

A CALENDAR OF
THE COURT MINUTES
ETC. OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY
1635-1639

BY
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WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
WILLIAM FOSTER

PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF HIS MAJESTY'S
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PREFACE

THE Court Minutes of the East India Company, now preserved in the Record Department of the India Office, have been calendared down to the close of 1634 in the late Mr. W. Noel Sainsbury's invaluable series of *Calendars of State Papers, East Indies*, the last instalment of which was published by the Public Record Office in 1892. In the present volume Miss Sainsbury continues her father's work, and carries it to the end of the year 1639. It is to be noted, however, that there is a gap in the Minutes from July, 1637, to July, 1639, owing to the loss of the volume containing the entries for that period.

In order to make the work as complete a reflex as possible of the Company's home administration, abstracts of the documents in the *East Indies* series at the Public Record Office have been added, also a few papers from other collections at that office and some miscellaneous items from the India Office Records. In addition, the references to Indian affairs in the *Domestic State Papers* have been reproduced, the descriptions being for the most part quoted (by permission) from the official calendars.

Where the location of a document is not specified, it is to be understood to be in the India Office. Except in the case of well-known persons and places, it has been thought

advisable to spell all names as given in the documents themselves. The reader is thus left to form his own judgement as to which of the several variations is to be regarded as the right one.

Acknowledgements are due to Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte, K.C.B., Deputy Keeper of the Records, for advice on various points; to Mr. Edward Salisbury, of the Public Record Office, for assistance in examining the documents there; and to Mr. Wallace, of the Privy Council Office, for affording facilities in consulting the Privy Council Registers of the time.

The Index has been prepared by Miss Sainsbury.

W. F.

INTRODUCTION

AT the beginning of 1635, the date when this Calendar commences, the Worshipful Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies had been in existence just over a third of a century. Its career had been a chequered one. Far and wide over the lands and seas of Southern Asia its servants had roamed, from Persia and the Red Sea ports on the west to Japan and the Isles of Banda on the east, and many fair hopes had been built on its early successes. But, as time passed, factory after factory was abandoned, owing either to Dutch competition or to the impossibility of developing any trade capable of yielding the high profits required to balance the expenses and risks incurred, while of those that were still maintained several were rather a drain than otherwise. Much of the money attracted to the Company's coffers by its favourable start had been wasted in these futile experiments, and the confidence of the investors in the golden nature of Eastern trade had sustained a rude shock. Nor were other discouragements wanting. The cost of shipping was always heavy, vessels wore out rapidly in tropical waters, and many a precious cargo disappeared beneath the waves in the hazardous homeward voyage. Then, too, the Company's servants had more and more openly devoted themselves to trading on their own account. To a certain extent this was recognized as legitimate; but it was notorious that most of the factors pushed the practice to excess, and we are told that in one year the amount of private trade carried on reached the high total of 30,000/ ¹ The example set by the factors was assiduously followed by the officers and seamen of the Company's ships. Royal proclamations had fixed the amount and kinds of goods allowed to be exported and imported as private trade, and had threatened punishment to all who exceeded these limits. But

¹ Mr Sainsbury's preface to the Calendar for 1630-34, p xix. Boothby, in his *True Declaration*, alleges that two of the Company's servants made 30,000 and 20,000/ respectively in less than six years.

not a vessel left or returned to English waters without smuggling goods aboard on shore ; while in the East it was impossible to set bounds to the port-to-port trade. When we add the losses sustained through the troubles with the Dutch, and the discouragement caused by the King's readiness to allow interlopers to invade the Company's monopoly, we can easily understand why at times the most optimistic of the adventurers gave way to despondency.

Before proceeding to summarize the events recorded in the present volume, it may be convenient to introduce to the reader the members of the directorate and their principal officers. The important post of Governor was filled at this time by Sir Morris Abbot, knight and alderman, who had been elected to that position in March, 1624, on the death of Alderman Halliday. He belonged to a group of clever brothers, of whom one (George) became Archbishop of Canterbury, and another (Robert) Bishop of Salisbury. Morris (Maurice) had devoted himself to foreign trade, and was now in the front rank of London merchants. The Deputy Governor was Alderman Christopher Clitherow, who, like Abbot, had occupied his post for nearly eleven years. The duties of the Treasurer were discharged by Robert Bateman. He had held this responsible office, first in conjunction with William Stone and then alone, from March, 1620. The list of the twenty-four 'Committees', or Directors contained the names of six aldermen—Sir Hugh Hammersley, Anthony Abdy, Henry Andrews, Richard Fenn, Henry Garway, and Hugh Perry; the others being Samuel Armitage, Thomas Bownest, Thomas Burnell, William Cokayne, Matthew Craddock, Richard Davies, William Garway, John Gayer, Job Harby, Thomas Kerridge (formerly President at Surat), John Langham, John Milward, Thomas Mun (the writer on economics), Thomas Mustard, Abraham Reynardson, William Spurstowe, Thomas Styles, and John Williams. Of the officers of the Company the most important was the Secretary, Edward Sherborne, who had been appointed to that post in April, 1625, having previously served in the same capacity the Lord Treasurer Salisbury and the Lord Keeper Bacon.¹ His assistant was John Cappur, who held also the quaint appointment of 'Remembrancer'.

¹ Early in 1536 he succeeded to the post of Clerk to the Ordnance Board, retaining, however, his position at the India House (p. 246).

The Accountant was an old and trusted servant named Jeremy Sambrooke; and with him we may mention the Book-keeper, Andrew Ellam. Of the rest we shall most frequently hear of Mr. William Acton, the Company's Solicitor; of Richard Mountney, the 'Husband'; of his son John, who appears to have been employed in the counting-house; and of John Spiller, the Beadle.

The actual financial position at the beginning of 1635 appears to have been as follows. The current stock was that known as the 'Third Joint Stock', which had been started four years earlier with a capital of 420,700*l*.¹ No dividend had yet been paid, and on June 28, 1634, the Governor had told the subscribers that they must not look for any return for a year or two longer. In addition to this general fund, three subscriptions had been raised for separate 'Persia Voyages', and an abortive attempt had been made in May, 1631, to raise a fourth. This division of interests had resulted in such an inextricable tangle of accounts that in October, 1634, it was agreed that the three Voyages should be amalgamated with the Joint Stock at a valuation of 160*l*., 180*l*., and 140*l*. per cent. respectively.² In addition to its liabilities to its stockholders the Company was considerably in debt both in India and England; in the former country it owed 100,000*l*., and in the latter 300,000*l*. (p. 24). This was not in itself especially alarming, as the Company had always borrowed largely to carry on its trade; but it was somewhat disquieting that these heavy commitments should coincide with a great depression in the Indian trade, due to the frightful famine which had ravaged Gujarat in 1630-31.

The natural result of the absence of a dividend was a certain amount of discontent amongst the shareholders, many of whom

¹ A paper noted on p. 284 gives the original subscription as 425,000*l*. and the amount actually expended up to June, 1637, as 800,000*l*. This of course included borrowed money.

² These amounts included both capital and profits. The latter may seem to be fairly large, but it must be remembered that the stocks had been running for several years, and that the current rate of interest in London, for well-secured loans, was from 6 to 8 per cent. per annum. As a matter of fact, the adventurers of the First Voyage had already received back their principal and 40 per cent. profit; those in the Second their principal and 50 per cent. profit; and those in the Third their principal only. Hence the sums now placed to their credit in the Joint Stock were 20, 30, and 40 per cent. respectively of their original subscriptions. The final profit on the Third Joint Stock was 35 per cent. (Sambrooke's Account).

were inclined to attribute the ill success of the Company's operations to the bad management of the governing body. This irritation was evinced in many ways, and was not lessened by the long-standing dispute as to the exact relations of the directorate and the 'generality'. Many of the stockholders maintained that the Governor and Committees were merely delegates, who ought to keep their constituents fully acquainted with the state of affairs, and refer all matters of importance to them for decision. Sir Morris Abbot and his colleagues, however, while admitting a certain responsibility to the generality, were inclined to fight for a free hand in the management of the affairs of the Company, relying on past practice and the wording of the charter. They resented the imputation that they were salaried officials, and they noted significantly that they, personally, held more stock than four hundred of the generality (p. 46). It was, in fact, a weakness in the constitution of the Company that the members all voted on a footing of equality, irrespective of the amount of their holdings; so that the man with 10,000*l.* at stake had no more voice in a decision of the General Court—the ultimate authority on all great issues—than one with 100*l.* Now, the Company may be said roughly to have been composed of two classes. The first consisted of merchants largely dependent on the Indian trade, being themselves engaged either in the sale of the commodities at home or in their re-export to foreign countries. These mostly took out their dividends in goods, and thus made a second profit; and in any case it was vital to their interests that the trade should continue. The majority of the Company, however, were small shareholders, who regarded the stock merely as a means of investment, and, when they saw little chance of a dividend, were chiefly eager to withdraw their principal. The former class was of course strong in the Court of Committees, for by a rule established in 1628 no one was eligible for election to that body unless he possessed stock to the value of 2,000*l.*; but the small holder was supreme in the General Court, with the result that from time to time serious friction arose between the two bodies.¹ In the present

¹ When the Joint Stock of 1657 was started, a rule was introduced by which votes were proportioned to a member's holding, and this system was continued until the dissolution of the Company.

instance the malcontents were strong enough to give considerable trouble. At a General Meeting held on November 21, 1634, they proposed the appointment of a special committee of twelve shareholders to look into the accounts; but the suggestion was indignantly scouted by the governing body, and Sir Morris Abbot refused to put the motion. This somewhat high-handed action was followed a month later (December 24) by an order of the Court of Committees prohibiting any of the ordinary members of the Company from examining the accounts and correspondence or attending (as had been not unusual) to hear the letters from the East read. On February 6, 1635, the Committees went so far as to determine to put down the Quarterly General Courts, on the ground that they only begat troublesome debates. When, however, on the afternoon of the same day, they faced their dissatisfied constituents, their courage seems to have ebbed rapidly away, and we hear no more of this valiant intention. The first breeze was over the transfer of the 'Persia Voyages' to the Joint Stock. The opponents could not deny that this had been authorized at a general meeting, but they declared that the proposal had been made without sufficient notice, and carried too hastily. The suggestion for the appointment of a committee of investigation was again brought forward, but it was staved off by a declaration that four of the regular Committees were already engaged on the task, and hoped within two or three months to produce a perfect statement of accounts. Finally, the meeting fell upon the recent order forbidding promiscuous examination of the letterbooks and ledgers. 'An honourable lord' denied the right of the Committees to give such orders to the detriment of the generality; to which the Governor replied that the action had been taken for the good of the Company, and partly in consequence of a censure from the State for suffering their letters to be made so public; adding that the order was not intended to exclude lords and gentlemen who were adventurers, but certain persons who used the opportunity to create scandals and dissensions. This attempt to draw a distinction failed to improve matters, and a division was challenged on the question whether the Committees had any power to make such an order without the sanction of the general body. This was decided in the negative, and it was then determined to

remit to the next Quarterly Court the consideration of the advisability of confirming or rejecting the new rule.

While this dispute was going on, the Committees were busily engaged in preparing two vessels for dispatch to Surat. Of these, the *William* had been for some years in the Company's service, and the *Crispian* had recently been purchased for 2,700*l.* from Captain (afterwards Sir Nicholas) Crispe, with a condition that her name should not be changed. Richard Gilson was appointed master of the former, and Thomas Lee of the latter; while Captain Browne was chosen chief commander of the fleet, to hoist his flag in the *William*. Full details are given of the purchase of stores and goods, the hiring of men, the provision of ordnance, &c.; and we may specially note the active part taken in all these matters by the Committees themselves. Most of the actual purchasing seems to have been done by members of the Court, and it is not unusual to find them 'entreated' to make journeys of considerable length on the Company's business. In spite of all efforts, however, it seems to have been the middle of March, 1635, before the vessels left the Thames. The Court then turned its attention to the unloading of the *Dolphin*, which had arrived from the East towards the end of January with a cargo of pepper, cloves, and sugar, estimated to be worth 58,000*l.* This was her last voyage, for she was pronounced unfit for further service, and was thereupon sold, together with another ship, the *Exchange*. The *Mary* seems to have been the only ship now left at home, and it was resolved in consequence to make a considerable reduction in the charges of the Company's dockyard at Blackwall: whereupon the salaries of several of the principal officers employed there were largely reduced (May 8), to their great dissatisfaction.

On April 24 another General Court was held. The Committees had previously determined to resist any motion permitting private members to view the accounts, on the ground that this would hinder the auditors and accountants, who were now busily engaged upon them; but the meeting was for once harmonious, the shareholders being too much engrossed with the question of the sale of the *Dolphin's* goods to go into other matters. On the 8th of the following month, however, the question was fully discussed. The order forbidding access to the Company's ledgers (except

to the separate accounts of the adventurers) was now presented for confirmation, and Sir Morris Abbot urged its adoption. A long discussion followed, and at length it was agreed that the accountants should be allowed to finish their work undisturbed, and that when they had drawn out a balance, a special committee of six of the adventurers—elected by the meeting—should go through and report. The order regarding promiscuous examination of the accounts was directed to be brought up in an amended form at the next Quarterly Court.

The long-expected statement of accounts was ready by June 12, when a somewhat strange course was adopted by the Court of Committees. On the proposal of the Deputy Governor it was decided to conceal from the recently appointed committee of investigation the amount of the Company's indebtedness. The accountants were ordered to revise their statement, and meanwhile all present and the Company's officials were enjoined to strict secrecy. When in the afternoon the generality assembled to hear the expected statement, they were told that it was ready, but that the Court had decided to have it 'perfected' by some of its own members before submitting it to the Special Committee. This at once raised a hubbub, the objectors clamouring to have the statement presented intact to the investigators; but the Deputy and others strongly withstood this, declaring that for want of proper information from the East it was merely 'a roving estimate', and might prove to be misleading. These arguments, however, were brushed aside, and it was ordered that the accountants' figures for the stock abroad should be delivered on the following Monday to the Special Committee, and that a second balance, for the Company's estate at home, should be prepared within ten days, and handed to the same Committee. The members of the latter were then to go through these accounts, and present them to the generality at a special meeting. On the motion of the Deputy, the members of the Committee were instructed to keep the particulars secret; and a resolution was also carried to shorten the minutes of future General Courts by omitting 'impertinent passages and discourses'. Either the idea of concealing the debt from the investigators was abandoned, or else they were talked into conniving at its suppression, for they seem to have had full

access to the accounts, and to have been satisfied with the results. The adjourned general meeting was held on July 1, but only three members of the Special Committee attended, and they differed in their conclusions. They agreed, however, that the statements submitted by the accountants were full and accurate. With this the generality, after hearing the statements read, professed themselves well satisfied, and the powers of the Special Committee were declared to be at an end. The assembly declined, however, to pass the desired order prohibiting members of the Company from viewing the accounts or attending to hear the letters read, but deferred its consideration to a later date.

The General Court of Election for 1635 was held on July 3. Abbot was reappointed Governor, and Mr. Robert Batenian, in spite of some objection on his part, was again elected Treasurer. It was necessary to find a new Deputy, for Alderman Clitherow was to be the next Lord Mayor, and therefore could not undertake to serve the Company any longer; whereupon the assembly elected Alderman Abdy to the post. He was absent at the time, and apparently had not been asked whether he would stand, for at the next meeting of the Committees he both by letter and in person refused to accept the office. As no fresh election could be made except by the general body, the post remained vacant until their next meeting (September 9), when Alderman Garway was appointed to fill the vacancy, while Abdy consented to take Garway's place as a Committee. On the latter date, also, the Governor had the pleasing task of announcing to the adventurers the arrival of three ships from the East, viz. the *Fonah* (or *Feuas*) from Surat, and the *Hart* and *Swan* from Bantam. A motion was at once made that a dividend should be paid, but this was refused. As the Company was now in funds, Sir Morris Abbot frankly disclosed the concealment which had been practised regarding the debt, and took occasion to read the generality a little homily on their mistrust of the Court. Further, he announced that the prospects of trade in India had been much improved by a convention which President Methwold had negotiated in person with the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa in the preceding January. By this important agreement (p. 4) the treaty which had been concluded at Madrid in November, 1630, was extended to the East Indies, and an end was put to the desul-

tory warfare which had troubled the Indian seas from the first appearance of our countrymen in those waters.

Methwold's good services in this respect were cordially acknowledged by the Committees in their next dispatches. They were, however, still rather despondent about the Surat trade, for they ordered a private letter to be written to Methwold warning him to prepare for the withdrawal of the Indian factories if better treatment were not experienced, and they also decided to ask King Charles to write to the Great Mogul to the same effect (p. 116). In Persia, too, the aspect of affairs was disquieting, for the Shah was showing a royal disregard of his contract with the Company, and the trade was much disorganized in consequence. In order to stir up the monarch to a proper sense of his obligations it was resolved to send him (no doubt with an altered date) a letter from King Charles which the Company had previously procured but not dispatched (p. 126). Mention is also made of a flowery epistle from the Persian monarch to His Majesty of England, which was presented to the latter on December 15 by a deputation headed by the Governor. The King 'vouchsafed to read every word himself, commending therein the high and lofty style'; and noticing a desire expressed by the Shah for the services of European clock-makers, painters, and limners, he recommended the Company to comply as far as possible with this request (p. 132).

The unfavourable aspect of the trade induced the Court to scrutinize carefully its outgoings, and particularly the expenses at home. As already mentioned, several economies had been effected at Blackwall; and although the home charges now amounted only to 5,226*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* (p. 117), it was resolved to apply the pruning-knife to the salaries of the office establishment. Two days before Christmas a revised list was adopted, which, except in the case of a few favoured individuals, showed reductions of from 20 to 50 per cent. in the emoluments of the staff. The Court also decided that the Company was too poor to give its usual New Year's gifts to courtiers and officials, with the significant exceptions of the Clerks of the Privy Council, the Judge of the Admiralty Court and the King's master-cook. The customary Christmas benevolences were not, however, omitted; a sum of 10*l.* was distributed among the poor of Stepney, a chal-

dron of coal and 20s. given to the almsmen at Poplar, and a further sum to the widows of men who had died in the Company's service.

The year 1635 is memorable in the annals of the Company for the commencement of a competition on the part of a rich and influential body of interlopers under the direct encouragement of the Crown. The willingness of Charles to ignore the privileges granted by his predecessors had already been shown by his dispatching the *Seahorse* under Captain Quail to the Red Sea in 1630, when England was still at war with Spain. Quail was furnished with a commission to capture the ships and goods of the subjects of the Spanish king or of any other sovereign not in league and amity with England; and on the strength of this authority he made prize of a Malabar junk for which the Company's servants at Surat were forced to pay full compensation. The *Seahorse* returned in July, 1633, and the Company doubtless hoped that there would be no repetition of the voyage; but in any case it could not well object to the King sending his own ship to any part of the world when the ostensible object was the waging of war with the national enemy. However, the matter did not escape the vigilant eyes of Endymion Porter, the well-known courtier and royal favourite, who was always on the watch for opportunities of making money.¹ The native traffic between the Red Sea and the Indian ports was conducted in rich and defenceless junks, while an excuse for privateering could always be found in the fact that the peace with Spain was not recognized when once the Equator had been crossed. The fact that most of the junks from India provided themselves with passes from the Company's factors guaranteeing them against capture by English ships was not likely to trouble either Porter or his royal master, any more than the clause in the charter by which King James bound himself and his successors not to 'grant liberty, licence or power to any person or persons whatsoever . . . to sail, pass, trade or traffick to the said East Indies' without the consent of the Company.

An expedition to the Red Sea, in imitation of that of the *Seahorse*, was therefore resolved upon; and in order to provide the necessary funds Porter took into partnership two young London merchants, Thomas Kynaston and Samuel Bonnell, of whom the

¹ See Miss Dorothea Townsend's *Life and Letters of Mr. Endymion Porter*, pp. 149-51.

former was cashier to Sir Abraham Dawes, while the latter was in the service of Sir William Courteen¹, one of the best-known merchant-princes of the day. The Company not unnaturally concluded that Courteen was at the back of the whole scheme, and indeed some evidence was obtained that he was part-owner of one of the vessels employed (p. 209); but, later on, affidavits were sworn by the younger Courteen and by Kynaston that Sir William had really nothing to do with the expedition, and this was confirmed by the King himself (p. 226). Kynaston and Bonnell freighted two ships—the *Samaritan* of 250 tons and the *Roebuck* of 100—and placed them under the command of William Cobb, with Richard Oldfield and William Ayres as the respective masters; while Porter obtained a licence under the privy seal authorizing these vessels to visit any part of the world and capture the ships and goods of any state not in league and amity with His Majesty. Armed with this document, Cobb started for the East in April, 1635, the whole affair having been managed with such secrecy that the East India Company had no suspicion of the blow which had been dealt at its interests.

This expedition was clearly a speculation in privateering, and did not imply any competition with the Company in actual trade. It resulted, as we shall see, in considerable loss and trouble to that body, but there it might have ended, as previous interloping ventures had done. Unfortunately, however, while the interest of Porter and his partners in the subject was still fresh, there came the news of the Convention of Goa, which threw open the Indo-Portuguese marts to English trade and thus offered an entirely new and profitable field of commerce. Moreover, the news was brought by a man who was not only eager to make the most of the opportunity thus afforded but was also nursing a grievance against the East India Company. John Weddell had many years of distinguished service behind him; yet when his flagship, the *Charles*, was

¹ *Fourth Report of the Royal Historical MSS. Commission*, p. 292; also *Biographia Britannica* (ed. 1789), vol. iv, where a full account is given of the Courteens, father and son, together with an abstract of Sir William's will, dated May 22, 1636, in which an annuity of 50*l.* is left to his servant Samuel Bonnell, so long as he continues in the employment of the testator's son. A Samuel Bonnell (probably the same) is mentioned in the Court Minutes for February 22, 1630, and a doubt was then expressed whether he was yet of full age.

accidentally burnt at Swally, the Court refused to appoint him to another ship and ordered him home. By the friendly connivance of the Surat Council, he was returning in command of the *Fonas*; but he must have had little hope of re-employment, and was probably very indignant at the way in which he had been treated. He had been with Methwold at Goa at the time of the negotiation of the Convention, and apparently he had grounded thereon a plan for exploiting the situation for his own advantage. Sir William Monson, who met him in the Channel (July, 1635), wrote to Secretary Windebank that Weddell had information to give 'how His Majesty may be honoured and profited by that East India voyage' and that he had promised to repair to Windebank immediately on arrival (p. 80). It must then have been easy for Weddell and Nathaniel Mountney (the cape merchant of the *Fonas* and Weddell's associate in the plan) to get into touch with Porter, and Porter would naturally introduce his partners, Kynaston and Bonnell. What now remained was to get the King's approval and to find a capitalist willing to provide the necessary funds. About the former there was no difficulty; and, once the King's patronage had been secured, the capitalist was forthcoming in the person of Sir William Courteen.

The plans of the new association were soon formed. A strong fleet was to be provided, which would sail first to Goa and then to Macao, and possibly to Japan. The King himself entered heartily into the project and put down his name for 10,000*l.*¹ (p. 123). To place matters on a sound footing a royal commission was issued on December 12, 1635, to Weddell and Mountney, authorizing them to undertake a voyage to Goa, Malabar, China, and Japan (p. 124). The document is a curious one. In the preamble mention is made of the Goa Convention (Weddell and Mountney being elevated almost to the position of principals on the English side) and of the benefits likely to accrue to English commerce from the opportunities thereby afforded; the East India Company is declared to have failed to settle and fortify as it ought to have done, with

¹ From a letter given on p. 188 it appears that the King did not actually pay the money, but was credited with the stock on the understanding that interest and insurance would be deducted from any profits payable to him. Secretary Windebank's interest was secured by a gift of 1,000*l.* stock on the same conditions (p. 124).

² Darell explains (*Strange News*, p. 4) that the intention of the new association was

the result that trade has been lost, to the detriment of the royal customs ; and, as an additional reason for favouring the present venture, it is stated that the long-desired passage round the north of America will probably be discovered if attempted (as intended) from the side of Japan. Authority is therefore given to Weddell and Mountney to proceed to the East with the fleet now prepared and to trade freely in the parts mentioned. Should China or Japan be reached, a vessel is to be dispatched to seek the said passage, and the discoverers are promised half of any benefits that may result. A seal is appointed for the use of the adventurers ; the servants of the East India Company are forbidden to molest or hinder the voyage in any way, and those concerned are not to be questioned in a court of law for anything done in pursuance of this commission. Further, as a token that they are employed by the King, the ships are authorized to carry the Union flag. By other letters of the same date Courteen and his partners were empowered to take up 40,000*l* in foreign coin or bullion ; and a grant a week later authorized Weddell to make reprisals on the Portuguese, should they withdraw the concessions they had offered. .

The fleet destined for this venture consisted of six vessels, the *Dragon*, *Sun*, *Katherine*, *Planter*, *Anne*, and *Discovery*. The preparation of so many ships and the engagement of several of its former servants did not of course escape the notice of the Company, and in January, 1636, the Governor and Deputy made representations to the King on the subject. His reply was an assurance that Weddell's fleet would not do anything to prejudice the Company, but was to be employed on a secret design which His Majesty did not think fit to reveal (p. 142). A month later a fresh representation was made through the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Charles replied with emphasis that (' upon the word of a King and as hee is a Christian King ') no hindrance was intended to the Company's trade, and that the ships would not go near the Company's factories but were for a voyage of discovery (p. 157). The rumours, however, grew more persistent and more definite, and on March 8 the Governor, Deputy, and two Committees went to Whitehall

'to settle factories and plant colonies after the Dutch manner'. It is a curious coincidence that in little more than four years from this time the Company's servants, by building Fort St. George (Madras), really established a fortified colony after the Dutch model.

with a formal petition from the Company. They waited all the morning in vain, and when at last they were admitted to the presence the King took their memorial without vouchsafing a word in reply; and though the Governor next morning invoked the aid of the Archbishop of Canterbury no notice appears to have been taken of the Company's respectful remonstrance (p. 164). The question had perforce to be dropped, and in April Weddell's fleet sailed boldly away under the King's colours. Still, the Committees did not lose heart. 'This shall nothing discomfort us', they wrote; 'wee hope the East India Companie maie stand and florish when these new undertakers maie bee wearie of what they have taken in hand, when they have, to their cost, well paid for the same.' And so it proved.

The conduct of Charles had been indefensible. The grounds on which it was sought to justify the breaking of the explicit pledge given by the Crown in the Company's charter were, as we have seen, that the Company had neglected to use its privileges to the full, that its trade was decaying, and the royal revenue from customs was declining in consequence. To all this the answer was simple. The members of the Company had embarked their capital on the faith of a royal charter which guaranteed them an exclusive concession, or (should this be found to be contrary to national interests) three years' notice in order that they might withdraw from the trade. Their inability to enlarge the area of their operations was due solely to the unwillingness of the public to invest in a commerce subject to such uncertainties and fluctuations; and obviously to license others to enter upon the trade—and especially to reap the benefits of a convention obtained by the efforts of the Company's servants—was the very way to make matters worse. Even if the fleets sent out kept clear of the Company's factories, their return cargoes must depress prices and lower the profits now derived from the trade. Mill, with his usual bias against the Company, suggests that the general opinion of the nation was against the continuance of the merchants' privileges ('nothing less seeming necessary to embolden the King to such a violation of their charter'), though he admits that in such case the stipulated notice might well have been given and a legal end put to the

¹ Letter to the factors in Persia, May 25, 1636 (*J. O. Letterbooks*, vol. i, p. 121).

monopoly. That, however, was not Charles's way. Probably he had committed himself to favouring Porter's schemes without any clear perception of the harm they were likely to do to the existing Company or the resentment they would arouse; and when these things became manifest his pride would not let him draw back, and he took refuge as usual in a tortuous diplomacy. He aimed at keeping his pledges to the new association, while at the same time inducing the Company to carry on its trade as usual. The result was that he satisfied nobody, and only increased the mistrust with which he was regarded by a large and important section of the nation.

The departure of Weddell's fleet was quickly followed by the death of the principal promoter, Sir William Courteen, which took place on May 27, 1636.¹ His affairs were left in a distressed condition², and his son and executor, William, found himself compelled to borrow in order to satisfy the more pressing of the creditors. This made it all the more necessary that the new association should be put on as permanent a footing as possible, and during the next few months we find active negotiations going on between the persons interested, with the object of settling their respective shares and obtaining a royal grant to enable them to send out a fresh fleet. The result of these efforts we shall see later.

We must now return to the Company's own efforts to maintain the trade. Towards the end of 1635 the *Swan* had been dispatched to the coast of Coromandel; and the programme for the new year included the early departure of the *Mary* and *Hart* for Surat and Bantam respectively. The date of departure of the latter is not known, but the *Mary* left Gravesend on March 25, and the Downs on April 14 (*Marine Records*, vol. lxii). There being no immediate need of the services of the *Fonas*, she was, after being repaired, let out on hire to the King for employment with the fleet which under the Earl of Lindsey made a vainglorious and useless cruise in the English Channel from May to October. This was the squadron equipped from the famous levy of ship-money, and we may note in

¹ Smyth's *Obituary*, and a note on p. 327 of the *Biographia Britannica*, vol. iv.

² The equipment of Weddell's fleet had cost over 120,000*l* (p. 275), of which Courteen contributed by far the greater part. Sir Paul Pindar is said to have lent him (at the King's instigation) about 36,000*l* for this purpose. (*Fraud and Oppression Detected*, by G. C[arew], 1676, and *A Brief Remonstrance*, by John Brown, 1680.)

passing that in January, 1635, and March, 1636, the Company paid, apparently without demur, its share of this unpopular impost.

At the yearly Court of Election held on July 1, 1636, Abbot, Garway, and Bateman were reappointed Governor, Deputy, and Treasurer respectively; and six new Committees were elected, in accordance with the now well-established practice of a fourth of their number retiring annually. Towards the end of September came the welcome intelligence that two ships, the *Palsgrave* and *Reformation*, were nearing home from Bantam, the former with a cargo worth at least 100,000*l.* But a few weeks later the Court heard with dismay that the *Palsgrave* had been wrecked near Plymouth and only a portion of her goods saved; while the *Reformation* also ran some danger from bad weather and did not get into the Thames until about November 25. The disaster shook the Company's credit, and the Committees hit upon a curious expedient to steady matters. It was decided to draw up a policy of assurance, guaranteeing (for a percentage) that 100,000*l.* (over and above charges) would be returned from the Indies within two years; and this was to be offered to public subscription, none to underwrite more than 1,000*l.* or less than 500*l.* The form of policy, however, was not settled till May, 1637, and we have no information to what extent the invitation was accepted; though, judging from Mr. Smithwick's eagerness, at the end of 1639, to get his name inserted in the list, the guarantee was a success.

A further trouble to the Company was the increased demand for customs. A fresh 'book of rates' had been issued in July, 1635 to come into force at the beginning of November, 1636. In this new schedule the rateable price of pepper was trebled, although that commodity had fallen largely in value, and the result was that, as the Company complained, the duty was actually 75 per cent. of the net amount received.¹ So vexatious was this increase deemed that a proposal was made (p. 197) to send the *Reformation*

¹ Macpherson (*History of the European Commerce with India*, p. 117) explains that the rateable price of pepper 'was advanced from 1*s.* 8*d.* to 5*s.* a pound, whereby the duty, being charged *ad valorem*, was raised from one penny to threepence, while the selling price had fallen from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 1*d.*, from which deducting sixpence for freight and charges, there remained only sevenpence as the net price, and only fourpence after deducting the duty of threepence, which thus appears to have been seventy-five per cent. on the real price'.

to Holland, and sell her cargo there instead of in London. Such a move would certainly have drawn down on the Company the King's anger, and the suggestion was not entertained. Instead, a vigorous protest was made to the Privy Council on the subject; but no relief was granted, and nothing remained but to shoulder the new burden, at least for the present.

About Christmas, 1636, came a further budget of bad news. The *Discovery* arrived on the coast with letters from Surat, informing the Court that a native junk belonging to that port had been robbed by an English ship in the Red Sea, with the result that the Mogul authorities had imprisoned the Company's factors and forced them to make compensation for this piracy. Inquiries were at once set on foot which left little doubt who the delinquents were. Of the two interlopers sent out in April, 1635, the *Samaritan*, it appears, was wrecked on the Comoro Islands. The *Roebuck*, however, having lost company with her before the disaster, made her way into the Red Sea and there, in September, 1635, overhauled two native junks, from one of which, though it was furnished with a pass from the Surat factory, she took a large sum in money and goods. On receipt of the news at Surat, the authorities, who drew no distinction between one English vessel and another, imprisoned the Company's factors and forced them to make full compensation to the sufferers. The Company at once determined to bring the matter before the King, and on January 6, 1637, the Governor and others presented a petition to His Majesty at Hampton Court Palace. He professed concern at the news, gave leave to proceed against the offenders at their return, and promised to write to the Governor of Surat explaining the state of affairs. Charles's intention evidently was to put all the blame upon Cobb and Ayres, as having exceeded their commission; but the Company held that the parties responsible were those who had fitted out the ship, and it was at them that the blow was really aimed. Porter, of course, was too high in the King's favour to be directly attacked; but an action was commenced in the Admiralty Court against his two associates. Bonnell fled to France, but Kynaston was arrested and lodged in jail. Charles, however, at once interfered and ordered his release on bail; while, to secure further delay, he announced later on his intention of hearing the case personally

at his leisure. As a matter of fact, although this was not known at the time, the Company had already been revenged to some extent upon the interlopers by the courageous action of one of its own servants, John Proud, master of the *Swan*. On reaching the Comoro Islands in June, 1636, the latter found there the *Roebuck*, under the command of Cobb, with the captured goods on board. Proud made a bold attempt to seize the vessel, but the crew showed fight, and the utmost he could effect was to obtain the surrender of the prize property, on the understanding that it should be taken to Surat, and should the Company be found to have sustained no damage from the capture of the junk the value should be reimbursed to the promoters of the voyage.¹

Meanwhile the younger Courteen and his associates were pressing the King for a confirmation under the great seal of the privileges granted in December, 1635. Some of the documents submitted to His Majesty in this connexion are particularly interesting as showing that the Company, disheartened by its difficulties and losses, and especially by the King's hostile attitude, was more than half inclined to abandon the trade. The remedy, as pointed out in a sensible memorandum noted on p. 273, was for Charles to take steps to reassure its leaders and to redress its grievances. The members of the new association, on the other hand, seem to have insinuated that the probability of the Company being dissolved was a forcible argument for encouraging its rival, in order that the Hollanders should have no chance of filling the hiatus (p. 271). Charles had, however, decided already (p. 241) to carry out his promise of confirming the licence of 1635 by a formal grant under the great seal, and the only concession he made was that the operations of the new association should be restricted to places at which the Company had not traded prior to the issue of the licence to Weddell. Subject to this restriction, the grant (which was dated June 1, 1637) practically established the new body as a rival East India Company for five years from Lady Day, 1637, and gave them power during that period to send out ships and

¹ See O. C. 1565 (I. O. Records); also the *Calendar of State Papers (Domestic)*, 1636-7, p. 528. The *Roebuck* returned to England in May, 1637, whereupon the Company promptly petitioned for the seizure of the gold and silver on board; but only to be put off with a vague assurance of justice. Proud was given 100*l.* in recognition of 'his extraordinary service' (p. 299).

goods, export bullion, and so forth, on much the same footing as the original Company (p. 275).¹

In the spring of 1637 the Company was threatened with a further, but less serious, infraction of its charter. This was a project for settling a colony in Madagascar. The Bay of St. Augustine in that island was a favourite rendezvous for English ships, and some of the returning merchants and seamen gave glowing accounts of the fertility of that place and its suitability both as a port of call and a trading centre. The idea of making a settlement was much favoured at court, where Endymion Porter appears to have been one of its chief advocates; and it was suggested that an attempt should be made under the leadership of no less a personage than the King's nephew, Prince Rupert, then a lad of seventeen. The proposal was first mooted in 1636; but the Prince's mother strongly disapproved, and the scheme hung fire, apparently for want of means. It was now revived, and the Company was asked to take a share in the venture. The Committees, however, prudently refused to have anything to do with the scheme, pleading that they had no power to use the Company's money for such a purpose, and that, in any case their funds were too low to permit of their doing so (pp. 248, 249). 'The dream of Madagascar', wrote Roe in May to the Queen of Bohemia, 'I think is vanished'²; and in the following month Rupert embarked for the Continent to join the army of the Stadtholder.

The Company's plans for 1637 included the dispatch of the *Fonas* to Surat with 100,000 rials. A pinnace, built at Blackwall in the preceding summer and named the *Advice*, had already been sent to the Coromandel Coast and Bantam; and another new vessel of the same class, the *Eagle*, was ordered to accompany the *Fonas*. With these ships departed a Persian ambassador who had arrived via Venice in July, 1636. Notices of his unhappy experiences with

¹ Bruce (*Annals*, vol. i. p. 348) refers to a petition from the Company about this time begging Charles to confer no new powers on Courteen's Association, and to give leave for instituting prosecutions against them should their servants commit irregularities and thus draw on the Company the vengeance of the native powers. A reference is given to the East India House MSS., but I have not been able to trace the document.

² See also Miss Eva Scott's *Rupert, Prince Palatine*, pp. 25, 28, and Eliot Warburton's *Memoirs of Prince Rupert*, vol. i. p. 59. In the latter it is stated that Lord Arundel was an active supporter of the project.

the London roughs of the day, and his squabbles with the Company over the amount to be paid for the transport of his suite and his goods, will be found at pp. 225, 229, 231, &c.

At the beginning of July, 1637, we lose the invaluable aid of the Company's records, for the volume containing the minutes from that point to July, 1639, is unfortunately missing. We gather, however, from the signatures appended to a letter addressed to the Surat Council (*J. O. Letterbooks*, vol. i. p. 142) that Abbot continued to be Governor, and Garway Deputy Governor, during 1637-38, while the list of 'Committees' included most of the familiar names. From the same source we learn that the *London* from Bantam reached the Downs on July 18, 1637, and that two more ships—the *William* from Surat and the *Jewel* from Bantam—arrived in December. Heartened perhaps by this, the Company once more approached the King, through the Recorder of London, making four requests: (1) for justice for the depredations committed in the Red Sea; (2) for the reduction of the customs on its commodities to the former level, together with the restoration of the period formerly allowed for drawback on re-exportation; (3) for the prosecution by His Majesty of the Company's claims against the Dutch; (4) for a renewal of its charter with additional privileges. To these requests the King returned a favourable answer, except as regards the extension of the period for drawback, which was point-blank refused; and, thus encouraged, the Company submitted a fresh petition in January, 1638, on much the same lines as before. Charles replied that as regards Cobb's piracies he would send for the parties concerned and examine them; that the reduction of duties and the question of drawback should be referred to the Lord Treasurer, who would confer with the Farmers of the Customs and give answer; and that the Company must submit in detail both the conditions of the proposed treaty with the Dutch and the alterations desired in the charter. At the end of the month a General Court was held, at which His Majesty's assurances of favour and protection were communicated to the generality, and the Governor and Committees urged that a ship should be sent out with a good stock to keep life in the trade. The majority of those present, however, were in no mood to do anything but withdraw their money as quickly as possible. One of Courteen's

ships—the *Planter*—had just arrived with a full cargo of spices and the news that Weddell had established a factory at Bhatkal, on the coast of Malabar; there were rumours that the King was about to make further grants to the detriment of the Company, and 'it was strongly pressed that to send more stocke was to spinne and linger out a sick trade, which they were resolved to abandon.' But Abbot and his supporters were equally resolved to keep the Company alive as long as possible, and a significant hint that those who placed themselves in opposition to His Majesty's wishes might expect to feel the royal displeasure cowed their opponents and enabled them to carry a resolution that a ship should be sent out with a sufficient stock to relieve and revive their factories. Pursuant to this decision, the *Discovery* was dispatched to Surat under Captain William Minors in March, 1638, carrying 20,000 rials of eight and a small general cargo, while a smaller ship, the *Fewel*, appears to have started about the same time for Bantam (*Hague Transcripts*, series ii vol. iii. no. 113).

In spite of his assurances of protection to the existing Company Charles had by no means withdrawn his favour from the new association, and he expressly ordered the Company to send out directions that their servants were not to trade at Bhatkal or at any other place where Courteen and his associates had settled factories (p. 295). He had also instructed Sir Paul Pindar and Sir John Wolstenholme to endeavour to arrange for an amalgamation between the two bodies. To this the Governor and Committees professed their readiness to agree, provided that Mr. Courteen's terms were found acceptable (p. 292).

It is evident that the King was now becoming alive to the gravity of the situation he had himself done so much to bring about. The prospect of an early dissolution of the East India Company—with the probability that the trade would then fall largely into the hands of the Dutch—was not one to be viewed with equanimity; and when in May, 1638, the Governor and Committees presented a further memorial, a strong committee of the Privy Council was appointed to deliberate upon the condition of the trade and suggest remedies. Amongst other matters to be considered by the committee were (1) a reform in the constitution of the Company by which the adventurers might be given a greater

amount of control ; (2) a suggestion that the trade might be managed, not as a joint stock, but as a regulated, company, in similar fashion to the Turkey Company ; (3) the possibility of merging Courteen's Association in the Company without prejudice to the former body. The committee, however, never met—probably owing to the preoccupation of the Council with the state of affairs in Scotland—and so matters drifted on much as before.

About this time the strong hand of Abbot was withdrawn from the rudder of the almost derelict ship. At the time of the General Court of Election of 1638 his appointment as Lord Mayor was approaching, and probably it was on this ground that he retired from the Governorship. The choice of the generality fell upon Sir Christopher Clitherow ; while Garway was continued in the office of Deputy. And this change of Governor, we may here note, was followed by a change of residence, which was not without its significance, as showing the reduced state of the Company and the little confidence of its members in the future of the trade. It was in the beginning of November, 1638, that the Company moved from its palatial premises at Crosby House to a much less commodious abode. It had been in occupation of the former since the autumn of 1621, on a lease from its owner, the Earl of Northampton, paying a rent of 200*l.* a year. In 1633 some negotiations were set on foot to secure a fresh lease, but the Earl demanded the same rent, with a fine of 1,000*l.*, while the Company considered that 400*l.* was high enough for the latter ; and although in June, 1635, an offer of 500*l.* was made, the Earl adhered to his former terms. As no agreement could be reached, the lease was allowed to expire, which it did in February, 1638, though the Company managed to retain possession for some months longer. In view of the uncertainty of the situation the Committees no doubt felt it impossible to take any house for a term of years, and they decided to accept the offer of their new Governor to accommodate them on his own premises. Clitherow's dwelling was on the south side of Leadenhall Street, next door to the mansion belonging to Lord Craven, which afterwards became the Company's final home ; and in this undignified position of lodgers in their Governor's house the East India merchants remained for a period of nearly ten years.

At the beginning of September, 1638, the Company once more approached the King with a statement of grievances, which seems to have run on much the same lines as before. To this he replied that, as regards the Red Sea business, he would appoint a committee to look into it, and on its report would either satisfy the Company or give permission for an action to be brought in the ordinary courts of law; that the demands regarding the customs should be referred to the Lord Treasurer and Lord Cottington, who would consult the Farmers thereon; that, with respect to the Company's claims against the Dutch, he had already taken steps to resume negotiations at the Hague; and that he viewed with favour the desire expressed for a renewal of the charter with additional privileges. These assurances were made known at a General Court held shortly afterwards, and in spite of considerable opposition it was decided to send out two ships in the coming season. At the same time the Governor and Committees were instructed to wait again on His Majesty to press for a settlement of the claims against Cobb and Ayres; to represent that, according to rumour, Mr. Courteen was preparing to dispatch another ship to the East¹, and that the adventurers in general were unwilling to send out fresh stock while this menace was hanging over their trade; and finally to beg for details of the concessions the King proposed to make for the benefit of the Company. The reply of Charles seems to have given the adventurers sufficient encouragement to induce them to send out the *London* in the spring of 1639 with a good stock of money (p. 304). Apparently the *William and Reformation* had been dispatched a few months previously to Bantam.

About this time the project of establishing a colony in Madagascar was revived, and in March we find the entry of a warrant under the privy signet appointing John Bond (who was to have been Prince Rupert's deputy under the previous scheme) to be Captain-General of the expedition. Later in the year we find Lord Arundel, the Earl Marshal, interesting himself in the matter, and declaring his intention to proceed in person to the island.

¹ On this point the King told the Company that Courteen had promised him that the ship should not trade in the East Indies, but merely embark the stock remaining there (*Privy Council Register*, October 7, 1638).

Charles approved the scheme, and promised to aid it; and the Earl seems to have expected that the Company would be equally complaisant. On September 27 he suggested that the Court should arrange to freight his ships for the return voyage; and about a fortnight later he asked that fifty of his men should be taken out in the Company's next shipping. To both requests a civil refusal was returned. The merchants could not prevent an influential noble, backed by the King, from encroaching in this manner on their chartered rights; but it was going too far to expect their active assistance.

Another project of this time was a proposal by the Earl of Southampton to colonize the island of Mauritius. As a matter of fact the Dutch had anticipated him; but the Earl was either ignorant of this or purposely ignored it; and in the autumn of 1639 he got ready a ship under a Captain Bell to take out settlers to the island. The outcome of this we shall see later.

From the beginning of July, 1639, we have once more the aid of the Company's minutes. On the 5th of that month a General Court of Election was held, at which Sir Christopher Clitherow was again chosen Governor, and Robert Bateman Treasurer. Alderman Garway, however, gave up the post of Deputy, in view of his approaching election as Lord Mayor; whereupon Alderman Gayer was (though absent) appointed to the post. He, however, refused to serve, and at another Court held on August 2 Mr. William Cokayne was prevailed upon to accept the office.

One of the earliest measures of the new Court was to reduce the salaries of the staff, on the plea that the Company was 'upon a loosing trade', and must exercise rigid economy. Sherborne, the Secretary, was obliged to submit to a reduction from 120*l.* to 100*l.* per annum; Cappur (who probably had some other employment) had to content himself with 40*l.* in lieu of 50*l.*; Sambrooke, though he was allowed to retain his salary of 25*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, was required to undertake additional work; Markham, the auditor, was reduced from 100*l.* to 100 marks; and corresponding reductions were made in the pay of other members of the establishment.

In July the *Swan* arrived in the Thames, and by the middle of the following month the *Advice* had returned from Bantam. Both these ships were ordered to be prepared for a further voyage; and

on September 13 the Governor and Committees wrung from a General Court a reluctant assent to the immediate dispatch of the *Hopewell* to the Coromandel Coast, and the *Advice* to Bantam with 40,000 rials of eight between them. In November it was settled that the *Fonas*, *Crispian*, and *Swan* should be sent to Surabaja in the spring; and the Company made an interesting departure from their usual practice by freighting a privately owned vessel, the *Caesar*, for a voyage to the East. The *Hopewell* and her consort appear to have started late in October.

Meanwhile, efforts had not been wanting to come to terms with the State about the Company's grievances, and thus pave the way for the establishment of a New Joint Stock. On October 27, 1639, a fresh petition and remonstrance were presented to Charles at Whitehall. In these documents complaint was made of the injuries received from the Dutch, the Red Sea piracies, the intended plantations on Mauritius and Madagascar, and the interference of Courteen's ships at the Company's settlements; while the old demands were renewed for a reduction of duties, an extension of time for the re-exportation of goods, and the issue of a fresh charter. After some debate, during which Lord Arundel warmly resented the references to his Madagascar scheme, the Archbishop of Canterbury declared on behalf of His Majesty that the latter desired to favour the Company and support the trade, and would appoint a new committee to consider the subject. Accordingly, six Privy Councillors, including the Lord Treasurer, Lord Cottington, and Secretary Windebank, were told off for the purpose, and these again appointed a sub-committee to go into the matter with the Company's representatives. The first result was the issue of a warrant for detaining Captain Bell's ship. Against this Lord Southampton appealed to the King, but apparently without success. The outcome of the committee's report was an Order in Council of December 10, 1639, which was the turning-point in the whole controversy. His Majesty at last threw over both the promoters of the Red Sea expedition and the new association. As regards the former venture, the Company was declared to be at liberty freely to prosecute its claims in the law courts of the realm; while a promise was given that all patents granted for plantations, &c., beyond the Cape of Good Hope should

be called in, after allowing Courteen and his partners a reasonable time to bring home their ships and goods. The period for re-exportation of East India commodities was extended to its former limits, and favourable terms were granted for the payment of customs dues. A fresh charter, with additional privileges, was also promised, provided that a sufficient stock were raised for carrying on the trade; and to this end the Governor and Committees were commanded to prepare a book of subscription, with a preamble enumerating these concessions, and submit the same for the King's approval. The subscription, we may note, was to be open to aliens as well as to English subjects. Finally, it was promised that Lord Cottington should attend a General Court to be specially summoned, and should then declare to the adventurers His Majesty's favour and his determination to maintain them in their privileges.

Thus encouraged, the Committees went boldly forward with their preparations for raising the new subscription and carrying on the trade with fresh vigour. To add to their cheerfulness, in the middle of December it was announced that the long-expected *Mary*, from Surat, with the ex-President Methwold on board, had safely reached the Downs. Methwold had brought with him the German traveller, Albert von Mandelslo, and the pair were welcomed at Blackwall by the Court with eight coaches, and taken to the city, where, two days later, they were entertained at the East India House (Mandelslo's *Travels*, ed. 1662, p. 280). The year thus closes on a note of feasting and general expectation of better times.

We have already noted the King's assurance to the Company in September, 1638, that he had taken steps to press forward the negotiations which had so long been dragging on for obtaining compensation from the Dutch on account of the injuries they had done to English merchants in the East. The statement was literally true, but it is to be feared that in this matter the King was considering his own interests quite as much as those of his subjects. The claim which was set in the forefront was for the loss occasioned by the action of the Hollanders in Pulo Run, one of the Banda group. As the reader may recollect, that island had been formally surrendered by its inhabitants to the British crown in 1616, in the

hope of thus securing themselves against further aggression from the Dutch. This surrender, however, did not prevent the latter from ravaging and taking possession of the island a few years later; but the English Company, fully alive to the importance of keeping a foothold in the Bandas, pressed the matter so vigorously that by the Accord of 1623 the Hollanders were obliged to undertake to evacuate the island. This they did, but only after the nutmeg trees had been to a large extent destroyed. A speedy occupation was therefore practically useless, while soon the English had enough to do to maintain themselves at Bantam and a few neighbouring stations; consequently no attempt was made to establish a settlement. In 1632, however, and again in 1633, orders were sent out to Bantam to instal a factory in Pulo Run, and in 1634 a vessel was actually dispatched for this purpose, though it failed to get as far and had to return. Warned, apparently, by these measures, the Dutch again cut down the nutmeg trees, with a view to render the island useless to its rightful owners. Such an action was of course an outrage, and Charles was justified in demanding reparation and the punishment of those responsible. For proof of the fact he had the evidence of Antony Van Den Heuvel, a dismissed servant of the Dutch Company¹, who had claims of his own against his late employers and was only too ready to be the means of causing them further trouble. Having been promised a liberal donation out of the damages to be obtained, Van Den Heuvel was dispatched to Holland in August or September, 1638, as Charles's procurator in the business, and was joined in commission with Sir William Boswell, the King's Resident at the Hague, to demand justice from the States General. The Directors of the Dutch Company were indignant at a former employé being made use of in this capacity, and refused to have anything to do with him, while professing their readiness to treat with Boswell. Charles, however, steadily supported his emissary; and the Directors fell

¹ He had been Commissaris for Amboyna, Banda, and Ternate in 1633, and Landvoogd of Amboyna from May, 1634, to May, 1635, when he was superseded and afterwards dismissed from the service of the Company (Valentyn's *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indien*). At p. 296 will be found a set of proposals submitted by him to the King in 1638 for a new East India Company composed partly of aliens and partly of Englishmen. He seems to have held out hopes that he could induce a number of Dutch merchants to take shares in such a company.

back on the argument that, under the Accord, any matters in dispute must first be negotiated between the two Companies and only referred to their respective governments in the event of their being unable to agree. This would not at all have suited the King's purpose, and he replied indignantly that the infraction of the agreement was a state matter and that he would not permit his subjects to interfere at all in the business. In obedience, perhaps, to a hint on the subject, the English East India Company became alive to its grievances against the Hollanders, and in March, 1639, and again (as we have seen) in October of that year, a long catalogue of its claims was presented to the sympathetic monarch. In the latter month Boswell and Van Den Heuvel, who had both been for a time in London, were dispatched again to the Hague to press for the speedy payment of compensation, with a veiled threat that, if they were not listened to, His Majesty would take steps to enforce his demands.¹ It may perhaps be surmised that the King's want of money at this time had something to do with this eagerness to recover damages from the Dutch; and it is to be feared that, had they made a ready payment, but little of the cash would have reached the English merchants, at least for some considerable time.

The present volume contains several interesting references to the Company's dockyard at Blackwall, which covered an area of about ten acres and was held on a lease from the Earl of Cleveland. In 1635 there was a lawsuit as to the amount of the fine to be paid, which was settled by commissioners appointed by the court, the Company greasing the wheels by giving a dinner to the referees at a cost of 12*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.* (p. 68). In January, 1636, some annoyance was caused by one of the Company's feoffees being nominated reeve of the manor of Stepney. As he declined to serve, a fine of 10*l.* became due; and although the Company advised him to refuse to pay, there is little doubt that the penalty was enforced. In July it was decided to close the yard after the launching of the pinnacle then under construction; and again in May, 1637, an order was made that the premises were to be sold or let; but although many of the staff were dismissed this intention was not carried out. As already noted, the freighting of the *Caesar* in 1639 foreshadowed the practice afterwards adopted by the Company of hiring the

¹ See *State Papers, Holland*, vol. clv, at the Public Record Office.

services of privately owned vessels, in lieu of building on its own account.

The Company's almshouse at Blackwall (or Poplar, as it was later called) was also at times a source of trouble. Amongst other items of interest we may note that in January, 1635, upon a report that the establishment was ill governed, regulations were ordered to be set up, and a suitable person was chosen to read daily prayers (p. 7); also that in the following month a mariner who had served with 'Capt. Drake [in] 1601' (*sic*) was admitted, on condition that his wife should not live in, or trouble, the house (p. 22).

Besides building and repairing ships, we find the Company spinning its own ropes and making its own powder. For the former purpose it had hired the King's cordage house at Woolwich in June, 1633, for three years, at a rent of 100*l.* per annum; but apparently the experiment was not a striking success, for in July, 1635, on receiving a demand from the Navy officials for the surrender of the premises, the Company cheerfully complied, although the term had yet a year to run (p. 75).

The story of the Company's powder-mills is a longer one. As is well known, the manufacture of explosives was a jealously guarded monopoly of the Crown, and from the time of the Armada down to 1636 the privilege of making gunpowder for the King remained almost exclusively in the hands of the family to which John Evelyn, the diarist, belonged. The East India Company was of course a large customer for that commodity, while at the same time India was becoming the chief source of supply for the most important ingredient, namely saltpetre. This was not, however, a particularly profitable article of import, both on account of its bulk and because the King was almost the only customer (at his own price); and in order to encourage the trade the Company was given a licence to make powder for its own needs (August 17, 1626). For this purpose mills were set up near Windsor Forest; but these the King ordered to be removed, on the ground that they disturbed the royal deer. Thereupon some mills were rented from Sir Edward Randall at Chilworth (near Guildford), a locality which has ever since been associated with the manufacture of ammunition; and Edward Collins, one of the survivors of the 'Amboyna Massacre', was installed as the Company's powder-maker. Evelyn was of

course loud in his complaints of this infringement of his patent ; and for some time the Company was interdicted from proceeding with the work. In April, 1635, we find the Committees anxious to get rid of the mills ; but in July the restraint was taken off and Collins was employed to make powder for the King's use as well. At the beginning of the next year there was trouble with the landlord over the rent, and a little later there was talk of Sir Henry Vane taking over the mills, apparently on behalf of the King. In the summer of 1636 Collins died, and in February, 1637, the lease was assigned to Samuel Cordell or Cordwell, who had secured a contract from the King in the previous November. Thus ended the Company's concern with powder-making.

The question of the supply of saltpetre for this purpose brought the Company into collision with the royal officers on several occasions. In May, 1635, Lord Cottington forced the Committees to sell their stock at a price much under its value ; and a year later this was repeated, with threats that unless they yielded they should be made to pay duty on all silver exported and should never again enjoy His Majesty's favour. They were also enjoined (December, 1635) to bring home a good quantity of saltpetre in all their ships.

Even the driest bundle of records is likely to contain some elements of amusement ; and in the present case the sober details of the everyday life of a great trading corporation are relieved from time to time by the vagaries of a certain member of the Company named Thomas Smithwick or Smethwike. This fantastic individual is first heard of in 1621, when he was selected for a post at Bantam—an appointment which was quickly revoked in disgust at 'his pride and overweening of himself'. No doubt this decision was wise from the point of view of the Company's interests, but many a time, during the twenty years that followed, the Governor and Committees must have wished Smithwick at the other side of the world. His activity was amazing. He was perpetually popping up with 'propositions' for the good of the Company, criticisms of the management, or a long array of figures to prove that the accountants and auditors were all wrong in their estimates of the financial position of the Stock. It was useless to point out to him that his facts were fictions and his inferences mistaken, for, as the Governor told him in public on one occasion, 'he doth see

abound in his own sense as nothing will satisfy him if it be not agreeable to his conceits and apprehensions.' At General Courts he was of course much in evidence, for there he found a certain amount of support in his attacks on the Governor and Committees. But he did not come off altogether scatheless. In 1628 his allegations became so serious that they were investigated by the Privy Council, who pronounced them baseless and committed Smithwick to prison until he apologized for his offence. Three years later, owing either to the growing discontent of the generality or to a hope on the part of his opponents that office would tame him, he was elected a Committee; and the appointment was repeated in 1635. He proved, however, a most intractable member, and his colleagues were glad to get rid of him at the end of the twelvemonth. So long as he confined his activities to the East India House he was more of a nuisance than a danger; but finding he could not get his own way he addressed memorials to the King, the Privy Council, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Cottington—in fact, to any one of position who would listen to him; and listen they did with amazing patience, and thereupon made inquiries and appointed commissions which troubled the Company greatly. One instance of his effrontery is particularly amusing. In April, 1633, armed with a copy of the recent treaty with Spain, he stopped Lord Cottington as the latter was leaving his house, and requested His Lordship then and there to expound the second article and give an opinion whether the Company's ships would still be justified in making prize of Portuguese vessels. It was not usual for a Privy Councillor to answer demands of this kind from a merchant at his own door, and Lord Cottington answered brusquely that the treaty explained itself and that he would wait until the question came up at the Council board before giving an opinion upon it. This, however, was enough for Smithwick. Bustling to the East India House, he pushed his way into the room where the Committees were sitting and warned them to be careful in what they did, as he had consulted Lord Cottington and the latter was of opinion that the English were not at liberty now to capture Portuguese ships. The Court at once rebuked him for his presumption in meddling with such a business, and desired him to depart, which he did after some wrangling; but the members were evidently somewhat disturbed,

until the Governor interviewed Lord Cottington and learnt the true facts of the case. However, evil days were in store for Mr. Smithwick. At one time he was sufficiently wealthy to have 7,000*l.* in the Company's stock, and to make a liberal gift to the fund for restoring St. Paul's Cathedral¹; but by the autumn of 1639 he was in low water and was anxiously pressing certain monetary claims on the attention of the Committees. The latter were not disposed to show him any favour, and they steadily referred him to his old battle-ground, a General Court. At this he lost patience, and on October 25 'used very opprobrious words against Mr. Governour and the whole Court and demeaned himselfe in that unmannerly and uncivill fashion' that they 'comaunded their Beadle by a strong hand to carry or thrust him out of the court; which comaund their Beadle obeyed and performed accordingly.' This unceremonious expulsion had no effect, and he still continued his personal attacks on the Governor and others, whereupon Clitherow appealed to a Court of Honour, with the result that Smithwick was pronounced to be in the wrong and was ordered to recant in open court. In accordance with this decision, at a meeting held on April 17, 1640, 'the said submission of the said Smithwick under his owne hand was now presented unto him to bee read and publickly acknowledged by himselfe, which hee did accordingly, but with some reluctancy and repyning.'

¹ He gave the fund an adventure of 900*l.* in the Company's stock. Of this he was afterwards permitted to borrow back 200*l.*, on signing a bond to repay it in six months (*Privy Council Register*, December 22, 1639).

CORRIGENDA

Page 135, line 28. *Add* Richard Mounthny 150*l.* (in lieu of 200*l.*);
,, 282, ,, 19. *After* 'Discovery' *insert* [*sic* 'Palsgrave' ?],

Foster. v. 31

COURT MINUTES, ETC.

OF THE

EAST INDIA COMPANY, 1635-1639

THE COMPANY'S BLACK BOOK, 1624-55 (*Home, Miscellaneous*, vol. xxix).

A record of the 'errors and misdemeanors' of the Company's servants. The entries for 1635-9 occupy ff. 19-28. The persons mentioned are: Nicholas Barnabie, Guy Bath, Mark Bromley, Cornelius Candish, Ralph Cartwright, Henry Chapman, Thomas Clarke, Thomas Collye, Richard Cooper, James Corbett, Robert Coulson, Francis Daye, Philip Dickenson, Abel Druce, William Fall, William Favour, Christopher Fleming, William Gibson, Nicholas Gove, Thomas Griffith, William Hall, Rev. — Hall, Thomas Hartnoll, Robert Heath, Arthur Henderson, Edward Heynes, — Honnywood, Richard Hopkins, Richard Hudson, — Jesson, H. Johnson, William Johnson, Thomas Joyce, Joseph Keeling, John Kendall, John Kingston, Thomas Lenninge, Robert Lewis, — Linge, Robert Litler, Robert Loftus, Robert Manley, William Methwold, — Miller, John Milward, Thomas Nelson, George Parphey, Diggory Penkevill, Gerald Pinson, John Powell, Christopher Reade, Ralph Reade, William Richardson, Thomas Rogers, Thomas Sankey, Thomas Smyth, William Swanley, John Tuesley, George Willoughby, Luke Wood, and Nathaniel Wyche. (19 pp.)

INDEX TO THE LEDGER OF THE THIRD JOINT STOCK [1631-42 ?] (*Ibid.*, vol. i).

An index to a non-existent ledger. It contains, however, a large number of names of shareholders and others who had dealings with the Company at this time. (24 pp.)

WAREHOUSEKEEPER'S ACCOUNTS, 1631-6 (*Ibid.*, vol. vi).

Details of goods (chiefly calicoes or silk) sold to various merchants. The five last entries relate to sales in 1635 and 1636. (1 p.)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 5, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 138).

Mr. Recorder's proposition for a final ending of the Hawleys' case considered. Resolved that unless the said Hawleys consent to give general releases to the Company, the Lord Keeper be moved to appoint a time to hear and end their case. Directions given for a trial of the Lahore indigo delivered in by Mr. Boulton.¹ Arnold Crony, son of William Crony of Guildford, 'that had a bunch of grapes in his forehead,' applies for the place of Henry Askwith but is refused.² Mrs. Hungerford tenders two bonds, entered into by herself and her brother, as surety for 100*l.* and plate left to her son Edward by his uncle, the late Edward Haynes, with condition to save harmless the executrix, Mrs. Haynes. The Court demurs, and directs that Mrs. Haynes's proctor be consulted before proceeding further.³ Forty shillings, paid by Leonard Culmer for four bags of turmeric, to be put into the poor-box. Twenty shillings given from the box to Thomas Pryor, quartermaster of the *Expedition*, who broke his leg in the Downs and so was left behind. There being now many youths in the Company's service in India, no more are to be entertained, but a few 'able merchants'. Five shillings bestowed on Thomas Carpenter, a sick 'almesman' at Blackwall. (1½ pp.)

¹ For the patent granted to William Bolton, grocer, to make flat indigo from indigo dust, and its subsequent cancelment upon the complaint of the Company, see the *Calendar of State Papers, E. Indies*, 1630-4, pp. 552, 568, 578, 607.

² In a separate series at the India Office, consisting of rough notes of the proceedings at Court meetings, we find the following additional information at this point:—Motion made on behalf of Mr. Kipp that the 50 tons of saltpetre bought of the Company to transport be entered in its name to be shipped; the Court desires to speak with Mr. Kipp before resolving on this point.

³ The request of Robert Deakle, who has served the Dutch in the West Indies, to be entertained as corporal in the ships now going out, is referred to the court of election for officers to be held next Friday (*Ibid.*).

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 7, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 139).

Two thousand pounds adventure and profits in the Third Joint Stock transferred by John Holloway to Derrick Host, on condition that Host pays to the Treasurer 1,600*l.* owing to the Company by the said Holloway. The Court, on hearing Mr. Wyon's opinion concerning the two bonds entered into by Mrs. Hungerford on behalf of her son Edward, decides that if Mrs. Haynes is satisfied with the security given, they will pay the money received for the plate. Petition read from Henry Glascocke for delivery of his eighteen jars of borax. Complaints of private trade registered in the 'blacke booke' [see p. 1] urged against him. He confesses to have received 320*l.* for private trade at Bantam, and 300*l.* for dates. His further examination deferred, but he is advised to make a full confession which may conduce to a more lenient judgement. Three samples of Mr. Boulton's indigo with a like proportion of the Company's, to be delivered, for trial of the difference in goodness, to some able and skilful dyers to enable the Aldermen to make their certificate thereon to the Board. (1½ pp.)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 9, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 141).

The quarter's rent due last Christmas for the Company's powder mills and lands at Chilworth demanded by Sir Morgan Randall, who expresses his willingness to accept the surrender of the Company's lease of the premises on receiving satisfaction for damages occasioned by breach of covenant; ordered that Mr. Mountny pay the rent to Robert Mullins for Sir Morgan Randall, whose demands are to be set down in writing. The Company express their willingness either to accept the lease as before, to surrender the present one, or to consider the matter further. This day appointed for the election of commanders, factors and pursers for the two ships intended for Surat. Captain Slade, being unable by reason of sickness to go as Admiral, desires that his services may be excused, but accepted next year. Captain Pynn and Captain Browne nominated as fit men. Captain Pynn to come before the Court. Petitions read of fifty-three persons desirous of enter-

tainment; on examination the following are chosen: Thomas Wilbraham¹, purser in the *William*; Robert Mullins, his mate; John Jefferies, steward; Thomas Meriell, his mate; Richard Fitch, purser in the *Crispian*; Nicholas Cooke, his mate; Nicholas Grent, steward; David Murry, his mate. Their several employments communicated to them. Charged to be careful and diligent, and to forbear all manner of private trade, which they promise to perform. George Peirson, brother-in-law to John Skinner and 'sometimes a Hamborough merchant', applies for employment as prime factor; he is desired to say what salary he expects and is allowed until Wednesday to consider. On the motion of Mr. Blunt, bills are ordered to be set up at the Exchange to give notice of a Court of Sales to be held 'this day senight in the afternoone'. Mr. Caron appeals on behalf of his brother-in-law, John Fowke, whose wife is in great extremity and like to die through grief at her husband's troubles. The Court is willing to settle the difference between it and John Fowke, especially as Mr. Bonneale has offered 500*l.* in payment of his share of the debt; Mr. Caron desires until Wednesday to consider what he will do herein. Samuel Pauncefoote, who has served Mr. Sambrooke in the counting-house for three years and upwards, petitions for entertainment as factor; being recommended by Mr. Sambrooke he is entertained, but his salary not decided. (2½ pp.)

THE ACCORD BETWEEN THE VICEROY OF GOA AND THE ENGLISH PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL, JANUARY ½^o, 1635² (*Public Record Office: East Indies*, vol. iv B, Nos. I, I I-II).

The Viceroy and President agree to a mutual cessation of arms &c., on the basis of, and going no farther than, the treaty concluded at Madrid on November ½^o, 1630; further, that the truce shall last until the Kings of Spain and England shall reciprocally denounce it; and that in such case, after notification of the denunciation to the Viceroy and President, six months' grace shall be allowed to the merchants to withdraw their estates. Signed by William

¹ In the rough notes referred to on p. 2 he is stated to have served the Company seven years in India.

² The text of the Accord, in Portuguese and English, will be found at p. 52 of vol. ii of Biker's *Collecção de Tratados*

Methwould, Nathaniel Mounteney, Thomas Turner, Malachy Marten, and Richard Cooper. (1¼ pp. *Three copies in English and two in Spanish. Also an extract in English, ¼ p.*)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 16, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 143).

Mr. Governor reports information given him by one Clarke, of Blackwall, of a plot he overheard spoken of at a tavern by some persons who wished to get for their own use the moneys collected by the Company for building the hospital and for relief of the almsmen at Poplar; this is conceived to be a large sum and these persons contend that the Company has no licence or authority to collect it; and in default of their getting the said money, appeal is to be made to 'the Lords Grace of Canterbury'. The Committees having clear consciences fear nothing in this matter. Clarke to be thanked but no gratification to be given him. Letter read from the Earl Marshal¹ and the Earl of Suffolk, recommending Thomas Wilson, who has served in India under Captain Quayle, for employment in the Company's service. Being on examination found possessed of good abilities, Wilson is entertained as purser's mate in the *William* at 25s. per month. Choice of a commander for the fleet considered. Captain Pynn unable through illness to serve. Captain Browne being much humbled and desirous to serve again, the Court, after warning him against past failings of pride and indiscretion, &c., agrees to consider his entertainment, he resolving to conform to the regulations, which have been altered and improved since his former service; he to consider hereof until Wednesday next. Mr. Charly petitions for remission of freight on twenty-nine pieces of coarse calicoes; this being a prime commodity is ordered to be detained, but Mr. Charly being reported an able man, and the Court being willing to show him favour, Mr. Armitage is desired to proportion the price. Joseph Marins, son of the preacher at the French church, referred to Captain Styles and Mr. Mustard for entertainment as surgeon's mate. Richard Boothby, late a factor to the Company, to receive, in full of wages and all other reckonings,

¹ Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel and Surrey, famous as an art collector.

1664, 19s. 3d., on his signing a general release, the Company promising to refund to him the sum of 200*l.*, deducted from his wages to pay his debts in Surat, on his proving to have paid from his estate in India sufficient to balance the discharge of the said debts. Sarah, wife of John Harley in the *Reformation*, and nurse to Sir Thomas Richardson's child, to receive two monthes' pay extraordinary of her husband's wages. Mr. Caron appears again on behalf of John Fowke, and offers to pay half the loss which Fowke and Bonneale sustained by saltpetre bought of the Company, on condition that Fowke's adventure is set free and discharged from broke¹ from the time the money is tendered. These conditions the Court refuses until Caron names the sum he intends to give, but promises to do what is just. Caron is desired to go with Mr. Sambrooke 'to draw downe' the account of Fowke and Bonneale with broke and interest, and to present it on Wednesday next for further consideration. Complaint made against the Company by Mr. Smithwick to the Commissioners of St Paul's Church. Mr. Governor, being in commission with the Lord Bishop of London and others about the repairing of St. Paul's, causes to be read Mr. Smithwick's propositions made to the Lords of the Council concerning his gift of 1,000*l.* towards that work, and the letter of the Lords to the Company, together with the several answers. It appearing that Mr. Smithwick has only paid in 100*l.* of the said 1,000*l.* and yet has received upon his adventure 600*l.*, the Commissioners purpose at his next appearance to obtain from him a letter to the Company to make good his proposition out of his adventure, or else to cause him to come before the Court and promise to pay from the same the 900*l.* still owing. The Auditors report that they have made progress in the business concerning the Company's estate, and desire that some Committees may be nominated to examine their labours. Messrs. Garway, Mun, Williams, Cockayne, and Mustard are entreated to peruse what the Auditors have done, and report at the next court. Mr. Potter's request to be allowed to look into Mr. Skibbow's accounts refused. Mr. Sambrooke required to make up and present the said accounts to the Court, who will then resolve thereon. Mr. Peirson, lately entertained as prime factor, who formerly insisted on 200*l.* salary,

¹ A fine levied for non-compliance with the rules of the stock.

now accepts 200 marks per annum, with condition to serve the Company five years, be debarred from private trade, and observe all directions given him. Samuel Paunceforte, who had served over three years in the counting-house under Sambrooke and was lately entertained as factor, is now contracted with to serve seven years, at 20*l.* for the first year, and 10*l.* rising, on entering into a bond to forbear all private trade. (4 *pp.*)

A GENERAL COURT OF SALES, JANUARY 16, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 148).

Only pepper sold. Names of purchasers and prices. ($\frac{1}{2}$ *p.*)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 21, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 149).^{*}

Stephen White, late servant of Nathaniel Wright, made a free brother of the Company, paying 20*s.* to the poor-box. Ordered that Mr. Mountny pay 4*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* due for the diet and lodging during their sickness of divers blacks who came home in the *Mary* and who are to be entertained and returned in the *William* and *Crispian* for India. Mr. Mun reporting the necessity of more men for those ships, in regard of the mortality in the *Swan*, and news from Bantam of the scarcity of mariners in India, the Court, though trusting that there may be a supply out of the *Charles* and *Swallow*, orders that ten more men be entertained both for the *William* and the *Crispian*, and Captain Styles, Mr. Spurstowe, and Mr. Mustard to make choice of 'able mariners, not landmen'. Ordered that Mr. Mountny pay to the collectors of Ship Money 20*l.*, being the amount the Company are assessed for Crosby House towards that payment. Mr. Governor buys the Company's rich indigo brought home by the mariners at the price Mr. Langham paid for his, on condition that he may refuse what Mr. Mountny reports to be not worth more than 20*d.* per lb. and take only what is good and merchantable. Alderman Abdy acquaints the Court with the disorder and ill government of their almsmen at Poplar, with neglect of the daily reading of prayers, there being no man there able to perform that service. After serious consideration the Court orders that the regulations drawn up by Mr. Mun on this subject

be engrossed and set up in the Almshouse, and a fit man chosen to read daily prayers, to whom a yearly stipend shall be given. Richard Harvey entertained as barber in the *William*, on recommendation of the Countess of Dorset. Desire of Henry Baynebrigg to pay in 1,000*l.* upon discount at eight per cent. referred to the consideration of Mr. Treasurer, who is now 'full of mony and hath much adoe to make men take in their mony at 6½ per cent.'. William Hurt appointed to look after the debts of the runaways. Mr. Thatcher offers to buy from the Company at 15*l.* per hundred the borax brought home as private trade by Glascocke; his offer refused, the borax being worth more. Glascocke questioned as to his private trade and charged with having sent goods to the value of 2,000*l.* from Surat to Persia; this he denies, affirming it to be a malicious report, he having done the Company good service and honestly given up his account in India, as may appear by the receipt which he now produces from the accountant at Surat, Mr. Giffard. Glascocke confesses having indulged in private trade but not to the extent pretended; he desires the Court to deal leniently with him and submits to its decision. His case referred to the next meeting, when decision shall be made either to detain his goods or to fine him according to his deserts. Letter read from Giles Waterman, desiring consideration on account of his sufferings and want caused by the burning of the *Swallow*; resolved not to entertain him, but to allow him to seek employment elsewhere and pay him only such wages as are his due. Ordered that 249*l.* be paid to the executor of Thomas Smith, the Company's late Secretary at Surat. (3 pp.)

CAPTAIN JOHN HATCH, ABOARD THE *DOLPHIN* IN SCILLY ROAD, TO EDWARD SHERBORNE, JANUARY 22, 1635 (*Public Record Office: East Indies*, vol. iv B, No. 2).

Has arrived, 'out of an ocean of miseryes, stormes, fearful tempests, and strange vicissitudes of weather,' by God's providence into England. Left Bantam the 11th of March last, but was forced by bad weather to bear up for St. Laurence. Set sail from thence the 18th of August after refreshing, all being in good health. Will tell further experiences at meeting, they being too tedious to

write. Constrained by an easterly wind and the great mortality and sickness of the men to seek refuge in this harbour. John Denne, 'your kinsman,' is well. (*Seal.* $\frac{3}{4}$ p.)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 23, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 152).

Henry Glascocke called in and questioned concerning his borax and again charged with sending goods to the value of 2,000*l.* from Surat to Persia; this he again denies; he is further charged with being one of the greatest private traders and with supplying calicoes to mariners and others for private trading. His account is demanded; this on many frivolous pretexts he refuses to produce. It appearing that he is still a debtor in the Surat books, his affairs are referred for conclusion, and his borax ordered to be sold. Mr. Mayo, who bought two bales of the Company's silk stolen from the *Mary*, and since taken from him by the Farmers' deputies, now demands its restitution; answered, that when he can satisfy the Court that he came by the said silk honestly it shall be restored to him; otherwise he may not only go without it but have to answer for it in another place. The Court being satisfied that Captain Slade, by reason of ill health, is unable to go as commander in their fleet this year, causes Captain Browne to be called; and after admonition (he acknowledging his former offences, with the promise of amendment and to forbear all private trade) entertains him at his former salary of twenty marks per month, with a gratification to set him to sea; acceding further to his request to take with him his son, who is fourteen or fifteen years old, and two youths, in regard of the confidence they have of his good service. Thomas Chapman, formerly entertained to assist John Mountry in perfecting the Company's accounts for stores, having served nine months, now petitions for an annual salary; a good report being given of him and of his careful attendance to business, he is granted 40*l.* per annum. A month's pay, due in March next, to be given to Mary, wife of Thomas Church in the *London*, Margaret, wife of William Bruton, who went out four years ago, Joan, wife of William Kingman in the *Discovery*, and Ann, wife of William Jourden, who went out in the *Blessing*, on their several petitions for relief of their present necessities. ($2\frac{1}{2}$ pp.)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, JANUARY 28, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 154).

Job Harby, having transferred the whole of his adventure of 1,200*l.* in the Third Joint Stock, paid in and clear of all brokes, to Captain John Milward, and so being no longer capable of holding office as a Committee, resigns his place and takes leave of the Court, with all good wishes for their prosperity and success. * On reconsideration of the salary lately conferred on Thomas Chapman, the Court agrees that it may well be spared, his labour being superfluous, and in effect performed by Mr. Cobb; but on the Auditors and Accountants agreeing that it is necessary to keep books of accounts of the valuation of the Company's stores other than those kept by Mr. Cobb, as otherwise Sambrooke cannot perfect the great books, or Mr. Fotherby deliver a perfect account of his charge at Blackwall, it is ordered that Chapman bring the accounts up to 1633, for which he is to be paid 30*l.* in gross, and that then his further services be dispensed with. After that John Mountny¹ is to continue the work. This expense has been brought upon the Company by Edward Seagar, who for many years past neglected the books of accounts of the stores; and it is therefore ordered that the said books be brought forward monthly as much as possible; Mr. Cobb to keep them for a fortnight, then to deliver them to John Mountny that he, in another fortnight, may pass them into the journal or ledger. Thomas Smithwick transfers his adventure of 1,000*l.*, with profits, in the Third Joint Stock, fully paid and free of interest, to Mr. Robert Bateman. John Greene transfers his adventure of 125*l.* and profits in the Third Joint Stock, being the remains and profits of 1,000*l.* formerly adventured in the Second Joint Stock, to Mr. John Milward. Letter read from Captain Slade, recommending Richard Gilson as a fit man for master in the *William* under Captain Browne; and on further special recommendation by Captain Pynn, Gilson is entertained at a salary of 5*l.* 10*s.* per month. Mr. Acton's bill of 8*l.* 1*s.* 0*d.* for law causes to be paid. Abraham Beck and his partners having bought a parcel of silk of the Company for

¹ Son of the Company's Husband. He had been employed on similar work from 1628 to 1634.

24,999*l.* 4*s.*, to pay for the same at five, six months,¹ from the first of December last, of which he has paid in stock, moneys and interest discounted, 7,095*l.* 10*s.*, Beck now requests that the remaining 17,903*l.* 14*s.* may be put into one bill and paid in one payment at the time before mentioned, he intending to discount the same from time to time; agreed to. Letter from Mr. Bell, desiring that the difference about the white wine sent into the Indies by Captain Hall may be ended, so that he may settle his accounts and adventures with the Company; the Court desires to accede to his request but defers the matter, he not being well enough to appear, meanwhile the court books are to be searched for the agreement made with him. A General Quarter Court to be summoned 'Friday next come senight'. Ordered that the Secretary attend Mr. Secretary Cooke² to obtain a warrant for arrest of one Mooreton of Dover, who is to make satisfaction, to the Company for goods brought home as private trade bought by him and taken from the Custom-house without payment. (3 *pp.*)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, FEBRUARY 4, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p 157).

Mr. Handson, one of the Company's Auditors, not giving sufficient attention to his business by reason of his many other employments, it is resolved that the number of the Company's Auditors be reduced from three to one, who shall give his whole time to that service. Mr. Handson's salary to be 'extinguished' at Lady Day, Mr. Ballow's at Midsummer. Mr. Markham retained as sole Auditor, to be assisted in cases of extraordinary business by Mr. Handson, who shall be paid for his services as shall be thought fit. Motion of Mr. Spurstow for leave to ship to India 37 chests of coarse coral (sent unto him without direction or advice from 'beyond the seas') on the following conditions: that he bear the adventure, that all proceeds of the coral be put into the Company's cash, and none sold until all belonging to the Company be disposed of: that freight and valuation be left to the Company's decision. The Court, remembering that coral is one of their principal com-

¹ This appears to mean that half the amount was to be paid at five months from the date of the bargain, and the rest six months later.

² Sir John Coke, Secretary of State, 1625-39

modities, and only allowed to be carried by themselves, but knowing that none is being sent this year in their ships, is pleased to condescend to Mr. Spurstow's request upon the conditions proposed, allowing him 5s. 6d. for the chests but demanding no freight. Benjamin Smith, recommended by Mr. Beck, desires employment as factor, but on the report given of him he is not entertained. The Court, hearing from their factors and commanders of the great want of chirurgeons and chirurgery, directs Mr. Woodall to provide two small chests of all kinds of chirurgery beyond the proportion usually sent, to be brought to the East India House by the 10th of March, ready for the Company's two ships; also two experienced chirurgeons for Surat and Persia, besides those designed for the ships. Application made by the two sons of John Fortree for their freedoms by right of their father, who purchased his at a charge of 100*l.* The Court observes that they could not challenge the same 'of right but by grace'; yet being willing to show them favour, proposes to admit them on payment of a moderate fine; refusing this, they are referred until the next court to consider thereof and then give answer. Complaints made in letters brought by the *Dolphin* from the pursers of the *London* and *Hopewell* of the badness of the beer, some having to be thrown overboard; Mr. Houghton, the Company's brewer, appearing to answer these complaints, protests that he never used 'flowers of broome' instead of hops, and that all the beer supplied was of one brewing. The Court, not satisfied with his excuse, imposes a fine of 10*l.* to be paid to the poor-box, resolving for the future not to pay his bill in full until they hear from the Cape of the goodness of his beer. Houghton desires the Court to consider the loss he sustained by being enforced to fill up the beer in the hold, which was formerly done in the lighters at the ship's side, being damage unto him 3s. 4*d.* in every tun. George Rooke accepted as security for his son, Nicholas, purser's mate in the *Crispian*, and Mr. Cappur of Wansted for Richard Fitch, purser in the said ship. (3 pp.)

A COURT OF COMMITTEES, FEBRUARY 6, 1635 (*Court Book*, vol. xv, p. 160).

Ordered that Alice, wife of William Clifton, cooper in the *Blessing*, receive a month's pay of her husband's wages due next

March. Letter read from Mr. Smithwick, desiring that 900*l.* of his adventure in the Joint Stock be turned over, as his free gift, towards the repairing of St. Paul's Church; the Court, observing divers ambiguous cautions and restrictions in this letter, refuses to accept it as sufficient warrant for the transport, and desires that Mr. Smithwick be sent for and pressed to make over the 900*l.* in the ordinary way. Mr. Smithwick appears and consents to do so if the Court will clear his adventure of brokes, which he is advised are illegal; whereupon Mr. Governor answers, as formerly before the Lord Bishop of London, that if Smithwick be in brokes, it is not in their power to free him; therefore he must settle the transport in the usual way. Smithwick departs, saying he must first find out what his brokes are. Mr. Governor now acquaints the Court with a paper presented to the Bishop of London by Mr. Smithwick containing a declaration of the Company's estate sent into India, and also a foul aspersion upon the Court of Committees for undervaluing the Voyages; resolved that a copy of this paper be obtained and particular answer made thereto, vindicating their reputations from these unjust accusations. Mr. Governor desiring to know what to tell the generality at the General Quarter Court this afternoon, it is resolved to acquaint them with the letter from the Bishop of London concerning their contribution towards the repair of St. Paul's Church. If an account of the Company's estate be required, the Court, not thinking it safe either to deliver or promise an estimate, agrees to tell the generality that the Auditors are on the work but cannot perfect it until April next. As the General Quarter Courts beget quarrels and debates, it is proposed and agreed to put them down, the chief cause for which they were established, namely, 'the satisfaction of divers noblemen and gents who are in towne only in the Terme time' and have since sold out, being gone. Resolved, in case of quarrels this afternoon, to have in readiness Mr. Secretary Cooke's letter signifying His Majesty's pleasure, and if there be cause to have it publicly read. The Court confirms its former order of 21st July¹, which is now read, and directs that payment be made of 38*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.*, the sum remaining due to the children of Mr. Aldsworth, to Matthew Aldsworth, the surviving child, the

¹ A mistake for June 25, 1634.