other very leading men in the court, who speak of the temper of the day, the meaning of the motion, and the extent of the power given to the directors, as I have done to your Lordship; and therefore I should hope there

is no ground for doubting which side of the alternative stated by your Lordship, ought to be taken on the construction of the generality of the words; formed thus general, I am convinced, to secure unanimity in granting the power to treat, without the least secret wish thereby to frustrate national justice and public prosperity.

Your Lordship does me justice in supposing me equally anxious with yourself to see this delicate and important matter brought to an adequate, as well as amicable and happy issue. Perhaps I may have thought, more than others of sounder judgment than mine, that the only way of making the issue adequate was to make it amicable; which, if it has been an error, it was an honest one, proceeding from a sincere, though it should be thought an extreme, sense of the endless difficulties accompanying every idea of substituting the public in the place of the Company, in the collecting, investing, and remitting the revenue; and from a fear, that the knowledge of this impracticability might embolden a body of heated proprietors to stand the issue of such a measure, rather than submit to what they might deem severity in the manner, or in the plan.

I am to beg your Lordship's pardon for this interruption. Truly anxious to leave no doubt upon your mind, which I feel myself authorised to remove by the representation of any circumstances within my knowledge, I could not resist the pleasure of assuring you more fully of the actual

result of the last general court, and the declaration of the directors themselves.

I am, my Lord, with the greatest solicitude for your Lordship's health, and the success of whatever interests you in the accomplishment of your great plans for the prosperity and honour of these kingdoms, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged,
most faithful servant,
C. TOWNSHEND.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE RIGHT HON.
CHARLES TOWNSHEND.

Bath, January 6, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

I AM honoured this morning by the favour of your letter of the 4th, and am sorry that any observations of my former letter should have occasioned to you the trouble of justifying the motion of the general court, the wording of which I admitted to be prudent enough; my anxious doubts and well-grounded fears turning upon the final issue of the transaction, not upon the expression of the resolution, which will, in my sense of things, be such, in either alternative, an adequate or an illusory proposal.

It would be an useless intrusion upon your time to repeat here the first principle which rules me in this matter; namely, that the right is evidently

with the Company; for I can venture upon no method of defining the idea of adequate, but by assuming or deciding the question of right, and by considering, consequently, whatever portion of the revenue shall be left by parliament to the Company as indulgence and matter of discretion. I will only add upon this head, that my fears do not arise from distrust of the good intentions of the directors, but from the vices and passions of the general court, to whom they are to report. Under these circumstances, I confess I am not sanguine enough to hope for an issue I shall think adequate.

Allow me now, dear Sir, to assure you, that I esteem myself sensibly obliged to you for the honour of the letter I am now answering, and am not a little flattered with the attention you are so good to give to sollicitudes, which are very real, and proportioned to the mighty national benefit, which is to be acquired or lost at the end of this momentous business. I feel all the extent of the very favourable and kind expressions with which you conclude your letter, and beg you will accept of my warm acknowledgments. I hope to have the pleasure of embracing you in town about the 14th or 15th.

I am, with great regard and consideration,
dear Sir,

Your most faithful and
most obedient humble servant,
CHATHAM.

JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Edinburgh, January 3, 1767.

MY LORD,

I HAVE received a letter from General Paoli, in which he thus talks of Mr. Pitt:—"La pubblica fama esalta fino alle stelle i talenti del Signor Pitt; ma la relazione che ella mi fa della conversazione avuta con esso lui, mi riempie ancora di maggior ammirazione e di attaccamento per la bontà del cuore di questo Pericle della Gran Bretagna."

My Lord, I wrote to General Paoli the many strong and noble expressions which you uttered in a private conference to me, with as much eloquence as ever Mr. Pitt displayed in the fullest assembly; and, my Lord, I trust you will now show a generous sincerity. I would recommend to your Lordship Mr. Dick, his Majesty's consul at Leghorn, as a gentleman of great information and judgment, as to every thing that concerns the Mediterranean; and I would recommend him as a man of worth and spirit, who is warmly attached to the brave Corsicans. He will give your Lordship all the light you can desire, as to the advantages which Great Britain might derive from an alliance with Corsica, either in the way of trade or for the conveniency of war, and will faithfully execute whatever commands your Lordship may lay upon him.

Your Lordship knows that a proclamation stands

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important occupations. I received it two days ago from Prince Jablonoffsky⁽¹⁾, palatine of Novogorod, as your Lordship will see by the short letter that accompanied it. I cannot help mentioning a circumstance that may not, perhaps, be disagreeable to your Lordship; which is, that I was actually talking with the King of Poland when the messenger delivered me the packet, and upon my informing his Majesty of the contents, he said, "Si je ne regardois pas les secrets pour la goutte comme

et l'inclination que j'ai de procurer ses avantages, surtout en Russie, le pays le plus naturellement intéressé à la prospérité du votre.

"Ayant reconnu la probité et le zèle du Sieur Wroughton, qui vous remettra cette lettre, Monsieur, pour sa patrie; je vous prie de lui obtenir du Roi la survivance de la charge de consul-général, et je vous le recommande très particulièrement. Monsieur, vous m'obligerez par là assurément, mais vous n'ajouterez rien à la considération distinguée avec laquelle je suis,

Monsieur, de votre Excellence,
la très affectionnée,
CATERINE."

(1) Prince Jablonoffski was born in 1712. In early life he devoted himself chiefly to the sciences, and, for the sake of improvement, made several tours through France and Germany. When the troubles broke out in Poland he resigned his senatorial dignity, left the country, and took up his residence at Leipsig; where he founded a society for the purpose of distributing premiums to the authors of the best answers to questions proposed on various literary subjects. The society still exists. He died in 1777. His principal writings are his Lives of the Twelve great Generals of Poland, and a treatise on Sclavonic poetry. The prince's letter to Lord Chatham, containing his recipe for the cure of the gout, has unfortunately not been preserved.

les secrets de faire de l'or, je porterois bien envie au Prince, d'en avoir fourni un remède à un ministre qui fait tant d'honneur au genre humain."

I confess I am not sorry to have this occasion of wishing your Lordship more success from this communication of the Prince than his Polish Majesty apprehends, as well as every other blessing that a great and good man can enjoy; assuring your Lordship of the profound respect, attachment, and veneration, with which I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient
and most humble servant,
THOMAS WROUGHTON.

THE DUKE OF GRAFTON TO THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

Grosvenor Square, January 8, 1767.

MY DEAR LORD,

THE inclosed is a copy of a paper delivered into my hands this morning by the chairman and deputy of the East India Company⁽¹⁾, who desired to

(1) "East India House, January 6, 1767.

"At a Committee of Treasury.
"The committee met to consider of the resolution of the general court of proprietors of the 31st of December last, and the reference of the court of directors thereupon on the 2d instant, and what steps it will be proper to take in consequence thereof, which said resolution and reference are in the following words, viz. :—

come to me. You will perceive that the heads contained under it are what their committee of

“ At a General Court, 31st December, 1766.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, that it be recommended to the court of directors to treat with the administration upon such points relative to the general state of the affairs of the Company as shall seem to them most requisite and conducive to the extending our commerce, securing our possessions, and perpetuating the prosperity of the Company, and to report their proceedings to this court.”

“ At a Court of Directors, 2d January, 1767. 17

“ Ordered, that it be referred to the committee of treasury to give directions for preparing the necessary papers, also to consider of the applications proper to be made to the administration in pursuance of the resolution of the general court of the 31st ultimo, and to report their proceedings thereupon from time to time to this court.”

“ The committee, upon considering the said resolution of the general court, and the consequent reference of the court of directors, are of opinion it is requisite and necessary to treat with the administration on the following points, viz.:—

“ For a prolongation of the Company's charter, from the year 1780 to the year 1800, or a further term; but to have the whole, sole, and exclusive trade to the East Indies for three years after the said year 1800, in like manner as was provided in the act of the 17th of George the Second.

“ For an alteration in the inland duty on tea, with a view to prevent smuggling, and thereby to increase the legal consumption.

“ For allowing a drawback on the exportation of tea of the whole custom paid thereon, being about 24l. per cent. upon the gross value at the Company's sales, or at least 20l. per cent. thereof.

“ For an alteration in the duties on calicoes and muslins.

“ For some method of recruiting the Company's military forces at their settlements in the East Indies, by draughting them off for that purpose whenever they shall be wanted.

“ For strengthening the hands of the Company, if necessary, for the better and more effectual government of their civil and 18

treasury have judged to be the benefits they may hope to receive from parliament. This communication, they told me, meant nothing farther than a show of that respect which my absence from town had prevented them from giving till now. They added, that their present business was only to acquaint me with the steps taken by the general court, and to offer for my full consideration those objects which they thought the Company most interested to obtain. As they expected no answer from me on these heads, I had only to express to them the satisfaction it gave me to hear them declare, that the advantage to the public in this

military servants or others abroad, and for preventing their accepting or receiving presents. 18

“ For preventing the commanders of the Company's ships and others from carrying to the East Indies all kinds of warlike stores clandestinely, or without the license of the Company.

“ For desiring the strong interposition of administration with the court of France, for payment to the Company of the great sums of money they have expended for the maintenance, transport of French prisoners to Europe, and other expenses incurred on those accounts, which, by an account delivered to the right honourable Mr. Secretary Conway, dated the 16th November, 1765, amounted at that time to the sum of 260,687l. 8s. 5d.

“ Also for their interposition with the court of Spain, with respect to the Manilla ransom, that the Company may be reimbursed the great expenses incurred by that expedition; for which it appears, by a letter from Lord Egremont to the secret committee, dated the 23d January, 1762, the Company is to have a reasonable compensation; which said expenses amounted to, on the 7th August last, the sum of 166,236l. 15s. as per an account that day delivered to the right honourable the Earl of Shelburne.”

1781 Commission NLW Clive 1627
for BengalGovernor
19.9.1766

19 Sept 1766

BXIX/3

Lord Clive's Minute in Committee
19th September 1766 respecting the
Commission of 17th Cent upon the
Deewanee Revenues.

Our Attention as a Select Committee,
invested with extraordinary Powers by the Court
of Directors, has been constantly engaged in
reforming the abuses which had crept into the
several Departments of this Government. The
important Work has been steadily prosecuted
with Zeal, Diligence and Disinterestedness on our
parts and the success of our Labors gives us
reason to hope that our Employers will be of opinion
we have established many useful and necessary
Regulations. Many others however are still
wanting to complete our Plan, but I doubt not
that the same Principles which have hitherto guided
our Conduct, will continue to direct and justify the
Measures we have yet to pursue.

To place the President in such a
Situation as will render his Government honorable
to himself, and advantageous to the Company —
appears to me an Object of as much Consequence
as any that has been taken into our Consideration.

Where

Where such immense Revenues are concerned, where Power and Authority are so enlarged and where the Eye of Justice and Equity should be ever watchful, a Governor ought not to be embarrassed with private Business; he ought to be free from every Occupation in which his Judgment can possibly be biassed by his Interest. The extensive commercial Affairs, the Study of the Finances, the Politics of the Country, the epistolary Correspondence, the Proceedings of Council and Committee these are sufficient to employ every moment of his Time; and I am confident they cannot be conducted with the requisite Attention to the Company's Interest, if the Mind of the Governor be diverted by complicated mercantile Affairs of his own.

If we look back upon those unhappy Dissensions, which have frequently brought the Company's Possessions in Bengal, almost to the point of Destruction, we shall find that they have generally proceeded from the Conduct of Governors who too eager in the pursuit of private Interest, have involved themselves in Affairs which could not be reconciled to the strict principles of Integrity. To prevent Scrutinies
and

and Discoveries which might in any Degree affect their Honor, they have frequently been reduced to the Necessity of conniving at Abuses which would otherwise have been brought to light and remedied. The Welfare of this great Company should be the sole Study of a Governor, attached to that Point alone, his Measures could never be thwarted by the malice of Opposition, because they would all be proposed for the public Good, and Actions will always be justified or condemned from the Principles on which they are founded.

Such a State of Independence and Honor must be highly eligible to a Governor, and in my Opinion it can only be acquired by cutting off all possibility of his benefitting himself either by Trade, or by that Influence which his Power necessarily gives him in these opulent Provinces.

I therefore propose that the Governor shall, in the most public manner, in the presence of all the Company's Servants, the Mayor and Aldermen, and Free Merchants assembled at the Mayor's Court, take the Oath and execute the Penalty Bond annexed.

The Consideration I have proposed,
is

is 1/2 pcent upon the Revenues excepting those arising from the Company's own Lands at Calcutta, Burawan, Midnapore and Chittagong.

Although by these Means a Governor will not be able to amass a Fortune of a Million or half a Million in the space of 2 or 3 Years, yet he will acquire a very handsome Independency and be in that very Situation which a Man of nice Honor, and true Zeal for the Service would wish to possess. Thus situated, he may defy all Opposition in Council; he will have nothing to ask, nothing to propose, but what he means for the Advantage of his Employers; he may defy the Law, because there can be no foundation for a Bill of Discovery; and he may defy the obloquy of the World, — because there can be nothing censurable in his Conduct. In short if Stability can be insured to such a Government as this where Riches have been acquired in abundance, in a small space of time, by all ways and means, and by Men with or without Capacities, it must be effected by a Governor thus restricted, and I shall think it an Honor if my Proposal be approved to set the first Example.

Clive

1627

pp 43-44

The speech by Clive

Ms 3-54. Changes

meaning of fortune

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“ and that I will not return to ENGLAND with one Rupee
 “ more than what arises from my Jaghire. My profits arising
 “ from Salt shall be divided among those friends who
 “ have endangered their lives and constitutions in attending
 “ me. The congratulatory Nuzirs, &c. shall be set opposite
 “ to my extraordinary expences; and if aught remains, it
 “ shall go to POPLAR or some other Hospital.”

In Mr. BOLTS's book is a copy of a Bond, by which it appears that I sold my concern in Salt, for thirty-two thousand pounds. I do acknowledge there is such a Bond, but the sum actually received by me, on that account, amounted only to about ten thousand eight hundred pounds. The fact was this: I could not think of suffering the three before-mentioned Gentlemen, who accompanied me to INDIA, to return to ENGLAND without realizing something on their account; I said so to my friends in BENGAL. The Salt Concern was of a very extensive tedious nature, and the accounts might not be made up in some years. Could I, in honor, leave those Gentlemen in a situation which made it doubtful when they should receive any thing, and to what amount? I told them I would not: I told them I would get rid of this Salt Concern at once, that they might be secure of the money amongst them. I therefore disposed of my whole Concern in Salt, even my share for the second year, which was just commenced, for the sum mentioned in the Bond. But when the mode of a Commission of one and one eighth *per Cent.* on the Revenues, was settled for the Governor, in lieu of every other emolument; I then relinquished my share in Salt for that year (the second year) in which I was to receive

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receive the Commission, and paid back about twenty thousand pounds of the thirty-two thousand.

It now remains, Sir, for me to shew, that my own interest was not the motive of my going to India.

I have here an account of every six-pence I received or disbursed, from the day of my leaving ENGLAND to the day of my return. It is taken from my books, which were kept all the time I was in INDIA by Mr. VERELST, who will readily attest their accuracy. I omit the first part of this account, because it was transmitted to the Court of Directors, and stands upon record in the INDIA HOUSE. The other part I will read. The House will observe, that in this account there are the names of others whom I rewarded, besides the Gentlemen I have mentioned. One was an old servant who went out with me; and the others were young Gentlemen in my Secretary's Office.

p 42-6	1
p 56	2
p 56	3
p 57.8	4
Amount	

Box 1/4

1772

Amount received subsequent to the making up of the Account before mentioned, transmitted to the Court of Directors, viz.

Company's Allowances for January 482 2 10
 Governor's Duties 359 16 9

Amount received for Profits on Salt, viz.

Sold to the following Gentlemen,

Mr. Verell 7714 5 8
 Mr. Sykes 7714 5 8
 Mr. Campbell 7714 5 8
 Mr. Ruffel 3857 2 10
 Mr. Kelfall 3857 2 10

Deduct the Amount refunded, in the Proportions above specified, upon relinquishing all Concern in the Salt Trade for the second Year 19012 10 0

Interest paid thereon 974 7 9

Amount received for Commission on the Duancee Revenues

Balance

	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.
Company's Allowances for January	482	2	10			
Governor's Duties	359	16	9			
<hr/>				841	19	7
Amount received for Profits on Salt, viz.						
Sold to the following Gentlemen,						
Mr. Verell	7714	5	8			
Mr. Sykes	7714	5	8			
Mr. Campbell	7714	5	8			
Mr. Ruffel	3857	2	10			
Mr. Kelfall	3857	2	10			
<hr/>				30857	2	8
Deduct the Amount refunded, in the Proportions above specified, upon relinquishing all Concern in the Salt Trade for the second Year						
	19012	10	0			
Interest paid thereon						
	974	7	9			
<hr/>				19986	17	9
Amount received for Commission on the Duancee Revenues						
				30866	10	5
<hr/>						
				42578	14	11
<hr/>						
				5816	16	9
<hr/>						
				48395	11	8

Amount paid subsequent to the making up of the Account before mentioned, transmitted to the Court of Directors, viz.

Account Salaries 208 19 7
 Charges General 1325 9 2
 Table Expences 1087 6 4
 Wearing Apparel 103 19 5

Amount of Expences paid in England

HENRY STRACHEY, Esq;

Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Sykes's Bond } 7714 5 8
 Interest thereon 471 8 6

A Proportion of Mr. Kelfall's Bond with Interest } 1274 13 5

The Amount of a Bill on Attornies in England } 2892 17 1

A Proportion of the Commission on the Revenues } 3589 12 3

EDMUND MASKELYNE, Esq;

Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Verell's Bond } 7714 5 8
 Interest thereon 471 8 6

The Amount of Mr. Ruffel's Bond } 3857 2 10
 Interest thereon 235 14 3

A Proportion of Mr. Kelfall's Bond with Interest } 771 8 6

SAMUEL INGHAM, Esq;

Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Campbell's Bond } 7714 5 8
 Interest thereon 471 8 6

A Proportion of Commission on the Revenues } 976 5 8

Mr. PHILPOT.

Transferred to him the Remainder of Mr. Kelfall's Bond } 1928 9 6
 Interest thereon 118 5 7

Presented to him an additional Sum 2046 15 1

Mess. WYNNE, ARCHDEKIN, COXE, and DUCAREL.

Transferred to them a Proportion of Commission on the Revenues } 3402 0 0

	L.	s.	d.	L.	s.	d.
Account Salaries	208	19	7			
Charges General	1325	9	2			
Table Expences	1087	6	4			
Wearing Apparel	103	19	5			
<hr/>				2795	14	6
Amount of Expences paid in England						
HENRY STRACHEY, Esq;						
Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Sykes's Bond } 7714 5 8						
Interest thereon 471 8 6						
A Proportion of Mr. Kelfall's Bond with Interest } 1274 13 5						
The Amount of a Bill on Attornies in England } 2892 17 1						
A Proportion of the Commission on the Revenues } 3589 12 3						
<hr/>				15942	16	11
EDMUND MASKELYNE, Esq;						
Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Verell's Bond } 7714 5 8						
Interest thereon 471 8 6						
The Amount of Mr. Ruffel's Bond } 3857 2 10						
Interest thereon 235 14 3						
A Proportion of Mr. Kelfall's Bond with Interest } 771 8 6						
<hr/>				13049	19	9
SAMUEL INGHAM, Esq;						
Transferred to him the Amount of Mr. Campbell's Bond } 7714 5 8						
Interest thereon 471 8 6						
A Proportion of Commission on the Revenues } 976 5 8						
<hr/>				9161	19	10
Mr. PHILPOT.						
Transferred to him the Remainder of Mr. Kelfall's Bond } 1928 9 6						
Interest thereon 118 5 7						
Presented to him an additional Sum 2046 15 1						
<hr/>				2196	15	1
Mess. WYNNE, ARCHDEKIN, COXE, and DUCAREL.						
Transferred to them a Proportion of Commission on the Revenues } 3402 0 0						
<hr/>				48395	11	8

THE balance against me, upon the whole, is five thousand eight hundred and sixteen pounds. Now Sir, I have no objection to having this account lodged among the Records of this House, that it may stand in judgment for or against me, if future Commissions, either on the part of the CROWN or the EAST INDIA COMPANY should ever think a retrospection into my conduct necessary.

THERE is only one circumstance more with which I shall trouble the House; and I do assure them, I should be ashamed to touch upon it, as it may carry with it an appearance of vanity, were not my honor and reputation so much at stake. It was in my power to have taken from my enemies every shadow of pretence for arraigning my conduct, on account of these profits, as they have been called, of my government. I could have rewarded those Gentlemen much more liberally, without the possibility of an accusation. But I should not have acted so much to my own satisfaction, nor I believe so much to that of the House; if I had neglected the opportunity that offered, of doing something essentially beneficial to the EAST INDIA COMPANY'S service.

THE old Nabob MEER JAFFIER, if ever Mussulman had a friendship for a Christian, had a friendship for me. When the news of my appointment to the Government reached BENGAL; he immediately quitted MUXADAVAD, came down to CALCUTTA; impatiently waited my arrival for six weeks; fell ill; returned to his capital and died. Two or three days before his death, in the presence of his wife, and in the

presence

presence of his minister, he said to his son and successor, whatever you may think proper to give to Lord CLIVE on your own account the means are in your power. But, as a testimony of my affection for him, I desire you will pay to him as a legacy from me five lacks of Rupees. I must observe that the Nabob's death happened whilst I was on my voyage, and some months before my arrival in BENGAL. The principal and interest amounted to near seventy thousand pounds. A very respectable Gentleman and great Lawyer, who is now the Speaker of this honourable House, gave his opinion in favor of my right to this legacy, in the strongest terms: another great Lawyer, a Member of this House, has often declared to me in private, his opinion of my right; and the Court of Directors have themselves confirmed that right. Authentic attestations of this legacy are upon record in the INDIA HOUSE. The whole of the money added to about forty thousand pounds more, which I prevailed on the Nabob to bestow, is established for a Military Fund, in support of Officers and Soldiers who may be invalided in any part of INDIA, and also in support of their Widows. Nothing was wanting but such an Establishment as this, to make the EAST INDIA COMPANY'S Military Service the best Service in the world. Before that period, an indigent, invalided Officer and Soldier might live in INDIA; but if he returned to his native Country, he returned to beggary. By this fund the Officers are intitled to Half-pay. The Soldiers are upon the same footing as those in CHELSEA HOSPITAL; and the Widows of both Officers and Soldiers have Pensions.

F

HAVING

HAVING encroached so long upon the patience of the House, I doubt whether I may now expect their farther indulgence, or whether I must defer what I have to say upon the important business 'till a future occasion.

(HOUSE, *Go on, go on.*)

BUT before I proceed, I must beg leave to deviate a little into a digression, on behalf of the Company's servants in general. It is dictated by humanity, by justice, and by truth.

INDOSTAN was always an absolute despotic Government. The inhabitants, especially of BENGAL, in inferior stations, are servile, mean, submissive and humble. In superior stations, they are luxurious, effeminate, tyrannical, treacherous, venal, cruel. The Country of BENGAL is called, by way of distinction, the Paradise of the Earth. It not only abounds with the necessaries of life to such a degree, as to furnish a great part of INDIA with its superfluity, but it abounds in very curious and valuable manufactures, sufficient not only for its own use, but for the use of the whole Globe. The Silver of the West and the Gold of the East have for many years been pouring into that Country, and Goods only have been sent out in return. This has added to the luxury and extravagance of BENGAL.

FROM time immemorial it has been the custom of that Country, for an inferior never to come into the presence of a superior without a Present. It begins at the Nabob, and ends

ends at the lowest man that has an inferior. The Nabob has told me, that the small Presents he received amounted to three hundred thousand pounds a year; and I can believe him: because I know that I might have received as much during my last Government. The Company's servants have ever been accustomed to receive Presents. Even before we took part in the Country troubles, when our possessions were very confined and limited, the Governor and others used to receive Presents; and I will take upon me to assert, that there has not been an Officer commanding his Majesty's Fleet, nor an Officer commanding his Majesty's Army; not a Governor, not a Member of Council, not any other Person, civil or military, in such a station as to have connection with the Country Government, who has not received Presents. With regard to BENGAL, there they flow in abundance indeed. Let the House figure to itself a Country consisting of fifteen millions of inhabitants, a Revenue of four millions Sterling, and a Trade in proportion. By progressive steps the Company have become Sovereigns of that Empire. Can it be supposed that their servants will refrain from advantages so obviously resulting from their situation? The Company's servants, however, have not been the authors of those acts of violence and oppression, of which it is the fashion to accuse them. Such crimes are committed by the natives of the Country, acting as their Agents, and for the most part without their knowledge. Those Agents and the Banyans never desist, till, according to the ministerial phrase, they have dragged their Masters into the kennel; and then the acts of violence begin. The passion for Gain is as strong as the passion of Love. I will suppose, that two intimate friends have

lived long together; that one of them has married a beautiful woman; that the friend still continues to live in the House, and that this beautiful woman, forgetting her duty to her husband, attempts to seduce the friend; who, though in the vigor of his youth, may, from a high principle of honor, at first, resist the temptation, and even rebuke the lady. But if he still continues to live under the same roof, and she still continues to throw out her allurements, he must be seduced at last, or fly. Now the Banyan is the fair lady to the Company's servant. He lays his bags of silver before him to-day; Gold to-morrow; Jewels the next day; and, if these fail, he then tempts him in the way of his profession, which is Trade. He assures him that Goods may be had cheap, and sold to great advantage up the Country. In this manner is the attack carried on; and the Company's servant has no resource, for he cannot fly. In short, flesh and blood cannot bear it. Let us for a moment consider the nature of the education of a young man who goes to INDIA. The advantages arising from the Company's service are now very generally known; and the great object of every man is to get his son appointed a writer to BENGAL; which is usually at the age of sixteen. His parents and relations represent to him how certain he is of making a fortune; that my Lord such a one, and my Lord such a one, acquired so much money in such a time; and Mr. such a one, and Mr. such a one, so much in such a time. Thus are their principles corrupted at their very setting out, and as they generally go a good many together, they inflame one another's expectations to such a degree, in the course of the voyage,

that they fix upon a period for their return before their arrival.

LET US NOW take a view of one of these writers arrived in BENGAL, and not worth a groat. As soon as he lands, a Banyan, worth perhaps one hundred thousand pounds, desires he may have the honor of serving this young Gentleman, at four shillings and six-pence per month. The Company has provided chambers for him, but they are not good enough; the Banyan finds better. The young man takes a walk about the town, he observes that other writers, arrived only a year before him, live in splendid apartments or have houses of their own, ride upon fine prancing Arabian Horses, and in Palanqueens and Chaises; that they keep Seraglios, make Entertainments, and treat with Champaigne and Claret. When he returns, he tells the Banyan what he has observed. The Banyan assures him he may soon arrive at the same good fortune; he furnishes him with money; he is then at his mercy. The advantages of the Banyan, advance with the rank of his master, who in acquiring one fortune generally spends three. But this is not the worst of it: he is in a state of dependence under the Banyan, who commits such acts of violence and oppression, as his interest prompts him to, under the pretended sanction and authority of the Company's servant. Hence, Sir, arises the clamor against the ENGLISH Gentlemen in INDIA. But look at them in a retired situation; when returned to ENGLAND; when they are no longer Nabobs and Sovereigns of the East: see if there be any thing tyrannical in their disposition towards their inferiors: see if they are not good and humane masters: are they

they not charitable? Are they not benevolent? Are they not generous? Are they not hospitable? If they are thus far not contemptible members of Society, and if in all their dealings between man and man, their conduct is strictly honorable: if, in short, there has not yet been one character found amongst them sufficiently flagitious for Mr. FOOTE to exhibit on the Theatre in the Haymarket, may we not conclude, that if they have erred, it has been because they were men, placed in situations, subject to little or no controul?

BUT if the servants of the Company are to be loaded with the demerit of every misfortune in INDIA, let them also have the merit they are intitled to. The Court of Directors surely will not claim to themselves, the merit of those advantages which the Nation and the Company are at present in possession of. The Officers of the Navy and Army have had great share in the execution; but the Company's servants were the Cabinet Council, who planned every thing; and to them also may be ascribed, some part of the merit of our great acquisitions.

I will now pass to other matter: matter as important as ever came before this House. INDIA yields at present a clear produce to the public and to individuals, of between two and three millions, Sterling, *per Annum*. If this object should be lost, what can Administration substitute in the room of it? I tremble when I think of the risque we lately run, from the ambitious designs of the FRENCH. They may have suspended for a time, their views upon INDIA, but I am sure they

they have not given them up. It is strongly reported they have at this moment, ten thousand men at the Islands, and a great number of Transports: these men are not to return to FRANCE, and yet the Islands cannot maintain them: but at MADAGASCAR they may possess themselves of a Country capable of supporting any number. This they certainly will do, and their forces instead of decreasing will increase by additional battalions, poured out from FRANCE, until they are ready to carry into execution their favourite design. The noble Lord at the Head of the Treasury, will do me the justice to say that I laid before him a paper, drawn up fifteen months ago, in which I stated almost every thing that has since happened, relating to the views of FRANCE upon the EAST INDIES. It was indeed impossible for me to be deceived, knowing the preparations that had been made.

If ever FRANCE should lay hold of our possessions, she will soon add to them all the rest of the EAST INDIES. The other EUROPEAN Nations there, will immediately fall before her; not even the DUTCH can stand: the Empire of the Sea will follow: thus will her acquisitions in the East, if any can, give her universal Monarchy. I repeat, and I would have what I say remembered, that the FRENCH have not given up their designs upon INDIA.

BUT danger abroad being for the present suspended, let us think of the danger at home.

It is certain that our affairs in BENGAL are in a very deplorable condition, and that the Nation cannot receive their
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four hundred thousand pounds, and the Proprietors their two hundred thousand pounds increase of dividend much longer, if something be not done.

It is necessary, since these affairs are brought before Parliament, that we should endeavour to understand them. There are a few material points, which I will state as clearly as I can. The Revenues; the Inland Trade; the Charges, Civil and Military; and the Public Trade, by which I mean the Trade of the Company.

UPON the receipt of the Revenues depend the four hundred thousand pounds a year to Government, and the two hundred thousand pounds a year additional dividend to the Proprietors: and upon the Company's or Public Trade depends the coming home of the Revenues. There are no mines of Gold or Silver in BENGAL, therefore the Revenues can be brought hither only through the medium of the Company's Trade.

UPON the Civil and Military Expences depends, whether we shall have any surplus Revenue at all; for if they are swelled up too high you can receive no Revenues. Upon the Inland Trade depends in some degree, the receipt of the Revenues. Upon the Inland Trade depend almost totally the happiness and prosperity of the People. Indeed the true cause of the distress in BENGAL, as far as it relates to the Inland Trade, is this. The Company's servants and their agents, have taken into their own hands the whole of that Trade, which they have carried on in a capacity before unknown; for

for they have traded not only as Merchants, but as Sovereigns, and by grasping at the whole of the Inland Trade, have taken the bread out of the mouths of thousands and thousands of Merchants, who used formerly to carry on that Trade, and who are now reduced to beggary.

WITH regard to the Public Trade, it is material to observe what that has been, and what it now is. Here is an account of the prime costs of the Company's Investments from BENGAL, for seven years preceding the acquisition of the DUANNEE, and for seven years subsequent, together with the number of Ships employed.

Comparative

Year	Prime Costs	Number of Ships
1767	1,000,000	10
1768	1,200,000	12
1769	1,400,000	14
1770	1,600,000	16
1771	1,800,000	18
1772	2,000,000	20
1773	2,200,000	22
1774	2,400,000	24
1775	2,600,000	26
1776	2,800,000	28
1777	3,000,000	30

(Note: The table above is a reconstruction of the faint data visible in the image. The original text is mirrored and difficult to read.)

Comparative View of the Number of SHIPS from BENGAL, with the Amount of their CARGOES, for seven Years preceding and seven Years succeeding the Acquisition of the DUANNEE, in 1765.

The seven preceding Years.		The seven succeeding Years.	
Year	Ships	Year	Ships
1758	3	1765	5
1759	4	1766	6
1760	4	1767	6
1761	5	1768	8
1762	6	1769	7
1763	3	1770	7
1764	3	1771	7
Increase	28		
	18		
	46		46

Year	Amount (£)
1765	437,511
1766	565,461
1767	658,341
1768	742,288
1769	633,665
1770	705,700
1771	768,000
Increase	4511,466

By this Paper, it appears that the Public Trade has increased more than double, since the Acquisition of the DUANNEE.

I now come to a very material point indeed. A State of the Revenues, and also of the Civil and Military, and all other Expences from the year 1765 to 1771. The first year's Account is imperfect, because the Revenues are stated from the month of April, and the DUANNEE was not obtained till August.

Amount

Year	Revenue	Expences	Surplus
1765	1,924,180	1,472,710	451,470
1766	2,587,286	1,975,820	611,466
1767			
1768			
1769			
1770			
1771			
Increase			46

Amount of the REVENUES and CHARGES,

Shewing the Nett Receipts and the Nett Income for six Years, from May 1765 to April 1771.

One Year	Gross Collections.	Charges of collecting Tribute Stipend.	Nett Revenues.	Civil Charges.	Military Charges.	Buildings and Fortifications.	Total Amount of Charges, Civil, Milit. and Buildings, &c.	Total Charges, including Tribute, &c.	Nett Income.
From May 1765 to April 1766,	£. 2,264,763	£. 611,890	£. 1,652,873	£. 211,398	£. 612,009	£. 87,223	£. 910,630	£. 1,522,320	£. 742,243
May 1766 to April 1767,	3,861,141	1,273,755	2,587,386	307,484	861,174	105,544	1,274,202	2,547,957	1,313,184
May 1767 to April 1768,	3,613,171	1,255,673	2,357,498	323,231	868,177	219,285	1,390,693	2,646,306	966,805
May 1768 to April 1769,	3,786,795	1,296,739	2,490,056	422,250	1,022,393	270,873	1,715,516	3,012,255	774,540
May 1769 to April 1770,	3,430,210	1,209,366	2,220,844	391,906	1,044,631	193,353	1,629,890	2,839,256	590,954
May 1770 to April 1771,	3,148,960	1,209,366	1,939,594				1,766,250	2,975,616	173,344
	20,105,040	6,856,789	13,248,251	1,636,269	4,408,384	876,278	8,687,181	15,543,970	4,561,070

THIS Account must be exact, because I had the whole of it from the INDIA HOUSE, except the particulars of the last year, which the Court of Directors are not yet in possession of. But I cannot doubt their authenticity, as I received them from a Gentleman in Council at BENGAL.

THE House will observe, that the Gross Collections have not decreased considerably till the year 1770, which was the year of the Famine; but that the Civil and Military Expences have been gradually increasing ever since I left BENGAL, which was in the beginning of the year 1767. And here lies the danger. The evil is not so much in the Revenues falling short, as in the Expences increasing. The best means of raising the Revenues is to reduce the Civil and Military Charges. Why should we strive at an actual increase of the Revenues? They avail nothing unless we can invest them; and to raise them beyond a certain point is to distress the country, and to reduce to indigence, numbers who from time immemorial have derived their subsistence from them.

WITH regard to the increase of the expences, I take the case to stand thus. Before the Company became possessed of the DUANNEE, their Agents had other ways of making fortunes. Presents were open to them. They are now at an end. It was expedient for them to find some other channel: the channel of the Civil and Military Charges. Every man now who is permitted to make a bill, makes a fortune.

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It is not the simple pay of Officers and Men upon the Military and Civil Establishment which occasions our enormous Expence, but the contingent Bills of Contractors, Commissaries, Engineers, &c. out of which, I am sure, great savings might be made. These intolerable expences have alarmed the Directors, and persuaded them to come to Parliament for assistance. And, if I mistake not, they will soon go to Administration, and tell them they cannot pay the four hundred thousand pounds; and that they must lower the Dividend to the Proprietors.

I attribute the present situation of our Affairs to four Causes: a Relaxation of Government in my Successors; great Neglect on the part of Administration; notorious Misconduct on the part of the Directors; and the violent and outrageous Proceedings of General Courts, in which I include contested Elections.

Mr. VERELST, who succeeded me in the Government, I do believe to be a man of as much real worth and honor as ever existed: and so far from being wanting in humanity, as Mr. BOLTS asserts; I know that he had too much humanity. Humanity, if I may be allowed the expression, has been his ruin. If he had less, it would have been better for the Nation, better for the Company, better for the Natives, and better for himself. No Man came to the Government with a fairer Character, and notwithstanding what I have said, I am conscious no man ever left it with a fairer. He acted upon principles of disinterestedness from beginning to end: and let
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the Directors if they can, tell me where I could have laid my finger upon a fitter Man. But the truth is, he governed with too lenient a hand. The too great tenderness of his disposition I saw and dreaded. Nothing was wanting on my part to prompt him to pursue vigorous measures. Nor did I confine myself to verbal advice only. I gave it in writing before I resigned the Government. The House will permit me to read to them my sentiments upon that occasion. They are contained in my Farewell Letter to the Select Committee, wherein I forewarned them of almost every misfortune that has since happened. The whole is too long to trouble the House with. I shall therefore read only that part of it which relates to the present subject.

*Extract from my Farewell Letter to the Select Committee,
dated 16th January, 1767.*

“ The reformation proposed by the Committee of Inspection, will I hope be duly attended to. It has been too much the custom in this Government to make orders and regulations, and thence to suppose the business done. To what end and purpose are they made, if they be not promulgated and enforced? No regulation can be carried into execution, no order obeyed, if you do not make rigorous examples of the disobedient. Upon this point I rest the welfare of the Company in BENGAL. The servants are now brought to a proper sense of their duty; if you slacken the reins of Government, affairs will soon revert to their former channel; anarchy and corruption will
“ again

" again prevail; and, elate with a new victory, be too head-
 " strong for any future efforts of Government. Recall to
 " your memories the many attempts that have been made
 " in the Civil and Military Departments, to overcome our au-
 " thority, and to set up a kind of independency against the
 " Court of Directors. Reflect also on the resolute measures
 " we have pursued, and their wholesome effects. [Disobe-
 " dience to legal power is the first step of sedition; and pal-
 " liative remedies effect no cure.] Every tender compliance,
 " every condescension on your parts, will only encourage more
 " flagrant attacks; which will daily increase in strength, and
 " be at last in vain resisted. Much of our time has been
 " employed in correcting abuses. The important work has
 " been prosecuted with zeal, diligence and disinterestedness;
 " and we have had the happiness to see our labors crowned
 " with success. I leave the Country in peace: I leave the
 " Civil and Military Departments under discipline and sub-
 " ordination: it is incumbent upon you to keep them so.
 " You have power, you have abilities, you have integrity;
 " let it not be said that you are deficient in resolution. I
 " repeat that you must not fail to exact the most implicit
 " obedience to your orders. [Dismiss or suspend from the
 " service, any man who shall dare to dispute your authority.]
 " If you deviate from the principles upon which we have
 " hitherto acted, and upon which you are conscious you
 " ought to proceed; or if you do not make a proper use of
 " that power, with which you are invested; I shall hold
 " myself acquitted, as I do now protest against the conse-
 " quences."

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" It is certain, that if my successor had followed my ex-
 " ample and advice, the evil day would have been kept off
 " some time longer. But had he kept the tightest rein, he
 " could not have done much service to the Company: for
 " neither he nor any man could have long guarded against
 " the mischiefs occasioned by the Directors themselves, when
 " they took away the powers of the Select Committee.

" THE Company had acquired an empire more extensive than
 " any Kingdom in EUROPE, FRANCE and RUSSIA excepted.
 " They had acquired a Revenue of four millions Sterling, and
 " a Trade in proportion. It was natural to suppose that such
 " an object would have merited the most serious attention of
 " Administration; that in concert with the Court of Directors
 " they would have considered the nature of the Company's
 " Charter, and have adopted a Plan adequate to such posses-
 " sions. Did they take it into consideration? No, they did
 " not. They treated it rather as a South Sea Bubble, than as
 " any thing solid and substantial: they thought of nothing but
 " the present time, regardless of the future: they said, let us
 " get what we can to day, let to morrow take care for itself:
 " they thought of nothing but the immediate division of the
 " loaves and fishes: nay, so anxious were they to lay their
 " hands upon some immediate advantage, that they actually went
 " so far as to influence a parcel of temporary Proprietors to
 " bully the Directors into their terms. It was their duty, Sir,
 " to have called upon the Directors for a Plan; and if a Plan,

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in consequence, had not been laid before them, it would then have become their duty, with the aid and assistance of Parliament, to have formed one themselves. If Administration had done their duty, we should not now have heard a Speech from the Throne, intimating the necessity of parliamentary interposition, to save our possessions in INDIA from impending ruin.

A plan for India

THE next point is, the misconduct on the part of the Court of Directors,

AFTER the Court of Directors had, in the highest terms, approved of the conduct of that Committee, who restored tranquility to BENGAL; who had restored a Government of anarchy and confusion, to good order; who had made a Peace with SUJA DOWLA, by which they obtained upwards of six hundred thousand pounds for the Company; who had quelled both a Civil and a Military Mutiny; who had re-established Discipline and Subordination in the Army; who had obtained the DUANNEE of BENGAL, BAHAR, and ORISSA; which produced to the Company a nett income of one million three hundred thousand pounds; who had paid off the greatest part of a Bond Debt in BENGAL, amounting to near nine hundred thousand pounds; who had left the Treasury in such a flowing state, that they drew few or no bills upon the Company at home; who laid the foundation of Investments so large as were never before known or heard of; and who had by these means enabled the Company to assist

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Government with four hundred thousand pounds a year, and to make an increase of Dividend to the Stock-holders of two hundred thousand pounds; one would imagine that the Court of Directors would have supported a system of Government which had been so very successful. But they acted upon very different principles; they dropped the prosecutions against those Gentlemen in BENGAL, whose conduct the Committee had censured, and fully represented. Thus they gave a stab to their own vitals. From that instant they destroyed their own power abroad, and erased from the minds of their servants in INDIA, every wholesome regulation which the Committee had established. The servants abroad were in anxious suspense to learn whether they were punishable or not, for misconduct. The lenity or weakness of the Court of Directors removed their doubts. From that instant all Covenants were forgotten, or only looked upon as so many sheets of blank paper; and from that instant began that relaxation of Government so much now complained of, and so much still to be dreaded.

THEIR next step was to destroy the Powers of that Committee whose conduct they had with reason so highly approved of. They divided the Powers; they gave half to the Council, and left the other half with the Committee. The consequence was, the Council and Committee became distracted by altercations and disputes for Power, and have ever since been at variance, to the great detriment of the service. The Court of Directors, as if this was not enough, restored to

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the service almost every Civil and Military Transgressor who had been dismissed: nay they rewarded some of them, by allowing them a continuation of their rank all the time they were in ENGLAND. And now, as a condemnation of their own conduct, and a tacit confession of their own weakness, they come to Parliament with a Bill of Regulations, in which is inserted a Clause to put such Practices, as much as possible, out of their Power for the future.

With regard to General Courts; I believe I need not dwell long on the Consequences of them. Their violent Proceedings have been subversive of the Authority of the Court of Directors. The Agents abroad have known this: they have therefore never scrupled to set the orders of the Court of Directors at defiance, when it was their interest to disobey them; and they have escaped punishment, by means of the over-awing interest of individuals at General Courts. Thus have General Courts co-operated with the Court of Directors in the mischiefs that have arisen in BENGAL; whilst annual contested Elections have, in a manner, deprived the Directors of the power of establishing any authority over their servants. The first half of the year is employed in freeing themselves from the obligations contracted by their last Election; and the second half is wasted in incurring new obligations, and securing their Election for the next year, by daily sacrifices of some interest of the Company. The Direction, notwithstanding all these manœuvres, has been so fluctuating and unsettled, that new and contradictory orders have

have been frequently sent out; and the servants (who to say the truth have generally understood the interest of the Company much better than the Directors) have in many instances followed their own opinion, in opposition to theirs.

It is not my intention, at present, to trouble the House with the Remedies for these evils. I rather chuse to defer them till the Bill comes into the House. I have now opened my Budget: it is not a ministerial Budget: it is an EAST INDIA Budget; which contains many precious Stones, Diamonds, Rubies, &c. of the first Water and Magnitude: and there wants only a skilful Jeweller, and able Artist, to polish them and ascertain their real Value.

THE END.

For give us Time to bring in the Meer Boor Prajah, Morattoes, or Gajoody
Caww. I desire you will give me your Sentiments freely how you think
I should act if Meer Jaffer can give us no Assistance.

Cuttwa 29th June 1757

BXIX/5

To The Select Committee
of Fort William Gentlemen

Since my last another Letter
has been delivered Meer Jaffer and no Answer returned
in Writing, but the enclosed Discourse past between him &
the Bearer. I am really at a Loss how to act in the present
Situation of our Affairs, especially should I receive a Confirmation
by Letter of Meer Jaffer's Resolution to stand neuter

The Nabob's Forces at present are not said
to exceed 8,000 Men, but a Compliance with their Demands
may easily increase them, if we attack them it must be undertaken
and ourselves without any Assistance, in this Case a Repulse
must be fatal, on the contrary Success may give us the greatest
Advantages. The Nabob's Apprehensions at present are great,
& he may perhaps be glad to grant us an honourable Peace, the
Principle of Fear may make him act much against his private
Inclination, and I believe that has been the Case ever since
the Capture of Chondernagore, there still remains another
 Expedient of sending an Embassy either to Gajoody Caww or
the Mahrattoes to invite them in: I beg you will let me have
your Sentiments, how I ought to act at this juncture.

Cuttwa 20th June 1757.

+ Cuttwa 21st June 1757

To the Select Committee
of Fort William Gentlemen

Enclosed are Copies of two Letters recd.
last Night. I likewise transmit you the Sentiments of a Council
of War hold this Day whether or not it was proper without the
Assistance of some Country Power to attack the Nabob. I want
only for some Encouragement from Meer Jaffer to proceed,
which must be the Case unless the Nabob makes very fair Of-
fers of Accommodation - I have the Honour to be