

# REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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**THE EAST INDIANS'**

## **PETITION TO PARLIAMENT,**

READ AT

**A PUBLIC MEETING**

Held AT

**THE TOWN HALL, CALCUTTA**

**MARCH 28, 1831;**

WITH

**AN APPENDIX.**

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**Calcutta :**

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**1831.**

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## East Indians' Petition Committee.

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Messrs. WALE BYRN,

WM. BYRN,

C. F. BYRN,

W. D'ACOSTA,

H. L. V. DEROZIO,

P. D'MELIO,

G. R. GARDENER,

Messrs. J. J. L. HOFF,

H. MARTINDELL,

H. PALMER,

C. POTE,

J. W. RICKETS,

AND

W. STURMER.

*Secretary*,—MR. H. PALMER.



*At a public Meeting held at the Town Hall, by Advertisement, on Monday the 28th of March 1831, for the purpose of receiving the Report of Mr. J. W. Ricketts, the Agent of the East Indians, just returned from his deputation with their Petition to the British Parliament.*

On the motion of Mr. Wale Byrn, seconded by Mr. J. Wood, Mr. W. M. Woollaston was unanimously voted to the Chair; when, after some prefatory observations on his part, explaining the object of the Meeting, he called upon the Secretary to the East Indians' Petition Committee to read Mr. Ricketts's Report: at whose request, Mr. J. A. Lorimer proceeded to fulfil the task.

The reading of the Report was frequently interrupted by loud bursts of unanimous applause; after which, Mr. A. HEBERLET rose, and addressed the Meeting to the following effect:—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—The very full and interesting Report, which has this day been read to us, must have satisfied every one who has listened to it, that Mr. Ricketts, in the arduous mission so readily undertaken by him, has ably and creditably fulfilled all those expectations, which the most sanguine minds may have entertained when he left his native land, deputed by his suffering countrymen, to ask on their behalf, from the wisdom and justice of the Parliament of Great Britain, for remedies calculated to remove disabilities under which they have long unfortunately laboured.

Mr. Ricketts's zeal for the advancement of our best interests, has for years past held him prominently forth as a gentleman meriting much of our commendation and gratitude; and from what he has latterly done, no dispassionate mind, I am convinced, will refuse to accord to him the just meed of being ranked at the head of our class. In saying so much, I am satisfied I do not overrate his talents or exertions; they are, indeed, above all praise. We certainly have not yet experienced the fruits of his endeavours to meliorate our condition; but it is to be hoped, after the part he has so ably taken, and the reception he so happily met with in England, as well as from the disposition that has of late been manifested, both by the local Government and by the Home Authorities, for the welfare and happiness of all classes con-



posing the population of India, that the time is not far distant when all that we now complain of as disabilities, odious in themselves, and incompatible with our descent, will at once be removed. Even if they are not, Mr. Ricketts has a strong and undeniable claim upon his countrymen at large, which must for ever excite in his favour their warmest and most heart-felt gratitude. In personally assuring that gentleman, who has done a great deal for us, that his countrymen and their posterity can never forget the extent or importance of his labours in their cause, I beg to propose, that the Report of his proceedings, which future generations will peruse with the same interest and satisfaction that we have this day felt, in listening to it, be approved, and printed for general information.

Mr. Heberlet then proposed the first Resolution, as follows:—

*That the Report now read, be adopted and printed, for general information.*

Mr. W. KIRKPATRICK, in seconding this Resolution, observed that it was quite unnecessary for him to recommend the motion to the support of the Meeting, as they had already repeatedly\* expressed their approbation of the Report. He would, however, take the opportunity to express his feelings on the occasion,—expressions which would be merely an echo of the feelings of the Meeting. He could not but feel the highest satisfaction at witnessing the perfect unanimity which pervaded the Meeting, as contrasted with some differences on a former occasion, which he did not wish to remember. He had heard the assertion, that East Indians could not be unanimous, and he blushed for those who made it; and were the feelings of the Meeting other than what he had witnessed, he should blush for them and for himself. But he felt there was no ground for shame; on the contrary, he rejoiced in perceiving that they were one. He would not make any particular remarks on the Report. The Meeting had heard of the manner in which Mr. Ricketts was received in England by men of influence who merited their thanks; and no one could regard, but with execration, the conduct of persons in a certain quarter. The best thanks which East Indians could render to their friends and supporters in England, would be the earnest prosecution of their rights, by which it would be made evident that they were worthy of the privileges which they claimed. Had the Report informed them of complete success, the Meeting would not have been of a deliberative kind; they would have only to share in a triumph. Something has been done; but there was yet much to accomplish. By their unanimity and their earnestness, they would oblige their friends to plead more earnestly for their rights,—which not all the efforts of their enemies could withhold from them. The East Indians

sue for no favour; they do not seek to be elevated above their fellow-citizens; they only demand to be placed upon an equality with them; they claim their rights. Mr. Kirkpatrick concluded by saying that, overcome by his feelings, he could not venture to speak any longer, however willing he might be to address them on so interesting a subject.

Mr. C. POTE then proposed the second Resolution, as follows:—

*That a review of the proceedings of our Agent in England, confirms this Meeting in the firm persuasion, that all that unwearied exertion, devoted zeal, and unshaken attachment to the cause, could have effected, has been done for promoting the success of the East Indians' Petition, and generally the interests of the East Indian Community, in England.*

In doing so, he observed, that, in order to understand fully the nature and value of Mr. Ricketts's exertions, it was necessary to take a transient view of the grievances and disqualifications, from which it was the object of those exertions to release Indo-Britons. Those grievances and disqualifications were comprehended in the Petition, that had, through the delegate, been sent up to Parliament. However some might object, that there were various errors in that document, (though he could never concede this point,) yet all must concur, that a great mass of injurious or inefficient legislation was there truly described; of a nature so oppressive, that he would not hesitate to say, that its operation upon any class of men, however barbarous, or destitute of knowledge, or sensibility, would be to degrade that class below what the vilest barbarism or ignorance could effect; for it would degrade them below their self-esteem, and this was left for the support even of the rudest savages. The particulars of their grievances they would find embodied in their Petition; the effects of them they felt in every act of doing and suffering, and in every moment of their lives, as surrounding them with the disgrace and obloquy that always attend legal disqualification; and he said it with truth, and with grief proportioned to the truth of the remark, that a body of men, against whom no offence could be charged, and who stood in many ways in the relation of consanguinity to Britons, were, while under the protection of the noblest, freest, and most enlightened government of the modern and ancient world, visited, by the concurrence of the British people, with such contumely and scorn, as was seldom the lot of the most infamous guilt.

This was shortly the condition of Indo-Britons; and from this it had been the labour of Mr. Ricketts's life, by every effort he could make, to extricate them. He would, however, call their attention, at present, to the last exertion of this description which Mr. Ricketts had made, as it would bear them out in supporting the Resolution it was his (Mr. Pote's) business to submit.

At a period of life when most men are immoveably fixed in the places of their birth, or of long and familiar abode, surrounded by the ties of family connections, dissuaded by all the natural considerations of ease, of social friendship and domestic love, and bound too to the spot by the engagements of business and of property, this lover of his country shook from him every motive that would have influenced other minds; and leaving ease, pleasure, and business behind him, boldly adventured to a foreign-land, to the hazards of a strange climate, to the labours of an undertaking vast, absorbing, and intricate almost beyond comprehension; and this in the solitude and dreariness of strange society, far from the sympathies and consolations of the circle from which he had been wont to draw his joys. What mind, said the speaker, can perfectly comprehend or appreciate such self-sacrifice? It is fair, in estimating the character of human efforts, to inquire how many have appeared capable of the same performance. Regarding the act of Mr. Ricketts in this view, we see him placed in a proud and peculiar station, won by the grandeur and virtue of the great motives that inspired him, and the self-devotion he exhibited. Nor was this all. The Meeting learned by the Report just read, that the conduct of the business he undertook, was, through its course, in all respects suited to the high merit of its adoption. Every labour, every difficulty was cheerfully encountered; alone, and surrounded by the subtleties of a court, by the opposition of the proud, and the negligence of the indifferent, his tenacious and faithful mind could be neither diverted, nor subdued. He was found persevering in his efforts to animate the sluggish, recall the faithless, and convert the hostile; to his personal efforts, they must attribute all that they recognize as favorable to the success of their cause; and looking at him thus, invested with the highest qualifications, and as one who has brought those qualifications to bear for their service, they could not refuse their heartiest and unanimous consent to the terms of the Resolution he had just had the honor to submit.

Mr. Pote next adverted to the Report, which he said, while it bore testimony to the labours and abilities of the delegate, yet appeared to him to indicate no such approach to the desired point as ought to be satisfactory. Every thing evinced the necessity of repeated and strenuous exertions. He earnestly recommended renewed efforts. There was no dependence to be placed on the smiles of courtiers, no faith in the promises of Lords, who were proverbial for the facility of making and breaking a pledge; but, indeed, none in this case could be of any service to the cause but themselves; and in this, as in most earthly concerns, there was no reliance so sure and infallible as that reposed in the perseverance and activity of the parties concerned. If, said Mr. Pote, we unremittingly, zealously, and firmly persevere in our exer-

tions, following the example of our respected delegate, we must succeed; for when did industry and perseverance fail in their efforts? Even in the purposes of the base and the bad, the efficacy of these qualities are well understood. What, then, have we not to hope, who are acting for interests and objects, in favor of which all the best feelings and affections of universal human nature are enlisted? In every uncorrupted soul, we shall meet a warm coadjutor; and the combined sense of mankind must triumph.

Mr. J. WELSH, in seconding Mr. Pote's motion, spoke as follows :—

Mr. CHAIRMAN,—I beg leave to second the motion; and after the very eloquent and glowing speech we have just heard, I need not say that I cannot but rise with great reluctance to venture a few observations of my own. Mr. Pote has taken so wide, and, in my humble opinion, so correct a view of the entire case connected with the East Indians' Petition, that I feel happy at being relieved from the necessity I should otherwise have labored under, of taking a retrospective survey of the particular circumstances which were considered to require the deputation of Mr. Ricketts to England, as a measure of indispensable necessity. I cannot, however, refrain from doing an act of simple justice to the gentlemen of the East Indians' Petition Committee, and their active and zealous friends and supporters, who appear to me to have been actuated throughout by the sincerest and most laudable desire to improve the condition and prospects of the community to which they belong, and of which they have proved themselves to be most worthy and patriotic members. In their choice of Mr. Ricketts to be the bearer of their Petition, and to express their sentiments before the Legislature, I believe I merely express the opinion of every individual present, when I say that they selected one whose whole soul had long been devoted to his country—one whose well-known public character afforded the surest earnest of his doing all that the "patriot's fire" can urge a man to do in a laudable and patriotic undertaking.

If there be any who might feel disposed to cavil with this decision, and require to be shown some specific beneficial result—the attainment of some positive good, or the mitigation of some positive evil,—I can only say, that they are unreasonably sanguine—they would overleap all difficulties, and attain the end, without considering the means by which it can alone be possibly arrived at. If there should be any individual so unjust, or so weak, as thus tacitly to acknowledge their inability to judge of the means, while the end remains yet to be developed, I am not utterly hopeless of being able to convince even such, that they have no tenable ground for dissatisfaction at the result, as far as it goes, of Mr. Ricketts's mission. Let them, for a moment,

consider the difficulties which beset that gentleman at every step. The most formidable impediment in his way, though a passive one, was the proverbial indifference of the British public to questions of Indian policy—an indifference naturally arising from the unceasing contemplation of distress at home, and disaffection in a sister isle—add to this the powerful tide of prejudice which has so long and so uninterruptedly been suffered to overflow the land, from its well-known fountain in Leadenhall Street, poisoning the recipients and sources of information in its course;—consider these difficulties, I say, and none, I am sure, will refuse to give Mr. Ricketts credit for at least energy of mind in venturing, single-handed, into the field; as Mr. Pote has so forcibly observed, in undertaking to interest a listless Legislature in behalf of his constituents, and attempting to expose in the broad light of day, and in their true colors, the hollow pretences, and illiberal prejudices, which have hitherto had the effect of retaining an enlightened and rapidly increasing class of subjects of the British Crown, in a state of “civil outlawry,” if I may be allowed to use the strong and uncontradicted expression of Sir James Mackintosh, in the House of Commons, on the presentation of the East Indians’ Petition.

That Mr. Ricketts succeeded in triumphing over the apathy of the British Statesman and Legislator, the Report we have just heard abundantly testifies. Public men shook off their habitual lethargy, and bestowed a degree of patient investigation into the statements of the Petition, which could scarcely have been expected. The Board of Control and the Court of Directors heard—in silence heard—the distant appeal for justice, and, it is to be hoped, pondered on the novel circumstance, with every wish to relieve those whom not a single member of either of those bodies dared to deny having hitherto suffered to remain in their native land, in a state of *civil outlawry*! Thus far then, the progress of the Petition was as favorable as could have been anticipated. What will be done eventually, in the shape of redress, remains yet to be seen. But here ends Mr. Ricketts’s responsibility; and, I believe, we may safely say, that he has *done his duty*.

It is to be regretted, that the dissolution of Parliament took place at the time it did; and that the all-engrossing interest excited in England, in consequence of the late glorious events in France, and the still deep and breathless interest, which England must continue to feel, in watching the aspect of continental politics, should render it more than likely, that the present Parliament, harassed by more immediately important calls on its attention, will be unable to devote that patient investigation into the merits of the India Question, which the approaching period of the Charter’s expiration so imperatively demands. What modified relation the East India Company will bear

to this country, remains to be developed : but we may depend upon it, that the state of the country, and the character and prospects, not only of the East Indian community, but of the entire native population, will advance and brighten, or sink and retrograde, in proportion as the benign spirit of genuine philanthropy, or the demon of insolent despotism, shall preponderate in dictating or swaying any changes that may be made in the judicial and commercial characters of the Company. That the spirit of philanthropy may prevail, who does not wish? who does not fervently hope? but that the blight of despotism may wither that hope, who is exempt from apprehending? Under such circumstances, it is impossible to anticipate the final result of the East Indians' Petition with any confidence. As far as Mr. Ricketts is concerned, I feel happy at being able to avow my honest conviction, that he has discharged the trust reposed in him with credit to himself, and honor to his country; but the Petition itself, launched on the troubled sea of politics, and at a time when the atmosphere of Europe would portend a storm, must, in some measure, be left to seek its own harbour. It is

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" like a weed,  
Plung from the rock, on ocean's foam to sail,  
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail."

From what I have said, it is not to be inferred, that I would advise East Indians to relax in their exertions. Far from it; they have put their shoulders to the wheel, and must carry through the work they have commenced. They must smile, in their turn, at the deceitful and alluring smiles of courtiers,—those smiles, whose hollow fascination has been so felicitously lashed by Mr. Pote; and, upheld by the justice of their cause, persevere in their exertions, until they witness the substantial fruition of their wishes. My conviction, however, is, that, if the East Indians' Petition should ultimately meet with no redress, (for what is not possible in the fluctuating world of politics?) Mr. Ricketts cannot be made fairly chargeable with any such unfortunate issue. But the Petition cannot fail; for the pride of the Lawyer and the Statesman will not suffer any acknowledged legal abuses to exist, without an effort to remedy them; will not hear of a body of men existing without the pale of any acknowledged code of civil laws, without endeavouring to supply the deficiency. The wants of a *legal nature* of the East Indians, will be supplied in some shape or other; and it is to be hoped that the enlightened spirit of the age will at length cause the removal of all political disabilities also.

It is absurd to see our rulers starting at shadows of their own creation. I should conceive that their ridiculous jealousy must, by this time, be worn perfectly threadbare, and cannot survive much longer. And then the eternal and unmeaning objection of "incapa-

city." Good God ! and is it come to this—that every school-boy now-a-days should possess the ability to put our high and mighty legislators to the blush, by telling them *that man labors not without some motive* ; that the objection of incapacity is the objection to a circumstance that is merely the effect of the past ineligibility of East Indians to offices of emolument and trust under the Government ? Are our youth less precocious than the youth of any other country ? Are their souls less capable of expansion, under the lofty and generous impulses of rectitude and honor ? I challenge the most inveterately prejudiced to adduce the slightest shadow of reason in support of any charges of so foul and scandalous a character. Widen the field for the employment of our youth—throw open the services to them—suffer them to qualify themselves in their native land for the creditable discharge of the duties of any situation under Government ;—do this, and the objection of *incapacity* will immediately become a byword ;—do this, and, encouraged by the possibility and hope of arriving at affluence and honor in their native land, East Indians will not be long in practically illustrating that excellence *must* follow the *inducement* to excel. Hold out but this incentive to exertion ; and it will be followed by the establishment of colleges and universities in the country, to assist in producing a greater development of mind, and for the training of youth to discharge the duties of the most arduous and responsible situations under Government. An immense advantage would thence accrue both to the governors and the governed. To the governors, as placing at their disposal the appropriation, in any manner, of the intellect of the country, and the employment of as much honesty and talent as they might find occasion to draw for upon the community, at an expense infinitely short of what is incurred by the maintenance of the present clumsy machinery, for the exclusive importation of British youth,—and the governed would benefit in having the dearest interests of the country placed under the watchful vigilance of those who, as children of the soil, could not fail to be feelingly alive to her welfare, and to devote their constant and undistracted attention to the best means within their power of advancing the prosperity and happiness of their native land.

I must apologize, Mr. Chairman, for having trespassed so long on your attention ; and I thank you, Sir, and the gentlemen present, for the patience with which I have been heard. I need scarcely repeat, that I do most heartily second the motion of my worthy and eloquent friend.

The Resolution having been carried by acclamation, Mr. RICKETTS rose ; and, when the loud and continued cheering with which he was received, had subsided, he spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—After the loud and reiterated plaudits, with which you have just cheered me on my rising to address you on this very interesting occasion, I fear I shall only disappoint the expectations which you may have formed. At this moment, I labor under the disadvantage of a rather weak state of bodily health, which disqualifies me, in some measure, from expressing myself in the way I could wish; but, after the frequent reiteration of my name at this Meeting, in a way of eulogy and praise, which must be so gratifying to my best feelings as a man, I should stand chargeable with a death-like insensibility of soul, were I to remain silent, and not make even a feeble attempt to give utterance to what I feel on this happy occasion. On the ground of my simple and straight-forward exertions in a public cause, in which I have acted as your Agent in England, I thought I could at least lay a fair claim to your honest approbation; but I now see that the tables have been turned against me. The state of the case is now completely reversed. Instead of your owing me an obligation for my past services, you have laid me under a debt of gratitude to you, for the very handsome manner in which you have been pleased to express yourselves towards me on this occasion; and thus I feel proud to own as an ample reward for all my personal sacrifices, and for all my past exertions for the public good of our community.

Gentlemen, it is now within a few weeks of two years since I last had the pleasure of meeting you in this hall, on the subject of our Petition to Parliament, when you did me the honor to repose so much confidence in my zeal for our common cause, as to select me as your Agent for deputation on a most important mission to England. At that time, some few of our countrymen kept aloof from our proceedings, on account of a difference of opinion on certain minor points arising out of the matter: but methinks I now see their faces in the room; and we may, perhaps, not unreasonably count upon them as decided converts to our public cause. I truly rejoice in the fact, and shall be first and foremost to give them the right hand of fellowship, and welcome them to a full participation of our counsels and deliberations. Unanimity of conduct in public matters, is no less important than desirable amongst us; and I am glad to have now returned to you to see this change.

Gentlemen, an allusion has been made, and very fairly and properly so, by a gentleman who has preceded me in addressing you, to the deceptive smiles of courtiers and public men. I am aware of much danger arising to our cause from too implicit a reliance upon the smiles and promises of the great, as they are called; and I will also allow that the duplicity of public men is quite proverbial, and, therefore, to be guarded against; but I still think that I have made no



mistake on this head. (*Here Mr. Pote rose to explain that he meant no personal allusion to individuals.*) I am pretty well hackneyed in the ways of official men, to know what they are capable of; but, in the face of this avowal, I still act on the principle of taking every man to be honest and sincere, until I discover something in him like double-dealing or crookedness of purpose. Precisely on this principle, too, the English law regards every man innocent, until he is proved to be guilty; and just so, I gave every official man in England credit for fair dealing and common honesty, until I saw some good reason to change my opinion. In this way, I was soon able to distinguish between friends and foes; that is, between those who were friendly, and those who were hostile to our cause: and here I must say that the general mass of public feeling, even among public men, was decidedly in our favor, with the exception of, perhaps, some two or three persons connected with the India House; but we need fear nothing from them. They are but men "whose breath is in their nostrils, and whose thoughts will perish in the very day of their death." They will die and pass away into the gulph of oblivion; while public opinion must gain ground, and the cause of truth, reason, and justice ultimately prevail. Our cause is one involving the very dignity of human nature; and the man who sets himself up in opposition to it, becomes his own enemy by sinking himself in the scale of moral excellence. After all, what is the objection to East Indians being emancipated from civil and political thralldom, and placed in a right position towards their rulers? It is a mere question of pounds, shillings, and pence, apart from all moral and statesman-like considerations. It is a question of East India patronage in the hands of a few, who jealously protect and guard it against every thing like encroachment. But we are to expect nothing from this quarter; we must look to the Legislature for the concession of our just rights; and here we have those who will not shrink from their duty. Amongst our other friends, who took so laudable an interest in advocating our cause in the House of Commons, we may fairly reckon upon Lord Ashley, who, though he felt himself restrained from presenting our Petition, as he originally intended, yet, I can assure this Meeting, has not abated in his laudable desire to promote our cause on public grounds. His Lordship is still as warm-hearted an advocate for the abolition of our civil and political disabilities, as he was before the sudden turn of affairs, to which I have just alluded. In this respect, Lord Ashley stands pre-eminent, and deserves our warmest thanks. I think it the more necessary to state this publicly and openly, lest you might suppose that I was duped by an undue stress laid by me on the smiles and promises of courtiers.

I fear, Gentlemen, I have detained you too long on the subject, especially after my full and detailed Report to our Committee, as read

before you this morning ; and now what shall I say in conclusion ? I feel justly proud of the very handsome manner in which you have been pleased to testify your approbation of my services. This is all the reward I aspire to ; and, for this, most sincerely do I thank you from the very bottom of my heart.

The conclusion of Mr. Ricketts's address was received with the same marks of approbation ; after which, Mr. H. L. V. DEROZIO rose, and introduced the third Resolution, in the following terms :—

Sir,—Surprising as my appearance here may seem to many, and labouring as I am under painful indisposition, I am here to take that part in the proceedings of this day, which circumstances and the occasion impose upon me. I should better consult both my convenience and the state of my health, were I merely to submit to this assembly the proposition I intend to make ; and, were it my desire to attract admiration, the brilliant address of my friend, Mr. Pote, might deter me from making such an attempt. But my tongue is not fashioned to impart the graces of speech to my thoughts. I must despair of inspiring admiration. Why, then, am I here this day ? why have I offered myself to your notice ? I have already answered that question. I have intimated that I am called here by duty ; and that is a voice which I dare not disobey. I am an East Indian, and therefore I ought to be here ; I am interested in the welfare of my countrymen, and therefore I ought to be here ; I am anxious to know what measures have been adopted to promote that welfare, and therefore I ought to be here ; I love my country, and therefore I ought to be here ; I love justice, and therefore I ought to be here. Shall it be said of me that I was the man who, having committed an error, was afraid or ashamed to acknowledge it ? They know me not, who entertain this opinion of me. Before the East Indians' Petition was sent to England, it is well known that I offered much persevering opposition to the proceedings of Mr. Ricketts : since that time, however, I have had ample reason to change my view of those proceedings. But, as this account of my conversion may make it appear more miraculous than it actually was, I shall, with your permission, unfold the mystery. When the merits of the Petition underwent discussion, before Mr. Ricketts left this country, I was impressed with the belief, (notwithstanding the arguments employed to make out a contrary position,) that the descendants of European foreigners were not included among the parties from whom the Petition was said to come. This conclusion I thought was correctly deduced from the premises which I found, or supposed I found, in the Petition itself. Mr. Ricketts, it is true, disclaimed the inference ; but I was not convinced, and thought his disclaimer was only a blind to such persons

of the class which I contended had been excluded, as had signed the Petition. I entertained a conviction, that in England he would not have represented that class as among the petitioners. But, upon reading his evidence before the Committees of the two Houses of Parliament, I was satisfied that I had done him wrong. Publicly was the error committed: as publicly is it recalled.

After the glowing manner in which Mr. Pote has dwelt upon the miseries and indignities, to which our unhappy class is condemned, for no fault of their own, it will be unnecessary for me to go over the same ground. He has characterized our condition as worse than the degradation of savage life. It is worse than savage degradation. Of what barbarous tribe has it yet been recorded, that the parents have consigned their offspring to infamy; that the fathers have stepped in between their children and those children's rights, withholding their privileges, although those privileges have never been justly forfeited? No, Sir; it has been left for civilized men to do what no barbarian has ever yet conceived; and that has been to work out for an unhappy class, the condition against which we complain. Taking this view of that condition, the Petition of which Mr. Ricketts was the bearer, was the remonstrance of East Indians against the unnatural cruelty of their fathers. The sacrifices made by that gentleman, in endeavouring to excite attention to our complaints, have been numerous, as has been already well observed. He left his home and his family to effect that object: he left a climate congenial to his constitution for one, the rigor of which might have been fatal to him: he ran the hazard of losing his employment; and trusted himself to all the perils of a dangerous voyage. And now that he has returned amongst us, what is the reward to which his services are entitled? This assembly has already accorded its thanks to him; but, although the acknowledgments of grateful hearts are pleasing, the labors of men in a public cause should not be passed by in that way. Mr. Ricketts has told us, that our congratulations, and the plaudits he has received this day, have rendered him indebted to us. Gentlemen, that sentiment has made us doubly his debtors. What are you now to give him? Conceive yourselves transported back to the days "of Greek and Roman glory;" conceive yourselves a community existing in those ages, with brilliant examples before your eyes, of honors and triumphs accorded to those who had served their country; conceive how such examples had operated upon your minds, and how you had then welcomed to his native shore the man who, for you, has done much, and suffered much. Many whom I have now the honor to address, are aware that it is not recently that he has exerted himself to meliorate our condition. In youth, when he first "felt life in every limb," that animation was inspired by an unabating zeal to do

his country service. You can testify whether I over-rate him, when I declare, that, if any man is entitled to the gratitude of the East Indian community, that man is John William Ricketts. Had he been entitled to it upon no other ground than because the Parental Academic Institution (an establishment which, if not well supported, is less creditable to those who should support it, than to its founder) owes its origin to him, such gratitude had been well deserved. Should we not, therefore, present to him some token of our regard, which he may hand down to his posterity, that the conduct of so excellent a father, and so worthy a man, may not be lost upon his sons ; but that it may inspire his children to render such services to yours, as he has done to you ? If, then, I am surrounded by East Indians ; if there be in your bosoms one spark of manly feeling which may be kindled into a flame ; if you consider patriotic exertions in your cause as worthy of imitation ; if you are alive to just principles of duty ; I charge you, by all that is dear to your hearts, to support the proposition which I shall now submit as follows :—

*That, in the opinion of this Meeting, Mr. J. W. Ricketts is entitled to the warmest approbation of the East Indian Community, and to every mark of respect and affection that can be evinced towards him. It is accordingly proposed,*

*First—That a silver vase, with a suitable inscription on it, be presented to Mr. Ricketts, to serve as a memorial of the gratitude of his countrymen for his public services.*

*Secondly—That Mr. Ricketts be requested to sit for his portrait, with the view of perpetuating the remembrance of one who has done so much for the public cause.*

*Thirdly—That a public dinner be given to Mr. Ricketts, welcoming him to his native shores, and to the bosom of that society, the condon of which it has been the object of his whole life to meliorate and improve.*

The Resolution, moved by Mr. Derozio, was seconded by Mr. J. J. L. Hoff, and carried unanimously ; after which, Mr. RICKETTS again rose, and spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I fear I have already trespassed too much on your time, by addressing you at a prior stage of our proceedings on this occasion, but a strong feeling of gratitude constrains me to rise once more, to thank you most heartily and sincerely for the signal marks of approbation, with which you are pleased, by your unanimous suffrage, to characterize my past exertions in a public cause. To speak plainly, when I landed at Madras on my passage to Calcutta, I received many favors and kind marks of attention from our brethren at that place, who also collectively invited me to a public dinner, and afterwards to a public ball and supper : on which occasion, they were pleased to engage the Garrison band, among

others, to play two original airs, composed expressly to welcome my arrival among them. Ingratitude is one of the blackest crimes, of which human nature is capable ; and I must own that their kindness in every way, a perfect stranger as I was individually to them, has left such an impression on my mind as no lapse of time can ever efface. When I took leave of our kind friends at Madras, they told me that they were only afraid of my being torn to pieces, the moment I reached Calcutta. I grant that you have not *literally* torn me to pieces ; but you have done all that the most sanguine could have expected. You have heaped such honors upon me by your last Resolution, and which has been carried with such marked applause and enthusiasm, that you have left our Madras brethren far behind ; and it is nothing but fair and right that you should do so. The East Indian community at Madras, it is true, felt an equal interest with ourselves in the success of the objects contemplated by our Petition to Parliament ; since whatever may hereafter be done by the Legislature, in consequence of that Petition, will be a public benefit not exclusively confined to the petitioners themselves, but extended alike to all their brethren labouring under similar disabilities and grievances at Madras and other parts of India. So far they were concerned ; and so far, to their credit be it said, they acquitted themselves towards me as their own feelings spontaneously prompted them ; but with you, Gentlemen, I stand on a very different footing. It was you who deputed me with our Petition to Parliament ; it was at your call that I tore myself away from all that is near and dear to me, and proceeded on a sea voyage to a distant land, in order to serve a public cause ; and it was as your Agent and public servant that I engaged in those proceedings, the Report of which has now been placed before you. From you, therefore, I had every reason in the world to receive some token of public approbation of my services, if you thought me deserving of such an honor. Gentlemen, I have not been disappointed. You have this day, before a numerous and respectable assembly, publicly testified your unqualified approbation of my past career as your Agent in England ; and this you have done in so handsome a way, as completely to leave me your debtor. I feel justly proud of the silver vase, which you have been pleased so generously to vote me on this occasion. It is calculated, more than any thing else, to excite in me a fresh stimulus to persevering and continued exertions for the public good of our community. A notion, however, seems to prevail in certain quarters, that I have made a fortune by my late mission to England. What can have led to so absurd an idea, I know not ; but I will take this opportunity to avow, that this silver watch (*Mr. Ricketts taking the watch out of his pocket, and holding it up to the view of the Meeting,*) is all the fortune I have thus made ; and even this was a purchase made quite

as a matter of business, for the regulation of my time for my numerous public engagements. My motives of action, so far as these can be judged of, are, I am sure, no secret to those with whom I have been long associated in schemes of public benevolence; and they must know that I am the last man in the world to be seduced from a public cause by any base influence of mercenary gain. On the contrary, your sober and honest approbation is the highest pinnacle of honor, as well as the greatest amount of reward, to which I aspire.

Gentlemen, I must thank you over and over again for your splendid conduct on this occasion; and the only use I purpose to make of the public gift so handsomely awarded to me is, that I shall hand it down with feelings of just pride to my children's children, with a distinct avowal of the public grounds on which I was put in possession of it, in the hope that, on all questions of public interest, they may imbibe the same spirit, and emulate the same example.

Mr. Ricketts sat down amid bursts of applause; after which, Mr. WALE BYRN proposed the fourth Resolution:—

*That to the Right Honorable the Earl of Carlisle, and to the Right Honorable Lord Ashley, to the Right Honorable C. W. Williams Wynn, to the Right Honorable Sir James Mackintosh, to Sir Charles Forbes, to Mr. James Stewart, to Mr. Wolryche Whitmore, to Dr. S. Lushington, and to Mr. J. Hume, the warmest acknowledgments of the East Indian Community are pre-eminently due, as well for their parliamentary exertions in the public cause connected with their Petition to the British Legislature, as for the kind assistance so readily afforded by them to our Agent; and that the same be accordingly conveyed to those distinguished personages in a written communication addressed to them by the Chairman of the Meeting.*

In doing so, he spoke as follows:—

It is with feelings of no ordinary gratification, that I rise to bring to the attention of this Meeting the Resolution which I have just read. I regret my inability to do adequate justice to the task assigned to me. But, while I regret so much for myself that I may be unable to acquit myself properly, that regret is increased when I reflect that my inability may not lead this Meeting suitably to acknowledge the exertions that have been made in England in our behalf.

The opinion was prevalent, and I confess it was one I entertained, that our Petition in England would have to make its way, as it were, inch by inch; that it would have to encounter the tide of adverse public opinion; and be treated with coldness and neglect. I had anticipated that, after its presentation to Parliament, it would be ordered to lie on the table, and thus be consigned to the custody of oblivion and neglect. Least of all did I expect, that a Minister of the Crown

would have voluntarily offered his services to usher the Petition to the notice of Parliament. Never did I anticipate such powerful and eloquent advocacy of our cause, on the part of the most distinguished members of the Legislature; such perfect unanimity of feeling and of opinion—such earnestness in the business—such a desire to be useful in furthering the success of our undertaking! Nor must I omit to mention the cordial and kind reception of our Agent in England. He went a perfect stranger to a foreign land; he felt no estrangement, but was heartily and cordially welcomed. The compliment, as paid to our Agent, was very flattering; but we must view it also as a compliment paid to ourselves, and make a suitable acknowledgment. It is for exertions and kindness like these that I call upon this Meeting to make a suitable acknowledgment, and evince a just appreciation. Nothing that I could say, I am aware, can add to the public worth of these distinguished personages. Of the Earl of Carlisle, it may be said that his whole career has been one distinguished for exertions in the cause of public liberty. Lord Ashley's character will at once be appreciated, when we see him rising above the narrow and confined notions of official station; and, acknowledging the hardships of our case, doing all in his power to obtain for us substantial justice. Mr. Wynn has long been connected with India; and, during his presidency over her affairs in England, he has done much to improve the existing state of things. It must, above all, be remembered that to him are the East Indians, in common with the natives of India, indebted for eligibility to the office of jurors; an institution which, as being the best preservative of civil right, and political freedom, we should highly regard, and consider as an honorable distinction obtained for us. To Sir James Mackintosh, the civilized world is highly indebted for no common exertions in the cause of morality and of humanity, in his endeavours to mollify and soften the harsh features of the criminal code; and no wonder that a mind, which has been long occupied in disarming law of so much of its terrors, and clothing it with a benign and benevolent philosophy, should at once have viewed in its true light the anomalous nature of our condition and circumstances. The established character of Sir Charles Forbes, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Hume, for liberality and public usefulness, is too well known, and renders it unnecessary for me to detain the Meeting any longer on this particular point.

With regard to the general question of the Petition, I am desirous of offering a few observations on one or two points connected with it. When we last met here for the purpose of discussing the subject, how few there were that were sanguine of any success attending our mission; and many doubted the expediency of deputing an Agent to England. As respects this last point, there ought, I think, to be but

one opinion. What other person, I ask, would have exerted himself in the way that Mr. Ricketts did? Let that man be of the best regulated mind; and I will say that he will be short of efforts, if he does not himself labor under such grievances. Would any gentleman, to whom we would have referred in England, how purely intentioned soever he might have been, feel what Mr. Ricketts must have felt, laboring as he did practically under the grievances which it was his special object to have removed? No,—assuredly he would not. Much also must have been gleaned by private explanations and personal conferences; nor must I fail to notice the examination of our Agent before the Committees of the Lords and Commons. Much information has been elicited in this way, which could not otherwise have been obtained. In my opinion, we have gained much every way by the deputation of an Agent to England.

As to our present position, the next point that I am desirous of speaking to, I think we have abundant cause to rejoice at the progress which we have made. I have sometimes heard the question asked, What has been done? and I have been equally surprized and chagrined at the question. What has been done? We have had a patient, a sympathizing, and an attentive hearing, at a time when we hardly expected that our Petition would have been endured. We have advanced from the starting point. We have given a shock to the mist of prejudice, by which we were enveloped, and have emerged from obscurity to light. We were, so to speak, unknown; but now are we known. What has been done, is it asked? We have removed much of the ignorance which existed, and imparted information as to the true state of our political and social condition; and (may I not be too sanguine in the expectation!) we have laid the foundation of our political fabric. We may not have reared the edifice—but this is not the work of a day—nor of a single generation—but of time. That man must have miscalculated most egregiously, who expected that our Petition would have been immediately met by an Act of Parliament, adjusting our claims. Of all miscalculators, those are the greatest, who, embarking in a great and important undertaking, expect immediate success. To such, I say that no moral or political achievement, which the pages of history record, has been wrought in this summary way. It has been by much toil, by much labor, through good report and evil report, under heart-burning procrastinations, and unnecessary delays, that these victories have been won. I repeat, we have no cause for discouragement; but our prospects are, on the contrary, very cheering. This is a circumstance that must not, however, lull us into supineness, or beget in us an indifference to the cause. We must be on the alert, and ever ready to take the part we have already so creditably sustained,—knowing that no shame is greater than that which attaches to



him, who, after having gone half the way to the goal of his hopes, fails to urge on his way still further. The heart that quails at danger, or sinks under discouragement, or, through fickleness of disposition, gives up the purpose in view, must never reckon upon victory; defeat and shame must be his inevitable portion. Though our prospects were otherwise than they are—though no ray of hope, or beam of light, illumined our path; we must still hope against hope; and though “hope deferred maketh the heart sick,” still we may be assured that constancy is a virtue that will meet its own reward. To all and each one of us I would say, strive to succeed, and success will be the reward of your labors. Strive to succeed; and success will crown your toils. I repeat—strive to succeed; and success will be the harvest of your hopes.

To him who has contributed so much to the furtherance of this cause, I cannot resist the impulse of my feelings to pay a passing tribute. Mr. Ricketts has not appeared before us but yesterday, but has long been engaged in the promotion of our interests. His laudable exertions in the cause of public education, will never be forgotten; and this, with other acts of benevolence, of philanthropy, and of patriotism, will, when his bones will have mouldered in the dust, and he shall have been gathered to his fathers, form an imperishable record of his name.

‘And when the vanities of life’s brief day  
Oblivion’s hurrying wing shall sweep away,  
Each act by charity and mercy done,  
High o’er the wrecks of time, shall live alone  
Immortal as the heavens, and beauteous bloom  
To other worlds and realms beyond the tomb.’

This Resolution was seconded by Mr. J. Wood, and unanimously carried.

Mr. M. CROWE, in proposing the fifth Resolution, addressed the Meeting as follows:—

MR. CHAIRMAN,—Although conscious of my inability to do justice to the task I am about to impose upon myself, and totally unaccustomed to public speaking; yet the interest which I feel in the business of the day, induces me to intrude myself on your attention, but with a hope that my auditors will regard my imperfections with an eye of indulgence.

Following the example of my worthy friend, Mr. Byrn, who has just addressed you, I beg to bring to your notice two individuals who are equally entitled to the consideration of this Meeting for the share which they have taken, and the interest which they have displayed, in

promoting the welfare of the East Indians. I mean Sir Alexander Johnston, some time ago the Chief Judge of Ceylon, and Dr. John Bowring, the Editor of the *Westminster Review*. To these, I shall add the name of Mr. Crawford. These names must be familiar to all, and many must be acquainted with the merits of these gentlemen; but I think it is necessary I should make some observations on the reasons, which have particularly induced me to mention them on this occasion.

I shall first advert to Sir Alexander Johnston. His name has been already mentioned in Mr. Ricketts's Report, and several circumstances connected with his public and private career noticed, which demand our approbation. I have therefore only to add, that his laudable efforts in behalf of the inhabitants of Ceylon, his abolition of slavery in that island, and his introduction of the jury system among them; are circumstances which reflect the highest honors on his name, and call forth the unqualified admiration of every lover of freedom and justice. But what more imperiously demands the expression of our gratitude, is his unceasing exertions to promote the happiness of the inhabitants of India, and in particular of the East Indians. His handsome introduction of Mr. Ricketts, our Agent, to the Royal Asiatic Society, and the friendly reception which he gave to that gentleman, may be mentioned as recent and decided instances of the good feeling and zeal which Sir Alexander possesses towards the East Indians.

The next individual I mentioned as deserving of our gratitude, was Dr. John Bowring, the learned Editor of the *Westminster Review*. It is needless for me to advert to his attainments as a scholar, and to his unremitted efforts to advocate and promote the cause of knowledge and liberty, or to pay him any compliment on these accounts. These are facts so well known, that it is needless to insist on them, or to remind you that they command the approbation of every liberal man. I shall only mention the friendship he has evinced towards Mr. Ricketts, and towards those he represented in England, and bring to your notice an important measure which he has recommended to Mr. Ricketts, for our adoption. In the course of the Report which has been just read, I recollect allusion was made to this circumstance; but, as the subject was not at all explained, I beg you will permit me to read the letter of Dr. Bowring to Mr. Ricketts, which contains an outline of the measure recommended to our attention, and to make a few observations on the subject, which suggest themselves to my mind. The letter is not long, and it will not occupy your attention beyond a few minutes.

The speaker then read the following letter:—

*London, 10th June, 1830 ; 5, Millman Street.*

*J. W. Ricketts, Esquire.*

My dear Sir,—It has occurred to me, and my conviction has been greatly strengthened by the concurring opinions of several intelligent and well-affectioned friends, that nothing would so effectually serve the cause of the *Anglo-Indians*, as the return of one of their body to the British House of Commons. I know of no impediment, legal or moral, provided funds could be raised for the purpose ; and I should most cordially lend my best assistance for the accomplishment of this interesting object. To succeed, would be to elevate *the class* into a position of equality : its effects in India must be exceedingly salutary, and in England scarcely less so. You would have an organ in the most eminent sphere of usefulness, whose existence alone would necessarily fling a lustre on those he represented. ~~How~~ *How* could *they* long continue divested of the lowest rights, who took a share in the highest legislation ? That especial care should be taken in the choice of an individual candidate for parliamentary honors, is too obvious to be insisted on. He should have the power of ready address, and as much of knowledge, virtue, and activity, as can be found among you—moral and intellectual aptitude in such a high degree as may be accessible, and habits of business for the due discharge of his duties. It is enough for me to have thrown out the hint, and to proffer any services, which may help the cause of those whose condition to meliorate is one of the highest claims on that country, to which, in truth, they owe their existence, and (would it were otherwise !) their *present* position.

I am, my dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

(Signed) JOHN BOWRING.

The arguments which we have urged to recommend the proposed measure, are of a nature which carries conviction along with it ; they are drawn from such admirable facts and established principles, as greatly add to the solidity of the reasoning which the letter contains. I shall, however, mention another circumstance calculated to shew the propriety of adopting the suggestion of Dr. Bowring. We are all acquainted with the proceedings of the Irish Catholics for obtaining emancipation ; we all know that one of the chief privileges, for which they petitioned Parliament, was the repeal of the law which prevented Catholics from occupying a seat in Parliament, and shut them out from having any share in legislation ; and we know the continued importunities of the petitioners for obtaining this privilege. It cannot be denied that the collective wisdom of Ireland, and even of a part of England, was employed in framing the Catholic petitions, and that the petitioners made no demand, but those from compliance with which they expected to derive solid and extensive benefits. They

repeated their importunities to Parliament, till their prayer was granted; and they are now enjoying the salutary effects arising from the repeal of the law, which shut them out from the House of Legislature. Now if we find that, after the maturest deliberation, they unanimously agreed that the acquisition of this privilege was important towards the melioration of their condition, and if it be an established principle that similar causes produce similar effects, may we not infer from hence that important benefits would result to us, if one or more of our body were returned to the British House of Commons, and thus we had a channel in that high legislative assembly, through which to forward our prayers to our rulers? Indeed, Gentlemen, when I reflect that there has never existed any such legal bar to our occupying a seat in Parliament, as that which had shut out the Catholics from it, I am astonished that this salutary, this important subject has not been yet thought of by any of us; at least not till this moment publicly agitated. Does not this omission exhibit palpable signs of that apathy and indifference to our political situation, for which we have been so often, perhaps too justly, censured?

There are two circumstances mentioned by Dr. Bowring, which deserve our particular attention—the qualifications of a candidate for parliamentary honors, and the pecuniary means which will be required to procure him a seat in Parliament. As to the first point, I am not prepared to demonstrate that an East Indian can be found in every respect qualified to discharge the important duties which, as an useful member of Parliament, this country will demand at his hands, by pointing to any particular individual. I rather fear that the mention of such a subject from an indifferent speaker like me, is somewhat calculated to raise a smile on the countenance of my auditors. But then I ask, whether England could produce a Brougham, a Canning, or a Peel, before she had a Parliament which required men like these to perform its duties; or Ireland could boast of a champion like O'Connell, before she began to smart under the lash of penal enactments? If these great men spontaneously sprung up from the circumstances of the times, and the necessities of events, then may we not hope that, if the want of a person qualified for parliamentary honors were felt, such a person would, in time, be found amongst us, or rather that time and a proper course of studies would enable one of us to acquire the qualifications necessary for the discharge of parliamentary duties?

Want of sufficient funds for such a purpose, is another subject which demands our attention. It is a subject which speaks home to the point rather seriously, and somewhat puzzles me to point out any plan for avoiding the difficulties, which may arise from a want of means in this respect. I can only say that the important benefits, which

may be expected to result from such a measure, ought to induce us to come forward in its support. It is true we are informed, that now the civil and the military services are thrown open to us; but it is equally true that, without great interest and influence, it is utterly impossible to procure admission into them. These powerful agents, which control the actions of men, are essentially requisite in our case; but these are requisites, the want of which is felt amongst us more than that of any thing else. In short, it is a painful, although an undeniable fact, that the interest and the influence we possess are extremely limited. The short period that Mr. Ricketts resided in England, and employed in our behalf all the influence which were available to him, has obtained for us important benefits, and is likely to procure much more. May we not conclude from this circumstance, if we had one of our own body permanently residing in England, taking a share in the highest legislative discussions, and among the highest functionaries of the state, that much benefit would result to us from the influence which he must possess, when placed in such circumstances, that our cause would then have a zealous advocate, and that the avenues to advancement, which are yet virtually shut against us, would then be accessible to us? In all new undertakings, the greatest difficulties occur in the beginning, and then they diminish in proportion to the success of that undertaking. If once the East Indians were introduced into the higher branches of the service, we should soon begin to feel the advantages arising from such an event, and to be convinced that the expense, to which we had been put for the purpose of rendering that service accessible to us, has not been uselessly lavished on a chimerical pursuit.

Although I have enlarged on this subject more than on that which I said was the cause of my intruding on your attention, yet I am not just now prepared to make any specific proposition on the subject. Such a step would at present be premature. I have made these remarks, and agitated this subject publicly, simply with a view that it may be kept in our recollection, and more fully discussed on some future occasion, when the public will be prepared to enter into its merits, and to examine at leisure the many important results which may be expected to arise from the adoption of such a measure.

I shall now conclude my address by reading the motion, which I beg earnestly to recommend to your unanimous approval:—

*That the cordial thanks of this Meeting are equally due to the Honorable Sir Alexander Johnston, Dr. J. Bowring, and Mr. J. Crawford, for the warm and friendly interest so kindly taken by each of them in the East Indian cause; and that the same be communicated to them respectively by the Chairman of the Meeting.*

The Resolution was seconded by Mr. W. SINCLAIR, and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. H. ANDREW then spoke to the following effect:—

GENTLEMEN,—I feel highly gratified in having it in my power to propose the motion put into my hands; and considering the lateness of the hour in which I had received it, and the diffidence which a consciousness of my own incapacity to speak with propriety at such a Meeting, must necessarily impart to me, I shall nevertheless venture to make a few observations, trusting that the novelty, with respect to myself at least, of the attempt, will plead a sufficient apology for any deviation, which the critical or even vulgar taste may perceive, from the punctilios of matter and manner.

The return of our Agent, Gentlemen, from the voyage he had undertaken, while it calls for public gratitude to Heaven, lays us under peremptory obligations to render him a tribute of thanks for the uncommon interest he has taken to promote the welfare of his countrymen. The patriot is loved by his own nation; and, where there is virtue of sentiment, and true dignity of character, is revered by his enemies. Contemplating, therefore, the long and persevering efforts of Mr. Ricketts in concerting schemes, and executing them with so much ability, though often with little success; considering the many oppositions and even abuses which have been thrown out against him by the splenetic and the malevolent, in the pursuit of his laudable projects, and regarding, in particular, his late responsible undertaking, and the very favorable state in which he has left matters in England for further prosecution, and we hope final success; there surely cannot be one in this assembly, who will not hold out the cordial hand of friendship, and confess himself under deep and lasting obligations to him. Although it is not in our power to make him any suitable returns, or to testify our admiration of his character by all those means to which the grateful, in such circumstances, have recourse, we yet trust that, as far as our influence and exertion can reach, we shall not be wanting in expressing our appreciation of his merits, and the light in which we regard his public spirit and patriotic zeal. This noble example will, we hope, rouse the drowsy powers of many East Indians, who, possessing talents sufficient, are yet, we are sorry to observe, lamentably backward in interesting themselves, by a proper exercise of them, to raise the present condition of their countrymen; and I feel persuaded that, were such a spirit of emulation excited and exerted, our worthy Agent would be more gratified by meeting with an increased co-operation in his labours, than by any testimony we can otherwise give of our attachment and esteem.

But, Gentlemen, there is still another class, who will, no doubt, be very grateful to their benefactor. Need I mention the case and gen-

dur? Why, Gentlemen, our worthy ladies will be very much pleased to see their men raised in the scale of influence and importance, that is to say, if they have any regard for us; and that they have, it would be a libel on their virtue, were we to suffer ourselves for a moment to doubt it. Ah! to see those tender creatures making their acknowledgments, how sweet! how pleasing! Who would not envy Mr. Ricketts to share in their affections, and to deserve their esteem. For my part, Gentlemen, I wish I were he. To humour their vanity a little, it is well known how much the female mind is apt to be taken up with what is brilliant in appearance, and engaging in show; this, indeed, is the characteristic of every woman in every clime; and for our ladies to see their countrymen all armed cap-a-pie; enveloped in red and blue, and themselves the objects for whom we dress, and fight, and die, why they will run to madness in loving us, and in loving their benefactor, who obtained this privilege for us. Suppose, for instance, they should hear "we were at such an action, our regiments charged on such an occasion, we distinguished ourselves, took a post, and run a thousand risks to be shot at in the head,"—oh! their little hearts would go pit-a-pat with fear and pleasure, and perhaps with love—who knows? and then come our young men, (such a one as myself, for example,) all in bloom and vigour, or with the facetious Sterne "clad in armour bright which shines like gold, beplumed with each gay feather of the East, all-all-tilting at it like fascinated knights in tournaments of yore for fame and love." Oh! this will stir the flame—the flame will burn with ardour; and, in seeking to possess us, our dear countrywomen will not fail to remember the person, through whom they were enabled to entertain such a wish, and to expect such an acquisition.

The motion in my hand proposes, "that the Managing Committee, in connection with the East Indian Fund, be requested to carry into effect the objects which the foregoing Resolutions have in view." I am certain, Gentlemen, that we shall one and all concur in its adoption. It refers chiefly to the third Resolution, expressive of our warmest thanks to Mr. Ricketts for his zeal and fidelity in the management of the affair connected with his mission to England, and suggesting the propriety of our presenting him with some tokens of public gratitude. That Resolution having been carried unanimously, no objection, I think, can arise to this. I shall, therefore, conclude with saying, that we hope this will be a new era in the history of our race; that we shall no longer remain subalterns in rank and station, but rise in the scale of society and political dignity; that we shall soon, by the consideration given by the British Parliament to the prayer of our Petition, be put in a situation to justify the very flattering commendations bestowed by our European friends, and put to

shame the insolence of those who are our declared enemies. Gentlemen, I long, I long for the time when we shall more effectually be able to prove our loyalty and affection towards the British Government, when we shall be able to show that the same ties which bound our fathers to its interest, continue to bind us as closely, and as inviolably; and that we acknowledge no other king or liege lord, but the sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland. God save the king!

Mr. Andrew then proposed the sixth Resolution, as follows:—

*That the Managing Committee in connection with the East Indian Fund, be requested to carry into effect the objects which the foregoing Resolutions have in view.*

This was seconded by Mr. H. B. Gardener, and carried.

MR. POTE now rose to say that he had a Resolution to offer to the Meeting, conformable with the sentiments he had expressed in his former address, which he sincerely trusted would be adopted by those who heard him, as he truly believed that its acceptance and execution were essentially connected with the promotion of the objects they had in view. He made this proposal with some reluctance; as, in the course of the Report, he had heard what induced him to fear that it might not, in the first instance, be agreeable to the present convictions of Mr. Ricketts; but, when it was considered that this measure was most strongly recommended by Mr. Crawford, and when the reasons he should have the honor to adduce, were heard, he trusted that Mr. Ricketts might be induced to adopt his notions, and, by his consent, induce the whole Meeting to concur in a matter of such primary importance. He should move as a Resolution, that the East Indians' Petition Committee be forthwith instructed to draw up a second Petition, to be submitted to a General Meeting, for approval and signature, and speedy transmission to the British Parliament, on the subject they were met to consider.

In offering reasons for adopting this measure, he felt that he was not called on to trespass at any length on the attention of the Meeting. There was only one obstacle to be removed from the way, and that was the delicacy which prompted Mr. Ricketts to believe that any immediate act on their part would be construed by the friendly individuals in England, who professed to take up their cause, as denoting a want of confidence in their promises or exertions. There was something in this objection peculiarly indicative of the punctilious integrity, which characterizes the mind from which it proceeded; and, had there been no probability of injury or loss, he would have been the last man to disturb so amiable a reluctance; but he (Mr. Pote) perceived, and he felt it his duty to submit, that inaction here, under any such impressions, would inevitably be imputed by all parties in England to indifference and apathy; and he implored their highly respected delegate,



and the Meeting, to reflect how fatal to the continuance of any interest in the minds of those in England, would be the intrusion of such a suspicion. He would repeat that this supposition would be the natural consequence of silence here—for was it not well known, that every advocate finds an assurance, a plea, and an excitement from the animation and zeal of those he is to support? In matters like this, what example have the people of England set us? Was it ever known there, that any honest parliamentary combatant for the people's rights asked such confidence from the people's hands, as silenced them, and left the whole weight and business of the battle to his unassisted strength? To oppose the many currents of hostile interests eternally flowing in the broad political ocean of the legislative assemblies, all the bulk, and all the impulse of the strongest expression of the public voice has been ever found wanting to enable the steersman to shape his course for the point intended; and it became them to beware that, by no mistake on so essential a matter, they deprived their advocates of that aid which experience had shown could not be supplied by any power of reason, or truth, that could be brought into operation. He bowed to the superior knowledge and experience of their respected delegate; but, while he felt in his conscience that, by treading that line of delicate observance which had been recommended, they would incur the two-fold disadvantage of neutralizing their advocates, by a mistake they could not avoid making, since they could judge only from the experience they had known, and of depriving them also of that succour, which in all past cases of a similar nature, had been found indispensable, he felt he should be criminally negligent of his duty in the present critical state of their affairs, if he did not stand up to offer the remonstrance he now made.

After following the same line of argument for some time, Mr. Pote concluded with reading the following Resolution:—

*That, in consideration of the dissolution of the Parliament, to which the East Indians' Petition was addressed, and of the necessity of repeating our calls for justice on the Legislature of Great Britain, until they are conceded, the East Indians' Petition Committee be requested to frame another Petition, which, when approved of and signed, shall be sent to both Houses of Parliament.*

Mr. Derozio, in support of the above Resolution, spoke as follows:—

Sir,—I rise to support the proposition of Mr. Pote. As junior counsel in the case, I cannot, however, be expected to dwell so long, or so ably upon its merits. But its importance, and the necessity of pressing it upon the consideration of this Meeting, must be my apology for the liberty I take with the patience and indulgence of all

around me. Although our respected delegate has informed us of his having received very favorable assurances from certain noble Lords and other influential individuals in Parliament, I cannot see the evils which the adoption of this Resolution is likely to entail. Why are we assembled here this day? Are we to confine ourselves to a particular routine, and exclude all matters which do not come exactly within it? Is this assembly unprepared to entertain this proposition? What is the difficulty in its way? Is it characterized by less discretion than zeal? He who entertains such a notion, has certainly misunderstood the object of my friend, Mr. Pote, and attended but indifferently to the tenor of his suggestion. It is not required of the Committee to prepare a Petition this moment; nor is it supposed that any individual present has such a document ready in his pocket, which he has only to lay upon the table for instant signature. Such speed is not contemplated by us. We only call upon our friends to request the Committee to frame another Petition; and that no haste may do mischief, we take care that it shall be fully approved of, before it is signed and despatched. Suppose this Resolution is adopted, and that it afterwards becomes unnecessary, what harm will be done? We shall only have to change our minds—a matter of trifling inconvenience. Were there no other consideration, the fact that one House of Commons rarely takes cognizance of Petitions addressed to its predecessor, should be alone sufficient to convince us of the imperative necessity of appealing to the Legislature of Great Britain again. What have we hitherto done? What have we yet obtained? Where are our spoils? Have our rights been restored? Have our claims been conceded? No, Sir. We have but just taken the field; and now shall we rest upon our arms? The spirit of exclusion has only been startled upon his throne: but there sits the demon still, mocking our efforts, and grinning over his triumph. Our hearts must not faint, our nerves must not slacken. Let us not trust our cause to men, who have nothing for us but empty professions. Our friend, Mr. Ricketts, has told us that Lord Ashley sympathizes with us, and that Sir Alexander Johnston is deeply interested for us. But their sympathy and their interest, however likely to call forth our gratitude, should never claim our confidence. Do you suppose that any member of the Legislature, touched by so much tenderness, will address either House of Parliament in some such way as this? "Gentlemen—Here am I, overflowing with the milk of human kindness, anxious to restore to that long-neglected, and unjustly treated race, the East Indians, those rights——which they do not demand."—No, Sir, such will never be the language of legislators: the benevolence of statesmen seldom incommodes them to such an alarming degree. But the very facts which Mr. Ricketts's Report communicates

to us, should lead us to distrust noble Lords and Honorable gentlemen. What are those facts? Lord Ashley felt for us. We thank his Lordship. He promised to present our Petition. This was generous. But, when the time came for his Lordship's hand to follow up the benevolent suggestions of his heart, that hand became suddenly paralyzed. Weighty matters of state pressed upon his heart, and the Petition was left to make its own way into the House of Commons. I am apprehensive (though I only suggest the possibility of the thing) that matters of state may be as burdensome to our other sympathizing friends in Parliament, and that such paralytic attacks, as we see do sometimes afflict Lord Ashley, may be common to others who are deeply interested in our welfare. To protect ourselves against such mischances, it would not, perhaps, be the most unwise course to petition the Legislature. Gentlemen, you have nothing to fear from firm and respectful remonstrance. Your calls for justice must be as incessant as your grievances are heavy; complain again and again; complain till you are heard—aye, and until you are answered. The ocean leaves traces of every inroad it makes upon the shore; but it must repeat those inroads with unabated strength, and follow them up with rapidity, before it washes away the strand.

Mr. RICKETTS, after Mr. Derozio sat down, again addressed the Meeting:—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN.—You may, perhaps, suppose that I now rise to oppose the motion which has just been made by Mr. Pote, and seconded by Mr. Derozio, in regard to our preparing and forwarding a second Petition to Parliament. Not so; for I rise to *third* the motion, if such a thing can be done. I am no advocate for apathetic indifference and silence, under an oppressive load of degrading disabilities. On the contrary, my motto is, "Complain loud and long, until you are heard and answered;" but perhaps my motive in dissuading the Committee, for the present, from a renewal of our application to the Legislature, is liable to be mistaken and misunderstood; and I will, therefore, now explain the matter. During my residence in England, I was in almost daily communication with Members of Parliament; and, before I came away, they never once even so much as hinted to me the necessity or desirableness of our re-petitioning Parliament for the redress of our civil and political grievances, on my return to Calcutta. With regard to the technical objection referred to, it is true that our Petition was presented to the last Parliament, which was afterwards dissolved by the King's death; but the proceedings of the two Select Committees on India affairs cannot, from that circumstance alone, be annulled and set aside. My evidence before them will be reported on to both Houses

of Parliament, and there can be no receding from a decision of the public question involved in the case.

But, Gentlemen, while I agree to the propriety of our petitioning Parliament a second time, you will allow me to state my opinion of what nature such a Petition should be. We need not, in our second Petition, go into any lengthy detail of all our disabilities and grievances. These are now pretty well known among public men in England, and a very brief recital of them will suffice for every purpose. What we should now bend our chief attention to, is this. The impression on my mind is, that the boon we solicit,—no, this is a misnomer,—I mean the concession of our just rights, will no longer be withheld from us. It is to the British Parliament we must look for ultimate success in the accomplishment of this object; but I fear that, even then, some secret delusion may hereafter be practised towards us, so as to keep us out of what the Legislature may fully intend to put us in possession of. The door of admission into the Company's service may, perhaps, be thrown open to us in theory, but completely and effectually barred against us in practice. Lest the noble intentions of the Legislature should be frustrated in some such way as this, I propose that we should at once express our honest fears on this head, and pray for the insertion of a specific clause in the next charter that may be granted to the East India Company, by which a fair proportion of their patronage may be transferred to India, and by which they may be required to maintain two Colleges in this country, at the public expense, on a similar footing to their present Colleges in England. This is what I should call fair play; and this is all we contend for. A portion of the East India patronage might thus be transferred to the local Government; who might be empowered, with the sanction of the Court of Directors, to nominate our East Indian youth, thus properly educated in local Colleges, to writerships and cadetships in the civil and military services. In certain quarters, this is altogether, as I have once before said, a mere question of pounds, shillings, and pence; but this is surely taking the matter on its very lowest scale. I say that *political* degradation invariably carries along with it *moral* degradation; and, if you seek to degrade any man *morally*, you have only to degrade him *politically*; and the thing is effectually done. I repeat it that, in certain quarters, the whole affair of the public administration for British India, is entirely a mercenary question of pounds, shillings, and pence; and I really think that, were I a Rothschild, with a long purse, it would not be difficult for me to compound the matter with those, who seem to have no other idea of a grave public question, involving important social and moral consequences to a whole community of Christian subjects. Gentlemen, I say that we have a right to be employed in the service

of the state, in our own native land; and, so long as this right is taken from us, we labour under a wrong, and an injustice, that reflect the deepest disgrace upon the authors of our degradation. It would even be hard and unjust, for the sake of putting us in possession of our right to public employment, to subject us to the necessity of seeking it as a boon at the hands of those separated from us by the distance of half the globe. *Here* we are on the spot of our nativity; and *here* we are willing to render our services to the British Government. Why should we be put to the trouble of travelling 15,000 miles from home, in quest of what we might never obtain? The thing ought to be placed within our reach on the spot; it ought to be made accessible to us at our own doors.

With these sentiments, Gentlemen, I say we have a right to complain of our grievances; and complain we will, loud and long, till we are heard and answered; and I would, therefore, conclude by *thirding* the motion just made by Mr. Pote, and seconded by Mr. Derozio, as already read to this Meeting.

The Resolution was, in consequence, unanimously carried; and Mr. Byrn rose to say, that a Petition was in course of preparation, and would be in due time submitted for approval. A vote of thanks was then passed to the Chairman, and the Meeting dissolved about half past two o'clock.

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# REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

CONNECTED WITH

## The East Indians' Petition to Parliament.

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The return of Mr. Ricketts to his native country, affords the East Indians' Petition Committee an opportunity of laying before their constituents, an account of their transactions for a period of something less than two years. The proceedings of Mr. Ricketts, while in England, as an Agent of the East Indians, are so explicitly and fully detailed in his Report to the Committee, that nothing of any consequence appears left to them to enter upon. Without further remark, therefore, the Committee proceed to submit the following communication from Mr. Ricketts, for the general information of all concerned:—

To H. PALMER, Esq.

*Secretary to the East Indians' Petition Committee.*

SIR,

My former letters to the Committee will have regularly apprised them of the gradual progress made in our very important public cause in England; and my last letter to you, from Rio Janeiro, under date the 22d November, will have informed them of the untoward circumstances which led to my very serious and protracted detention on the passage from London to Calcutta. Having now, under a kind Providence, happily escaped the perils of a tedious voyage, and returned in safety to my native land, I feel it incumbent on me, as due to my constituents, to embody the whole subject of my mission in one con-

pected point of view ; and in so doing, I will endeavour to take a retrospective glance at all that has gone by, so as to put them in possession of each and every particular, which it may be of any consequence for them to know.

Thanks to the improved spirit of the age, in which it is our happy lot to live ; our cause is one that needs little or no advocacy to secure for it the warm interest and hearty co-operation of every honest and liberal-minded man. When I first reached London, on the 27th of December, 1829, (having arrived at Falmouth on the 23d,) a perfect stranger as I was to all around, the aspect of things, in reference to our great work, appeared dark and gloomy to my mind ; while the bleak dreariness of a desperately severe winter, conspired not a little to enhance the difficulties of my situation. All the gentlemen connected with Parliament, moreover, as well as Mr. Crawford, the accredited Agent for the inhabitants of Calcutta, for whom I had brought letters of introduction, through the kindness of our friends in India, were at this time absent in the country ; so that I had to grope in the dark, as it were, till I could find out a proper way of proceeding. To make some sort of a beginning, therefore, (since a beginning must be made in every thing,) I took up my position, by the advice of a kind friend, in a set of lodgings, very centrally situated, in Claremont Place, Pentonville \*, which gave me the double advantage of travelling either way to the city in one direction, or to the west end of the town in the other, as my future engagements might require.

As Parliament was to open on the 4th of February, the Members soon began to flock into town ; some a little before, and some a little after, the commencement of the Session ; and I, of course, kept an eager watch for the arrival of those with whom I was more immediately to have to do, and also for such others as were likely, from the known stamp of their public character, to take an interest in our long-neglected political condition. Having, accordingly, once broken the ice, I proceeded step by step in the matter, until it was not long before the object of my mission to England became pretty generally known. With perfect truth, I can affirm, that in no one instance was I disappointed as to the view taken of our case ; for I really found so decided a tone of liberal-mindedness among public men in general, (with but one or two exceptions, in the case of those officially connected with the affairs of India,) that I felt myself transported, as it were, into a new world

I afterwards transferred my lodgings to Brooksbury Street, and from thence to Cloudeley Terrace, both in the same neighbourhood.

politics, quite dissimilar to what we are usually accustomed to know in India; so much so, that what was habitually regarded and admired as a laudable spirit of high-toned political liberality in that country, amounted, in the atmosphere of England, to nothing more than the mere incipient parts of the science.

In so saying, I must not be understood to insinuate any thing like the most distant reflection upon the community of Calcutta, who, so far as individuality of public character goes, and even taken as a collective whole, may fairly vie with any public body, under similar circumstances, in any part of the civilized world; but the comparatively feeble and deteriorated quality of politics in India, viewed by way of contrast with the state of things in England, even on matters of indispensably vital importance to the real public good, is easily accounted for, by a simple advertence to the glaring fact of a peculiar anomaly in the commercio-political frame of state administration in British India, which gives rise, in many instances, to an awkward clashing of commercial interests with political good, on a liberal and an enlarged scale; and this inevitably leads to the enactment of restrictive and compulsory laws, backed by austere and extra-judicial penalties, involving too often the sacrifice of the latter for the undue protection of the former.

But to return to the point, and to give you a striking instance in illustration of what I mean, the Committee may probably remember how much was thought, by our friends in Calcutta, of Sir Charles Grey's letter to me, in which he declined giving us the aid of his pecuniary subscription, towards the furtherance of our public undertaking, merely because he happened to conclude in these words: 'At the same time, I am desirous to add, that, in my opinion, the class of persons, of whom you are the Agent, have many just claims upon those in whom the power is vested of altering the laws of this country, for a full and attentive consideration of their present political condition.' This quoted passage from the letter in question, merely goes to acknowledge the justness of our claims to be heard and considered,—a position which, in England, was altogether regarded as a vapid common-place truism, destitute of all intrinsic importance to our cause.

On the 1st of February, as a preliminary step to future proceedings, I called at the India-house, in Leadenhall Street, first to see Mr. Lock, then Chairman of the Court of Directors, and afterwards Mr. Astell, then Deputy Chairman. The former received me with a commendable degree of official courtesy; and we entered into an easy conversation



on the state of things in regard to our class. Among other points, he remarked that there was every disposition, on the part of the Court, to remedy the legal grievances complained of in our Petition to Parliament ; but that, so far as regarded our political condition, there were some difficulties involved in the case, which required grave consideration. These difficulties, no doubt, belong to the abstract question of East India patronage, which is known to be so jealously protected and guarded against all encroachment. The latter seemed rather shy to face the subject, so as to enter freely upon it ; and concluded by saying, that a Member of Parliament as he was, the whole question would, of course, come before him in the proper place, when our Petition should be presented to the House.

Since my interviews with Mr. Loch and Mr. Astell, as just mentioned, I repeated my call on the former, and also made it a point to see Mr. Campbell, the present Deputy Chairman, together with Mr. Edmonstone and Colonel Baillie, two other Directors ; the two former of whom (Mr. Campbell and Mr. Edmonstone) shewed an aptitude to take a pretty fair view of the matter, though the latter (Colonel Baillie) by no means went to any thing like the same extent. Of Mr. Loch, I must decidedly say, that, so far as I am capable of judging, he appears to be an upright and a well-intentioned legislator for India ; though, perhaps, like many others, strongly warped and hampered by the force of prescriptive custom and usage, the stubborn growth of prejudice and self-interest. Mr. Loch very frankly bore testimony to our general respectability, as a class improving in intelligence, and increasing in numbers. Mr. Campbell did precisely the same, making honorable allusion to some with whom he was personally acquainted in the Indian Army at Madras. Nor was Mr. Edmonstone at all backward in this way ; for he told me, without scruple, that India was as much *his* native country as *my own*, having spent the best part of his life in it ; and, when the conversation turned upon our fitness for offices of trust and importance, he mentioned the names of Mr. Breton and Mr. Dunbar, two of our countrymen, whose mental attainments, he said, he had ample opportunities to know, and whom he considered as eminently qualified to fill any situation whatever. As to Colonel Baillie, however unpalatable it may be for me to do so, still a sacred regard to truth requires me to say of him, that the tendency of his observations savoured too much of the rust of antiquity, and looked very like a studied attempt to throw cold water upon the fire of a laudable zeal, flowing from a good cause.

On the 12th of the same month, I had an interview with Lord Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control, who made many inquiries into our case, in the presence of his then Secretary, Mr. G. Banks; the sequel of which was, that he would consult the Law Officers of the Crown on the legal technicalities of the matter; thus leaving, untouched, the other point connected with East India patronage,—a question evidently of grave importance in certain quarters.

By this time, I was in possession of sufficient data to be able to judge, that nothing in a satisfactory or tangible shape was to have been looked for at the India-house,—that great imperial mart of lucrative patronage for British India; and I accordingly became fully resolved to turn my undivided attention to another and a higher public tribunal.

In pursuance of this resolution, and concurrently with Mr. Crawford, I engaged the Right Honorable C. W. Williams Wynn, on the 18th of February, to present our Petition in the House of Commons, which, the moment the subject was mentioned to him, he most cordially agreed to undertake; and not only so, but also named one or two Peers, who, he thought, might, with advantage, do the same in the House of Lords. With my ready concurrence, therefore, Mr. Wynn very kindly arranged the matter with the Earl of Carlisle, on whom I accordingly waited with the Lords' Petition, on the 2d of March."

Things were in such a train, when I called at the India Board, in Cannon-Row, Westminster, on the 5th of the same month, to obtain an interview with Lord Ashley, a Member of the Board; who, in happy accordance with his known liberal-mindedness, received me very cordially, and readily entered into a free conversation on the subject of my mission; and so lively an interest did he take in the matter, clearly the result of his own views, that he frankly volunteered himself to be the medium of presenting our Petition in the House of Commons. Upon this, I, of course, made his Lordship acquainted with the true state of the case, in regard to the arrangement already concluded with Mr. Wynn; but still, though placed in a delicate predicament towards that gentleman, I promised to do my best to obtain his consent to a transfer of the Petition, as proposed by Lord Ashley; and I felt myself quite justified in going thus far, from the consideration (as Mr. Wynn since so correctly observed in his speech in the House, on the 4th of May,) that much weight would doubtless attach to the very fact of so prominent a part being taken in our favor by a Noble Lord filling a Ministerial office at the India Board, and also from the firm belief in

my mind, that Mr. Wynn would himself readily concur in the same view of the matter, and generously waive all scruples of personal delicacy about it. Nor in this was I at all disappointed; for Mr. Wynn, when I afterwards called to see him on the subject, literally acted out the very part I had just before, as it were, theoretically given him due credit for.

Lord Ashley further told me, that he would confer with his colleagues at the India Board, and also with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman at the India-house, to feel their pulse on the subject, so as at once to do the thing in a fair and open way; and that, if I would favor him with a call, two days after, at his private residence in King-street, St. James's, he would let me know the result. I accordingly waited upon his Lordship on the 7th, when he gave me a cordial reception; telling me, with expressions of great pleasure, and much to his credit, that all was settled in the most satisfactory manner, since the home authorities were now quite willing to throw open to our class every branch of the regular service in India, without any distinction or reserve; and that, so far as the legal disabilities went, after due consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown, they would be fully prepared to remove them by a legislative enactment suited to the case. All this, his Lordship said, he would have the pleasure to state publicly in his speech, while presenting our Petition. He moreover added, (in consequence of my expressed wish to see matters adjusted at an early period, preparatory to my returning to India,) that the India Board would instruct the Court of Directors to write out to the Bengal Government in their next despatches, apprizing them, officially, of what had taken place; and, to enable me to return with satisfaction to my constituents in India, that he would give me a pledge in writing to the purport that all should be carried into effect.

Nothing could have been more honorable to Lord Ashley, than the very fair and liberal part he had so spontaneously taken in the affair; and, if things underwent a different turn not long afterwards, as the sequel will shew, I must freely and unequivocally acquit his Lordship of all voluntary fault whatever. So far from imputing blame to him on this account, I have always been foremost to sympathize with him for the awkward embarrassment, in which he soon became involved, by reason of circumstances beyond his control. Public men acting on the broad basis of liberal views and principles, will sometimes be hampered in this way, but without necessarily entailing on themselves any impeachment of their moral or political consistency as individuals;

and Lord Ashley was, I am sure, precisely so situated in a subsequent stage of the affair.

The Commons' Petition was accordingly now to have been presented by Lord Ashley on an early day; but, just about this time, Lord Ellenborough interfered so as to keep the matter in suspense, until he should consult the Law Officers of the Crown on the technical points involved in our case\*. Matters thus remained until the 3d of April, (prior to which, however, I was accustomed to see Lord Ashley once or twice a week, generally by appointment, and sometimes of my own accord,) when, calling upon his Lordship, agreeably to appointment, in order to have 'a little more familiar conversation with him on the subject,' to use his own words, he, evidently, with much proper keenness of feeling, told me that 'he was almost ashamed to see me that morning; as, since his last appointment with me, and after all the open and straight-forward manner in which I had acted throughout, he was sorry to be obliged to say that things had taken a sudden turn, by which he felt himself restrained from presenting the Petition, however willing and happy he might still be to do so.' His Lordship's apology to me on this account, was most ample and kind, and quite characteristic of his own honorable straight-forwardness; and I, of course, very readily exculpated him from all deserved blame in the matter, strongly alive as I was to the pressing and unavoidable exigency of the case. This sudden turn took place between Tuesday the 30th of March, (when Lord Ashley, according to Parliamentary usage, gave notice in the House of his intention to present our Petition on Monday, the 5th of April,) and Saturday, the 3d, when I saw him a greeably to appointment.

Though most feelingly disappointed as to the prompt adjustment of the question, according to the original plan, yet Lord Ashley assured me that there was every symptom of a friendly disposition, on the part of the Government, towards our long-neglected claims; and that they merely wished to take evidence on the subject before the Select Committees of both Houses of Parliament, and, after thoroughly sifting and weighing the whole matter, to decide upon the real merits of the case. No possible objection could, of course, have been made to so fair and reasonable a mode of proceeding; since there was no doubt in my mind as to the final result, so long as the Legislature did but do their duty; and, indeed, were this course resolved on at an earlier stage of the business, the circumstance would have been hailed by me with

\* See Appendix, No. 1.

mixed satisfaction. As it was, an alloy to that satisfaction came along with the natural disappointment resulting from the difference, as far as regards the mere question of time, between a summary adjustment, founded upon a strong eagle-eyed view of the whole case, and a more tardy one, grounded upon the lingering process of a formal and protracted investigation; nor was this feeling of just disappointment the less poignant, from the consideration that Lord Ashley had, for the present, so unexpectedly failed in compassing his noble views of things.

As matters took so astounding a turn, I was once more reduced to the delicate alternative of going back to Mr. Wynn, with a plain story of the whole case, as it then stood, in order that he might again kindly undertake to present our Petition in the House of Commons, as originally planned; and, indeed, if proof were wanting of that gentleman's dignified sacrifice of personal feeling, and of his sincere wish to promote a public cause, purely on public grounds, this proof was amply furnished to my mind, in his unhesitating readiness to comply with my second request. To Mr. Wynn, therefore, (no less than to Lord Ashley, for his laudable intentions, temporarily frustrated by others,) are the East Indian public doubly indebted for the vital services so cheerfully rendered by him on this occasion.

Before I proceed any further, I ought here to mention, for the sake of chronological order, that, agreeably to a pledge given to my constituents in Calcutta, I addressed a letter, on the 3rd of March, to his Grace the Duke of Wellington, transmitting, for his perusal, a printed copy of our Petition, and requesting the favor of an audience; and also one of a similar tenor to Mr. Peel (now Sir Robert) of the Home Department. Both the one and the other of these public functionaries, like men of business, were alike prompt and polite in their replies respectively. The latter assigned the multiplicity of his public avocations as a reason for asking me, if convenient, to communicate what I had to say in a written form; adding, however, that 'he would see me some time hence, if I still thought an interview necessary.' The former suggested the expediency of my communicating, in the first instance, with the President of the Board of Control, and with the Chairman of the Court of Directors; if after which, I still wished for an audience, His Grace would appoint a time for seeing me. To this I wrote in reply, to say, that I had already opened a communication with the two quarters pointed out to me; and would, therefore, of course, avail myself of the promised audience. A rejoinder from the Duke purported to give me a sort

of full-length portrait of his numerous engagements during the day; in consequence of which, his Grace said, "he would be much obliged to me, if I would put in writing what I wished to represent; but that, if I could not do so, he would endeavour to find time to receive me at an early hour in the morning." Upon this, I wrote back to inform his Grace, that I would do myself the honor to wait upon him any morning he might appoint for the purpose. Here the correspondence most abruptly dropped; nor did I hear from the Duke again. As to Mr. Peel, I replied to his letter, to say that, having seen a Noble Lord at the India Board, (Lord Ashley,) since first writing to him, I considered that the necessity for troubling him, either with a verbal or written communication, ceased to exist; and would not, therefore, intrude upon his valuable time, occupied, as he must be, with various matters of importance\*.

So far as Mr. Peel is concerned, I must allow that all was right and proper; but I confess I had, and still have, some misgivings about the perfect decency of the Duke's silent retraction, under the circumstances of the case, and after once positively giving me to understand that he would see me "at an early hour in the morning;" and the only way I can possibly account for it in my own mind, is this. The Duke was in almost daily intercourse with Lord Ellenborough, on one subject and another, as a Member of the Cabinet; and it is more than likely, that, after conversing with him about our Petition to Parliament, his Grace did not deem it worth while seeing me, as he had just before intended. At all events, if such was really the case, a very ordinary degree of official courtesy might have dictated the propriety of a brief apologetic answer, at once simply telling me so. Thus much have I felt it right to say, by no means in a tone of complaint, but merely by way of necessary explanation, so far as regards my abortive purpose (without any fault of mine) to obtain an interview, first with the Duke of Wellington, and then with Mr. Peel.

After this, beyond my continued interviews, from time to time, with different Members of Parliament, whose names it may, perhaps, be needless to mention, and also an interview with Lord Calthorpe, who, through another gentleman, expressed a wish to see me †, nothing of any consequence occurred, until the presentation of our Petition by Lord Carlisle, in the House of Lords, on the 29th of March. His Lordship very kindly gave me an order of admission into the House,

\* See Appendix. Nos. 2. to 9. † See Appendix, Nos. 10 and 11.

that I might witness the debate on the occasion ; but so extremely unfortunate was I, when I reached the place, as to find myself just a little too late to realize my wishes in that respect. In this instance, as it turned out, I was led into a mistake about the exact hour for the opening of the House ; and, as the Petition was presented among the earlier business of the evening, I thus stupidly missed the anticipated satisfaction of seeing things for myself, but from no fault whatever on the part of Lord Carlisle.

On the 31st of March, in obedience to a summons from the House of Lords\*, I attended to give evidence before their Select Committee on the affairs of India. The Committee Meeting was well attended ; and the Duke of Wellington was also present on the occasion. Most of the Peers shewed an inclination to draw out to public view, by the fair drift of their questions, the aggravated evils of our civil and political condition ; while Lord Ellenborough was the only one among them, who, assuming a sort of *ex-officio* position in the affair, endeavoured, by the ordinary process of cross-examination, to palliate and soften down, as much as possible, the otherwise glaringly self-evident hardships of our case. A manuscript copy of my evidence on this occasion, as taken from a printed one belonging to Lord Carlisle, occupies a place in the Appendix†.

While on this part of the subject, I may as well mention that it was in the House of Lords I first saw Sir Alexander Johnston,—a name so familiar to the merited applause of India, on account of its association with much public good, emanating from all his liberal-minded career, whilst Chief Justice and Member of Council at Ceylon. He was also in attendance at the House, for the purpose of giving evidence on India affairs ; and, after some interesting conversation between us, touching my mission to England, he gave me his card for the sake of renewing it more fully, at his own house, on a future day. To Sir Alexander, as truth and justice require me to avow, I owe a peculiar class of obligations, for the characteristic ardour of mind, with which he so readily entered into our case ; for the very warm interest he so steadily continued to take in it, and for all the personal kind attentions so uniformly shewn me up to the day of my quitting England. Thus much must I say of him just now ; but a principle of fair dealing with all parties, will constrain me to renew the subject in a subsequent part of this letter.

\* See Appendix, Nos. 12 and 13.

† See No. 14.

But to return from this seeming digression. The Easter vacation now intervening, which lasted for three weeks, all business was, of course, suspended in both Houses of Parliament; and, soon after the resumption of the session, our Petition was presented by Mr. Wynn, in the House of Commons, on the 4th of May. Never before, since my arrival in England, did I witness a more interesting spectacle, than the one presented to my sight on this occasion; and Mr. Wynn very kindly secured a seat for me in the House, below the gallery, where I truly enjoyed a rich mental feast, afforded by the warm debate arising from the subject,—one which was now, for the first time, fairly and tangibly brought before the Legislature. Without exception, it was decidedly the best thing in the way of a debate in the House that evening, as was also acknowledged by others; and Mr. Crawford, who was likewise present, came up to congratulate me on the peculiar warmth of interest shewn to be felt by the different speakers, and on the happy issue of the business, so far as it went.

To Mr. Wynn, therefore, and also to Sir James Mackintosh and Sir Charles Forbes, to Mr. J. Stewart and Mr. Wolryche Whitmore, are the East Indian public pre-eminently indebted, for the highly beneficial results accruing from their parliamentary exertions in an affair, which concerns a politically degraded and proscribed class of Christian population, subject to the rule of a British-Christian Government, at the distance of half the globe. Nor are our obligations, in this respect, the less due to Dr. S. Lushington and Mr. J. Hume; who, but for the lateness of their arrival on the particular evening referred to, would have taken their full share in the debate.

The separate debates on our Petition in both Houses of Parliament were, it is true, reported in the Newspapers of the day, but in so imperfect and meagre a way, as to leave no more than a mere skeleton of the thing; and it, therefore, became necessary for me to look elsewhere for a more full and detailed account. It was now I began to regret that I had not employed a special Reporter on our own account; but this omission is to be ascribed, not to any lack of will to do my best in every way, but purely to the chilling and benumbing influence of an English climate, which is often such as almost to stultify an old Indian, always accustomed to breathe in a warm latitude, and to deprive him of much of that ready-witted presence of mind, and of that staid composure of judgment, which are found to be so eminently useful in the active business of life. It soon occurred to me, however, that a work called "The Mirror of Parliament," was the



best source whence the deficiency might be supplied to advantage ; and here I can only say, to the credit of Mr. Barrow, the Editor of that publication, (it being intended solely for the use of subscribers,) that I had no difficulty in compassing my object. For the complete report, therefore, which I afterwards published in the more convenient form of a pamphlet, (1,000 copies of which were forwarded to the Committee at Calcutta, 400 to the East Indian community at Madras, 200 to that at Bombay, and a considerable number circulated in England,) we are indebted to the Conductor of the Mirror of Parliament ; but for whose disinterested kindness in thus accommodating me, I must have been doomed to sink into hopeless disappointment, with a mere echo of gone-by interesting speeches' tingling in my ears.

So far as regards Lord Carlisle's speech, however, I deem it my duty, in justice to his Lordship, to insert in the Appendix, a letter\* written by him, on receiving a few copies of the printed debates which I sent. As already explained in a former part of this letter, I did not personally witness what took place in the House of Lords, in reference to our Petition ; and hence it was very natural for me to conclude, that the report of his Lordship's speech, as given in the Mirror of Parliament, was substantially correct ; though in this, I was afterwards sorry to find myself mistaken. At the risk of needlessly swelling out this my report to the Committee, already perhaps too lengthy, I have prevailed on myself to give a full statement of the case, by inserting also my reply to Lord Carlisle's letter† ; which, however, still leaves it necessary for me to add a word or two, by way of further explanation. When Lord Carlisle presented the Lords' Petition, on the 29th of March, there was no intention in my mind to publish the debate separately, on our own account, under an idea that a report of it in the Newspapers of the day would suffice for every ordinary purpose ; and, not having been present on the occasion, as before stated, I was naturally led to conclude that all was right, so far as the substance of the matter went. Not so, however, in regard to the debate on the Commons' Petition, presented by Mr. Wyna, on the 4th of May. Having personally witnessed what took place in the Lower House, I was, of course, better enabled to judge for myself ; and, seeing but a meagre Newspaper report of the debate the next day, I felt convinced that nothing like justice had been done to the very able and interesting speeches of the different Members ; and it was

\* See No. 15.

† See No. 16.

precisely this disappointment that gave rise to the first idea of the desirableness of publishing a new version of the whole, in the permanent form of a pamphlet.

With regard to the incorrectness of Lord Carlisle's speech in the Upper House, I can only account for it in this way. When his Lordship rose to present the Lords' Petition, having commenced with stating that it was one from a certain class of the Christian population in India, it is likely enough that this circumstance alone was quite sufficient to produce a sort of narcotic effect on the mind of the Reporter, who must have treated the matter as one of subordinate interest, relating to a scene separated by the distance of half the globe; and hence a mere hurried guess, as I must now call it, at Lord Carlisle's speech on the occasion, as given in the *Mirror of Parliament*. Quite otherwise, however, with the Lower House. When Mr. Wynn rose to present the Commons' Petition, the cry of "Order, order" resounded more than once from the Speaker; and Mr. Wynn himself, experiencing some little inconvenience from the prevailing buz in the House, very courteously turned round and requested the Honourable Members to desist for a few moments. Perfect silence and order being now restored, Mr. Wynn proceeded without interruption, and was attentively listened to; and the whole of the debate growing out of the matter, became strikingly spirited and interesting.

Before finally quitting this branch of the subject, I must be allowed to express my sense of gratitude to Lord Carlisle, for the kind share of interest he took in presenting our Petition in the House of Lords, and in examining me before the Lords' Committee; and, though he had but a simple part to act in the matter, and abstained, for the reason assigned in his letter, from enlarging on our case while presenting the Petition, yet our obligations to his Lordship remain unaffected by that circumstance.

Returning home from the House at a late hour of the night, and rising above all influence of climate, I was impressed with feelings of lively gratification at what I had just witnessed, beyond any thing that I can now describe; and the next evening, being present at the East Indians' Dinner Club, then newly formed by some of our fellow-countrymen in London, I there saw many of our friends; and, among the rest, Mr. H. C. R. Wilson, a firm and steady adherent to our common cause. The conversation naturally turning upon the parliamentary debates of the preceding evening, we were unanimously of opinion that we should address a letter of thanks to Mr. Wynn, and to the other

gentlemen who had taken so praiseworthy an interest in advocating our long-neglected rights. Copies of both our letter, and of Mr. Wynn's reply, will be found in the Appendix\* ; and I am most fully persuaded in my own mind, that the East Indian public will not be backward in redeeming our voluntary pledge, as regards "a rich harvest of grateful feeling in this country."

Precisely a similar letter was also addressed by us to Sir James Mackintosh and Sir Charles Forbes, respectively ; but from neither of them, were we so fortunate as to receive a reply. This omission on their part, however, is not, in my opinion, to be imputed to any thing like want of courtesy, or proper feeling, towards us ; but may rather be accounted for, with regard to the former, by the circumstance of a serious bereavement in his family, just about this time, which of course precluded all attention to business ; and, with regard to the latter, by the fact of his having then been laid up with a fit of severe illness, which must have produced a like effect.

After the presentation of both Petitions, one in the House of Lords, and the other in the House of Commons, as already mentioned, and after my examination before the Lords' Committee, nothing further of essential consequence remained for me, than to wait a similar process before the other Committee ; and, indeed, at one time, I saw no prospect of this taking place during the then present session. The Commons' Committee were long occupied in collecting evidence on matters relative to the China trade, having commenced their work in this department ; and, when they had fairly brought their proceedings on that head to a close, which was towards the end of May, for the purpose of entering upon India affairs, I thought it my duty to make every effort to get myself examined on an early day, so as to be enabled to return to India. Having, accordingly, made the necessary attempt, I was told by Mr. Wynn, and some other gentlemen on the Committee, that their regular plan of proceeding was such as to hold out little or no hope of compliance with my request, until the ensuing session ; but that, if I were really anxious to return home to Calcutta, they would take care to see that other witnesses, who had before resided in India, should be examined with reference to the civil and political disabilities of our case. Thus ascertaining the exact position of things, I waited a little longer, to see how matters would go, and then made up my mind to treat for a passage to Calcutta, which I actually

\* See Nos. 17 and 18.

engaged on the 14th of June; but, having once done so, I soon began to reflect on the serious gravity of my disappointment in leaving England, without previously doing all that was essential on my part towards the success of our cause.

Taking this strong view of the matter, I lost no time in repairing once more to Mr. Wynn, to say that I had just engaged a passage to Calcutta, but could not leave England with any degree of comfort, on account of my non-examination before the Commons' Committee. I was told, in reply, that the Committee were now occupied in examining Mr. Lloyd, the Company's Accountant-General, on the finances of India; but still, for the reasons stated by me, Mr. Wynn kindly promised that, with the concurrence of his colleagues, he would endeavour to bring about my summary examination, if possible. At the same time, I waited upon Mr. Stewart, and one or two other gentlemen connected with the Committee, to obtain their friendly assistance in the same way; and, to my great joy arising from agreeable disappointment, I had soon the complete satisfaction to know that, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the Committee had most liberally resolved on suspending Mr. Lloyd's examination, *pro tempore*, to make room for mine. For their very kind and considerate regard to my wishes on this occasion, I must ever feel deeply indebted to those gentlemen who so readily interested themselves in my behalf. Nor can I here omit to express myself thankful to Mr. Stewart, who very kindly offered, if I wished at any time to witness the proceedings of the Committee, to introduce me into their chambers, with the concurrence of the Chairman; though other pressing engagements interfered with my availing myself of the kind offer.

Matters being thus satisfactorily arranged, in obedience to a summons signed by the Chairman of the Committee\*, I attended in the House of Commons, on Monday the 21st of June, for the purpose of giving my evidence. The interrogatories put to me on this occasion, happily discover much of a feeling of deep interest in the details of our case. Hence the eliciting of many fresh points in my examination before the Committee in the Lower House, which were left untouched before that of the Upper. The Committee adjourned about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and resumed my examination at their next sitting on Thursday, the 24th. My bodily health had, since my first arrival in England, now began to decline sensibly, from a perpetual

\* See Appendix, No. 19.

struggle with the extreme fickleness of the climate ; and, on this occasion, I proceeded to the House under a violent irritation of fever ; which becoming known, I was advised to go home. This, however, I declined doing, from my great anxiety to despatch the business, lest a total cessation might take place from the approaching event of the King's death, which occurred, as it turned out, but two days after ; and my adjourned examination was accordingly gone through. A manuscript copy of my evidence before the Committee in the House of Commons, as taken from a printed one belonging to Mr. Wynn, will be found to occupy a suitable place in the Appendix \*.

Upon now taking a cool and deliberate retrospect of the whole matter, I have only to regret my failure in repulsing, with a due regard to justice, and in the strongest terms compatible with a sense of proper decorum, certain antiquated notions of an illiberal stamp, hatched in a particular quarter connected with the India House, as embodied in the questions put to me in the course of my examination. For this self-conscious failure on my part, I hope not to stand chargeable with a deficiency of right feeling suited to the case ; since, in my own defence, I can truly plead a weak state of health, very sensibly affecting my spirits, doubtless superinduced by the benumbing influence of a desperately severe and changeable climate. What I here allude to, regards questions relative to "colour, caste of mothers, want of mental qualifications," and so forth ; the two former being, indeed, of so grave a magnitude, as to prop up a system of aristocracy, based on the flimsy texture of the skin, to the utter overthrow of every principle of sound moral philosophy.

So far as regards any silly prejudice, arising from "colour and caste of mothers," these are distortions of the fact too puerile and unfounded, to deserve a serious thought in the mind of a reasonable being ; but, with regard to the matter of "mental qualifications," the question seems to claim a little sober treatment. And here, I would ask, what are the qualifications necessary to fit men for the public service in India ? Are they human, angelic, or divine ? If the two latter, cold and hopeless despair belongs to our case, until the Millenium shall have done its perfect work amongst us ; but I rather think that the qualifications so much insisted on, are merely human ; and what are they ? Embracing the circle of moral qualities, they consist in principles of uniform probity and rectitude, which lead to correctness of public character and conduct through life ; and, with regard to

mental qualities, they are made up of such ingredients, as common sense, a sound understanding, combined with a competent knowledge of English, and the vernacular dialects of the country, and a practical aptitude for the despatch of public business. With these qualifications, (taken on the lowest scale, for the mere sake of argument, but which may, of course, be carried to a still higher pitch, if desirable,) superadded to an honest regard for the public good of India, it must require the presence of a monstrous political anomaly to bar the door against candidates for public employment,—such an anomaly as has, I must say it to the shame of England, already too long been allowed to exist in India.

Having now gone through a faithful detail of the main proceedings connected with my public mission to the British Legislature, in what further remains I will confine myself to a few interesting topics, which have occasionally occupied my mind, as bearing a general aspect on our case.

Here I must begin with giving all due praise to Sir Alexander Johnston, for the very creditable share of interest, as before observed, taken by him in favor of our class. His conversations with me on this subject, were peculiarly interesting. He told me that, during his residence at Ceylon, he paid every attention to the case of East Indians, and of the natives in general, on that island; and it was precisely in pursuance of his liberal habits of thinking on such points, that he persevered, and at length succeeded in introducing among them the system of trial by jury, so justly admired by all civilized nations. He further made it a point to elevate their political condition, by throwing open situations of respectability in his Court, to qualified persons born on the island, and also the office of local Magistrates in the interior, where suitable opportunities offered; and, during his periodical circuits, he did all in his power to uphold their personal respectability, by inviting them to his table, on the same footing with the civil and military gentlemen at the different stations. Though not directly connected with the subject; still, as so materially reflecting on the highly praiseworthy public career of Sir Alexander, I may also mention, that it was he who, with the previous consent of the proprietors, brought about the emancipation of all children born of slave parents, after the 12th of August, 1816, a day fixed for this purpose in honor of the then Prince Regent's birth-day; and so heartily did the proprietors of slaves enter into the truly philanthropic views of Sir Alexander on this point, that, in many instances, they acted upon them to the length

of emancipating adult slaves of their own accord ; so that, the fresh importation of slaves being declared illegal, and the offspring of slaves being free, the horrible traffic in human flesh must, ere long, die a natural death, leaving not even a vestige of slavery on the island at no great distance of time. This splendid act of philanthropy alone, if there were no other, is sufficient to hand down the name of Sir Alexander Johnston to the latest posterity in India ; but there are still two other points, about which Sir Alexander interested himself ; viz. the invidious restrictions placed on the civil rights of the Catholic community, and the prohibitory laws against the holding of lands by Europeans ; both of which evils were afterwards accordingly removed. Let it not be supposed, however, that I mention these facts, for the paltry purpose of idolizing Sir Alexander. Far from it. I do so merely in a way of deserved eulogy, and just to show what *can* and *might* be done for British India, by a public functionary of the requisite influence, and of the right stamp.

As more immediately bearing on our general cause, I must do Sir Alexander Johnston the common justice to say, that he invariably shewed me many kind attentions, for which I cannot but ever feel thankful. Among the rest, he personally invited me to attend the periodical Meetings of the Royal Asiatic Society, in Grafton street, of which he is a Member, as well as President of their Committee of Correspondence. At his invitation, too, I attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society, on the 6th of June ; Lord Amherst having been called to the chair, in the absence of Mr. Wynn, the President, who was detained by some business in the House of Commons. On this occasion, after the reading of the Annual Report by the Secretary, Sir Alexander addressed the Meeting in an eloquent strain, at some length. His speech embraced a succinct review of their proceedings in the Correspondence department, during the past year ; and, in the wide range of his other observations, he took a glance at the various tribes inhabiting different parts of India, and the Eastern Archipelago, concerning whose habits, customs, and manners, and whose civil polity and laws relative to the important matters of property, marriage, and inheritance, the Society still lacked much information. To pave the way for remedying this defect in some sort, Sir Alexander proposed, agreeably to the purport of a previous conversation which he had with me on the subject, to form an Auxiliary Committee of Correspondence among our community in Calcutta, through my instrumentality, for the avowed purpose of collecting fragments of Oriental interest, from different

sources. In speaking of us, he, from the kindest of motives, forbore to designate us by any distinctive name, "lest," as he was pleased to say, "he should unintentionally offend the feelings of a gentleman in the room, who, for character, talent, and integrity, was equal to any Member of the Society, whom he was now addressing;" and, for this reason, he defined our class by the circumlocutory appellation of "the descendants of Europeans in India." Here he enlarged a little by saying, that, in one of his overland journeys on the Coromandel Coast, he met with two gentlemen of this description, a Mr. Hughes and a Mr. Wheatly, (the latter since dead,) who, in the course of conversation, imparted to him a fund of valuable information, relative to the surrounding country, to such an extent as he never possessed before. He further stated his firm belief, that a most useful auxiliary would at once be secured to the Society, by the formation of a Committee of Correspondence in Calcutta, as proposed; and in illustration of this, he adverted to the high testimony borne to our class, by the late Colonel Mackenzie, Surveyor-General in India, who went the length of telling Sir Alexander, that, without their valuable aid in the department, the Surveyor-Generalship could never get on. The Meeting approved of Sir Alexander's suggestion; and the next speaker who rose to address them, (the Honorable Mr. Shore,) highly applauded his speech for the comprehensiveness of its views, and concluded with recommending that such speeches should, in future, be embodied in a permanent form, for the general information of all.

I have felt it imperative on me thus prominently to state what took place at the Annual General Meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, on the occasion referred to, in order that the East Indian community at large may be aware, that I stand pledged to do my best for bringing about the formation of an Auxiliary Committee of Correspondence, in connection with that Society, and that all public-spirited East Indians may have a full and fair opportunity to assist in promoting the highly praiseworthy object contemplated by Sir Alexander Johnstone. Whatever may be the preconceived notions and interested prejudices prevailing on this subject in certain quarters, I know it to be a fact, and one in which I can truly rejoice, that my countrymen around me are making rapid strides in the march of sound intellect; and that, even as things now stand, we can, here and there, point to a poet and an essayist, to a grammarian and a logician, to an algebraist and a mathematician, to a Latin and a French scholar, and even to a theologian and a metaphysician; in a word, they now very properly begin to find



their way into every nook and corner of the great republic of letters. After this open and unreserved declaration of the fact, I hope to escape from being counted too sanguine in expecting certain success in so feasible an undertaking; and one, too, which must reflect so much credit on our literary character as a community.

I will now conclude my just and deserved eulogy of Sir Alexander Johnston, by inserting in the 'Appendix' a letter with which he favored me while at Portsmouth, in reply to a few lines, by way of a farewell, that I wrote him, just before embarking for Calcutta; a fit of illness having prevented my taking leave of him personally. A previous communication from me, to which he there alludes, is one which I addressed to him some time before, relative to the state of things at Ceylon, and to which he promised to give me a full and detailed reply at a moment of convenient leisure. A copy of this, too, perhaps, it would be as well to throw into the Appendix†.

While quitting the subject, however, as regards the formation of an Auxiliary Committee of Correspondence among our community in Calcutta, I cannot refrain from adverting to another point; which, though foreign to the specific object of my mission to England, yet, as possessing a kindred character, fully deserves to be mentioned. What I now allude to, is my offer to the Committee of Management for the Parental Academic Institution, just before I left Calcutta, to lend my aid in securing for the Institution, the services of a Professor of superior classical and scientific attainments, either from England or Scotland. For reasons of a financial nature, the Committee declined acceding to my proposal; but more than ever do I now regret that I was not authorized to accomplish so very desirable and important a measure. An improved tone of education for the rising generation, and for our coming posterity, on sound principles, forms the brightest hope of our future permanent prosperity. Let our successors in life be but properly trained and brought up; let their moral and intellectual attainments but approximate nearer and nearer towards the destined goal of a true standard; and I will undertake to vouch for it, that they will gradually, and at no great distance of time, overcome all unfair and illiberal obstacles and impediments thrown in their way, and ultimately put to the rout every system of repulsive and unjust laws that, under whatever pretence, may be in force against them in any quarter. Under the salutary impulse of a rightly cultivated mind, our East Indian

\* See No. 21.

† See No. 22.

youth will then have acquired a sober aptitude to think, to speak, to write, and to act on all matters bearing upon their social and political welfare; and illiberalism and injustice, in every palpable form, must then, of necessity, by the fair triumph of public opinion, begin to hide their bold and unblushing front, and seek a congenial retirement into their native obscurity.

I am aware that much has been done, within late years, in the momentous affair of education among our class; and the general air of improvement in society, already resulting from that circumstance, is too obvious to be denied: but what has as yet been done in that way, up to this moment, can only be regarded as the mere preliminary efforts of a great moral work that still remains to be achieved. Nor will I omit this opportunity to avow, that my temporary residence in a distant land has by no means so operated as to produce the effect of impairing my firm and decided predilection for the public good of India, or of abating my accustomed ardour of interest in schemes for the proper elevation of our community in the scale of moral and civilized life; and, if an unequivocal pledge of this be wanted, the best I can offer may, perhaps, be found in the simple fact of my having voluntarily restored to their native soil, two of my boys, who accompanied me on the voyage to England; and who are now destined, with the free and full consent of my mind, to receive all their training for the practical purposes of life on the very spot of their nativity.

Besides Sir Alexander Johnston, as above particularized, there are many other gentlemen, both in and out of Parliament, who professedly take a laudable share of interest in our cause in England, though nothing of any material consequence may have transpired in my respective communications with them; but there is one among the rest, whom it would be quite unpardonable in me not to mention. I allude to Dr. J. Bowring, the talented Editor of the *Westminster Review*, who very kindly made himself known to me, and has promised not only to give us a fair hearing at all times, through the medium of his quarterly publication, but also to advocate, on principle, our public cause, editorially. An interesting letter from him, on a very important point, will be found in the Appendix\*; and, indeed, here I may add, without exaggeration, that a liberal public feeling in our favor, as indicated by the fair specimen afforded in that letter, prevails to a happy extent in almost every disinterested quarter in England.

Yet, after all that may be said or done through other subordinate, but not the less important channels, it is in the public spirit to be found in the British Legislature alone, that we must ultimately seek our chief guarantee for the total abolition of civil and political disabilities identified with our long-neglected case ; and, when we take a cursory glance at the operations of Parliament, even within the brief period of the last few years, a cheering conviction fastens upon the mind, founded on the known analogy of things, that our just claims to an equal participation of rights and privileges, in common with the rest of the community, will not pass unheeded in that quarter. Witness, for instance, the rescindment of the Test and Corporation Act, of antiquated memory, which took place in the session of 1827 ; and prior to which, public offices in the state were so unjustly confined to a privileged class, as they may well be called, to the utter exclusion of all others who might happen to entertain religious scruples against the particular form of oath prescribed for candidates. Look, again, at the fact of the Catholic Relief Bill having been passed by the Legislature in the year 1829, which at once purported to restore a large proportion of Irish subjects of the British realm to the fair exercise of their just rights, under certain limitations. Lastly, let us also advert to the landable attempt made in Parliament, during the session of last year, to give the right hand of fellowship, in matters of legislation, to a body of about 30,000 Jews, forming by no means an unimportant branch of the British population in England ; and, if we may judge from its first failure in the House of Commons, only by a trifling majority on the other side of the question, it is not, perhaps, too much to predict that a second attempt in the same way will, in all likelihood, be crowned with complete success.

All these facts put together, and following so closely upon the heels of each other, may, I think, not unreasonably, be classed among " the signs of the times," as bearing a peculiarly auspicious aspect towards our particular condition in India ; and much substantial good may, therefore, surely be looked for from the final proceedings in both Houses of Parliament, which are likely to take their shape from a fair and an unbiassed consideration of the whole mass of evidence placed before the two Select Committees, and afterwards reported on by them.

Just before leaving London, I most earnestly confided the task of watching over our case, now fairly before Parliament, to Mr. Crawford's vigilance and attention ; of course making Lord Carlisle and Mr. Wynn duly acquainted with the arrangement. Amid other press-

ing avocations connected with the commercial interests of India, Mr. Crawford, it is true, as himself repeatedly acknowledged, was not able to render me much personal assistance in any way ; but he assured me, at the moment of parting, that, as he had now gone through the more onerous parts of his own work, he would, in future, take care to identify our cause with other general matters, within the scope of his public agency. On this assurance, I can firmly rely ; and my sentiments to the same effect were expressed in a letter, which I took the opportunity to write him during my detention at Rio Janeiro, as inserted in the Appendix\*.

I have the pleasure to lay before the Committee my Account-Current†, showing the amount of my entire expenditure, chargeable to the public fund raised for the purpose ; and, in order that nothing in any way may be kept back on my part, I beg also to transmit herewith a bundle of papers, 115 in number, which accumulated in my hands while in London.

This brings me to the close of my career in England, up to the time of my departure from Portsmouth, on the 8th of July last ; and, if I shall be thought to have been guilty of any degree of lengthy tediousness in the foregoing statement, my best apology will, I hope, be found in the vast importance of the whole matter, and the consequently greater necessity imposed upon me to give a full and unreserved detail of all particulars. In what now remains, my pen shall be confined to a brief recital of one or two points emanating from my short stay at Madras.

On the 1st instant, I was favored with an audience of the Right Honorable the Governor, Mr. Lushington, who gave me a polite and urbane reception, and spoke about my evidence before the Lords' Committee, touching the disabilities set forth in our Petition to Parliament. The Governor, so far as I can judge, appears to be well disposed towards our class generally ; and he introduced the name of Mr. Hughes in conversation, mentioning him as one, " more intelligent than whom he never saw." This is precisely the same gentleman, to whose character for much general information Sir Alexander Johnston bears so high a testimony, as adverted to in a preceding part of this letter. He is an extensive landholder in the interior of Madras ; and is so well versed in local matters connected with political economy, that " Government make no scruple," as I was told, " to consult him for infor-

\* See No. 24.

† See No. 25.

mation on certain points, which they cannot so readily derive from any other source whatever." While retiring from the presence of the Governor, he very kindly asked me to a ball and supper at the Banqueting Room on the following evening ; for which mark of personal attention, I must here express myself thankful.

Just another point remains to be noticed, as connected with my stay at Madras ; and, to speak without vanity, it is really one alike creditable to the public spirit of the one party, and gratifying to the best feelings of the other. What I refer to, is the very cordial and friendly reception I met with among our community at that Presidency. Not to mention the many personal marks of kindness individually shown me by one and all, they collectively, as a body, invited me first to a public dinner, on the evening of the 3d, and then to a ball and supper on that of the 5th. On both these occasions, the arrangements made were such as to reflect the highest credit on all concerned ; and, in so saying, I do no more than give the echo of general opinion about the matter. At the public dinner, the Garrison band was engaged to play ; and several loyal and patriotic toasts were most cordially and enthusiastically drank, preceded by warm and eloquent speeches, and followed by appropriate tunes ; two of which, much to their credit be it said, were composed on the spur of the occasion, expressly to welcome my arrival among them\*. Under the irresistible power of such kind and friendly treatment, spontaneously emanating from themselves, my natural feelings, as may be expected, were drawn into full exercise, and fairly overcome ; and I could not restrain the strong impulse of my mind to make some feeble attempt at giving them utterance, not only at the time when my name became prominently associated with a special toast proposed and drank with much enthusiasm by the company, but also in a letter which I was afterwards impelled, by motives of pure gratitude, to address to Mr. P. Carstairs, the gentleman who presided at the table, preparatory to my sailing out of the Madras roads†. Nor did our kind friends at Madras content themselves with these glowing effusions of public spirit on so patriotic an occasion. They, moreover, generously came forward with an offer to defray my hotel expenses during my stay among them ; and, though motives of personal delicacy influenced me to withstand the gratification of their laudable impulse in this way, yet the heart-felt sense of such their spontaneous kindness remains unabatingly impressed on my mind.

\* " Ricketts's March," and " Ricketts's Welcome to Madras."

† See Appendix, No. 26.

And now to bring my Report to the Committee to a final close. When I steadily look back upon the past, I have every reason in the world to regard my deputation to England as by far the most happy period of my public career ; and justly proud do I feel of the high tone of salutary confidence thus reposed in me by my fellow-countrymen ; whose fair and honest approbation of my proceedings, if such be deserved, is the highest pinnacle of honor, as well as the greatest amount of reward, to which I aspire. Finally, from the very bottom of my heart do I bless God, for having spared my life, under very trying circumstances in a distant land, and also on a perilous voyage back ; for the pleasing symptoms of success already vouchsafed to our public cause ; and for once more restoring me in safety to the land of my birth, and to the bosom of a family endeared to me by the strongest ties, and by a thousand best considerations.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient and faithful Servant,

JOHN W. RICKETTS.

CALCUTTA, 21st March, 1831.

P. S. Since the reading and approval of the above Report, at the Public Meeting held at the Town Hall, on Monday the 28th March, and while the Report is in the press, authentic intelligence has reached Calcutta, of a complete change in the Ministry in England. This is a circumstance that looks like the very finger of a kind Providence for averting evil, and producing good ; and must be hailed with a sort of rapturous joy and gratitude, by every well-wisher of the human race, as portending a civil and political regeneration in every part of the civilized world, to which the counsels of the British Cabinet extend their salutary influence. We may, therefore, I think, rest satisfied that, amid the great vortex of general politics, India, ' the brightest gem in the British crown,' will not be overlooked by the new Ministry ; the decided liberality of whose known political character, (composed as it is of men renowned in the history of public opinion for all that is truly great and noble in public life,) affords a sure pledge of success to our public cause, whenever the time shall arrive for discussing and regulating the terms, on which the East India Company's lease for these distant parts of the British Empire, if renewed, shall be granted by the Legislature.

J. W. R.

In conformity with Mr. Crawford's advice, as communicated in his letter inserted in the Appendix\*, the Committee had taken the necessary steps for preparing and despatching another Petition to England. This document was not intended so much to embrace any new matter, as to be restricted to the brief reiteration of the various grievances contained in the original Petition. The second Petition was, accordingly, in a state of forwardness, when Mr. Ricketts arrived; but, on their consulting him, he stated it as his opinion, that the document in question was rendered unnecessary, by the very favorable state of public feeling existing in England towards the political claims of the East Indian body, and also with reference to the present advanced stage of the business in both Houses of Parliament, in consequence of their first Petition. For these reasons, Mr. Ricketts thought that a second Petition at this moment would seem to imply a culpable want of confidence in those gentlemen, who have already taken so warm an interest in the matter, and who never once hinted to him the necessity and propriety of forwarding another Petition to them, on his return to India. Concurring in the same view of things, the Committee have resolved to abstain, for the present, from any fresh appeal to the Legislature, until the result of what is now doing in England, in consequence of their original Petition, shall be known †.

The Committee would deem themselves highly culpable, if they permitted themselves to conclude their Report, without expressing, in the strongest possible terms, the very high sense they entertain of Mr. Ricketts's valuable services in the public cause. Judging from the result of his delegation, as far as it appears exhibited in his statement, and which, as far as circumstances have developed themselves to observation, holds out an earnest of ultimate success;

\* See A.

† In consequence of a proposition made at the late public Meeting, at the Town Hall, it was unanimously resolved to frame a second Petition to Parliament.

the Committee are satisfied that the East Indian community could not have selected a more fit and qualified individual from among their body as their representative on so important a mission. How zealously he interested himself, and with what laudable and exemplary ardour does continue to interest himself in their behalf; and how warmly he was animated in the fulfilment of his responsible trust, let the voluntary sacrifices he so cheerfully submitted to, speak to the fact. How well he has answered the expectations which were formed of his capability, and how ably and satisfactorily he has accomplished the object of his deputation to Parliament, are quite manifest, from the detail furnished in his very judicious Report. That Mr. Ricketts's exertions on their account ought to be cherished in lasting remembrance, by a grateful East Indian community, will be readily admitted; that East Indians should consider themselves as bound to Mr. Ricketts by ties of no common obligation for the unwearied zeal, indefatigable exertions, and pure patriotism he has ever evinced in the public cause, and to secure the public good, will be acknowledged with equal readiness. But though Mr. Ricketts's merits are above the limited aim of cold and feeble panegyric, yet not only their thanks, but also of the East Indian body at large, are due to him; and it is hoped that the Committee will be cordially and heartily joined by their countrymen, in testifying, in a marked manner, their deep sense of his inestimable services.

The Committee deem it right to take this opportunity to assign a place in the Appendix\* to the East Indians' Petition, with which their Agent was deputed to England, by a Resolution passed at the public Meeting held at the Town Hall, on the 20th of April, 1829, together with the Parliamentary Debates on that Petition in both Houses of the Legislature, as published by Mr. Ricketts in London.

\* See B. and C.



Since writing the above, the Committee have received a communication from Mr. P. Carstairs, at Madras, detailing the proceedings of the East Indian community at that place, consequent on the arrival of Mr. Ricketts among them, on his passage to Calcutta, which are of so gratifying a nature, as to deserve a place in this Report\*.

In conclusion, the Committee beg to lay before their constituents, an Account-Current of Receipts and Disbursements since the publication of their last Report, in the month of July, 1829 †.

\* See Appendix D. † See Appendix E.

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## A P P E N D I X.

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### No. 1.

Lord Carlisle presents his compliments to Mr. Ricketts, and begs leave to inform him, that he had intended to present his Petition to the House of Lords on an early day; but has been requested, by Lord Ellenborough, to postpone it to rather a more distant one, as he wishes to have a legal opinion upon the subject.

Lord C. will acquaint Mr. R. with the day, on which he will present the Petition.

*Grosvenor Place, March 6th, 1830.*

J. W. Ricketts, Esq.

*13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

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### No. 2.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, March 3d, 1830.*

MY LORD DUKE,

Allow me respectfully to submit, for your Grace's perusal and consideration, the accompanying printed copy of a Petition to Parliament, with which I have been deputed to England, by my countrymen in India; and I beg to solicit the honor of an audience of your Grace, whenever it may suit your Grace's convenience to see me.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's very obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN W. RICKETTS.

*To his Grace the Duke of Wellington, &c. &c. Downing Street.*

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### No. 3.

The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Ricketts, and has received his letter of this day, and the enclosed printed copy of a Petition, which he intends to present to the House of Commons.

The Duke recommends to Mr. Ricketts to see the Chairman of the Court of Directors and the President of the Board of Con-

trol. If, after having conversed with those gentlemen, Mr. Ricketts still wishes to see the Duke, he will appoint a time to receive him.

J. W. Ricketts, Esq. *London, March 3d, 1830.*  
*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

No. 4.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, March 4th, 1830.*

MY LORD DUKE,

I have been honored with the receipt of your Grace's note of yesterday's date; and beg to state that I have already seen the President of the Board of Control, and the Chairman of the Court of Directors, on the subject of the Petition to Parliament, with which I have been deputed from India.

Under these circumstances, I shall wait your Grace's pleasure, as to the time when it will be convenient to your Grace to grant me the honor of an audience.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's very obedient Servant,  
 (Signed) JOHN W. RICKETTS.

*To his Grace the Duke of Wellington, &c. &c. Downing Street.*

No. 5.

*London, March 5th, 1830.*

The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Ricketts, and has received his letter of the 4th instant.

The Duke begs leave to inform him that he is engaged every day from 12 o'clock, in one or other of the Committees sitting in the House of Lords, and afterwards in the House itself in the afternoon.

The Duke would be much obliged to Mr. Ricketts, if he will put in writing what he wishes to represent.

If he cannot do so, the Duke will endeavour to find time to receive him at an early hour in the morning.

John W. Ricketts, Esq.  
*13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

## No. 6.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, March 6th, 1830.*

MY LORD DUKE,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's note of yesterday's date; and beg to express my sincere regret at the trouble which I have occasioned, amid the multiplicity of your Grace's engagements.

I shall do myself the honor to wait upon your Grace any morning which it may be convenient to your Grace to grant me the favor of an audience.

Apologizing for this intrusion on your Grace's valuable time,

I have the honor to subscribe myself,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's very obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN W. RICKETTS.

*To his Grace the Duke of Wellington, &c. &c. Downing Street.*

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## No. 7.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, March 6th, 1830.*

SIR,

Allow me respectfully to submit, for your perusal and consideration, the accompanying printed copy of a Petition to Parliament, with which I have been deputed by my countrymen in India; and to solicit the honor of an audience, at such time as may be most convenient to you, amid your numerous important avocations.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN W. RICKETTS.

*To the Right Hon'ble R. Peel, &c. &c. Whitehall.*

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## No. 8.

*Whitehall, March 8th, 1830.*

Mr. Peel presents his compliments to Mr. Ricketts, and begs leave to observe, in reply to his letter of the 6th March, that Mr. Peel is so occupied at the present time, by public and parliamentary business, pressing for immediate despatch, that he will be much obliged to Mr. Ricketts to make to him in writing (in the first instance at least) the communication which Mr. Ricketts wishes to make personally. Mr. Peel will see Mr. Ricketts some time hence, if Mr. Ricketts shall still think an interview necessary.

John W. Ricketts, Esq.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

## No. 9.

*No. 13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, March 9th, 1830.*

SIR,

I have been honored with the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date; and beg to state, in reply, that, as an Agent entrusted with an important mission from India, I had certainly thought it my duty to seek an audience of a Minister holding so prominent a place in the India Board, as yourself; but, since the date of my application to you, I have obtained an interview with another Member of the Board, which supersedes the necessity of my intruding upon your valuable time, occupied, as you are, with various matters of importance.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN W. RICKETTS.

*To the Right Hon'ble R. Peel, &c. &c. Whitehall.*

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## No. 10.

*Essex Street, March 27th, 1830.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I enclose a note I have received from Lord Calthorpe. I do not know whether it is intended to examine you on Tuesday—if so, it seems desirable that you should endeavour to see his Lordship previously to that time.

I am,

My dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. B. GURNEY.

J. W. Ricketts, Esq.

*13, Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

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## No. 11.

Lord Calthorpe presents his compliments to Mr. Gurney, and would be obliged to him to ask Mr. Ricketts, in case he should have an opportunity, to call upon him on Tuesday next, at half past 3 o'clock.

*Grosvenor Square, March 27th, 1830.*

W. B. Gurney, Esq.

*Essex Street, Strand.*

## No. 12.

*House of Lords.*

By the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the present state of the Affairs of the East India Company.

ORDERED,

That John William Ricketts, Esq. be requested to attend to give evidence before the said Committee, and that the Clerk be directed to write to him accordingly.

SIR,

In pursuance of the above order, I have to request your attendance at the Bar of the House of Lords, on Thursday, the 25th of March, at  $\frac{1}{4}$  before 4 o'clock, to be sworn to give evidence before the said Committee. And you are further requested to attend the said Committee, on Friday, the 26th, at 1 o'clock, for the purpose of being examined.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. W. BIRCH,

*Clerk to Committee.*

*House of Lords, Friday, 19th March, 1830.*

P. S. You are requested to show this letter, and give your name to one of the door-keepers of the House of Lords.

Though *Thursday* is named for the attendance of Mr. Ricketts, any earlier day, next week, from 4 to 5 o'clock, will do as well for Mr. Ricketts to be sworn, if more convenient.

J. W. Ricketts, Esq.

13, *Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road, London.*

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## No. 13.

*Die Veneris, 19<sup>o</sup> Martii, 1830.*

Ordered, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, that John William Ricketts, Esq. do attend this House on Monday next, to be sworn, in order to his being examined as a witness before the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the present state of the Affairs of the East India Company, and into the trade between Great Britain, the East Indies, and China.

(Signed) W. COURTENAY,

*Deputy Clerk, Parliament.*

J. W. Ricketts, Esq.

13, *Brooksby Street, Liverpool Road.*

## No. 14.

*Evidence on the Affairs of the East India Company.*

Die Mercurii, 31<sup>o</sup> Martii, 1830.

The Lord President in the Chair.

*John William Ricketts, Esq. is called in, and examined as follows :—*

You are a native of Calcutta? ‘

I am.

You were the bearer of a Petition from a certain portion of the inhabitants of Calcutta and the Presidency of Fort William, which has been presented to the House of Lords?

I was.

How is that Petition signed; by what number?

Between six and seven hundred.

Are they mostly persons immediately descended from European fathers and native mothers, or are they the offspring of intermarriages?

They are also the offspring of intermarriages.

Do you know in what proportion?

No, I do not.

Can you state the grievances which are detailed in that Petition? The first grievance appears to be a complaint with respect to their being destitute of any rule of civil law; will you explain how that operates upon the Petitioners?

We are not recognized as British subjects by the Supreme Court of Calcutta, if residing in the Mofussil.

That is, without the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court?

Just so, which throws us upon the Mofussil Courts, the proceedings of which are regulated by the Mahomedan law. As Christians, we cannot avail ourselves of the Mahomedan civil law, though we are subject to the criminal code. The Mahomedan civil code does not apply to us as Christians, though we are subject to the lash of the criminal law.

It does not apply to you as regards marriages, or succession to property?

The Mahomedan code is expressly for Mahomedans. It provides for the rights and interests of Mahomedans.

Therefore, in all that regards marriages and succession to property, you are without any rule by which you can regulate your conduct?

Without any definite rule of civil law.

You have said that, in criminal cases, you are subject to the code of Mahomedan law?

We are.

Is that attended with considerable hardship and severity ; for instance, the infliction of punishment in criminal cases ?

I am not aware of its being unnecessarily severe, so far as my personal knowledge goes ; though its provisions are barbarous as applicable to a Christian population.

Has there been no mitigation of the severity of part of that code ?

The code is modified by the Company's Regulations.

Is there any appeal from that tribunal ?

To the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut in Calcutta, but not to the Supreme Court. The question was tried in the year 1821 ; and it was the opinion of the Judges, that we could not claim a right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

Does the tribunal of Sudder Adawlut possess the power of increasing the punishment ?

So I understand.

Is that the case, without fresh evidence being adduced ?

Yes.

In that Petition, there is a complaint, that from all the superior and covenanted offices, as well as all the sworn offices of the Marine, the Petitioners have been excluded by the positive Regulations of the Company ?

Either by the positive Regulations, or by the established usage of the service.

Does the preamble also provide, that a person so appointed shall not be the son of a native Indian ?

It does, with regard to appointments in the regular service of the Company, and to the military appointments of the Company.

Does that apply after intermarriage ?

It used to do ; but I believe there has been some modification of that rule within the last two years.

That modification is by Regulation ?

There is no law upon the subject ; it is by the orders of the Court of Directors.

Do you know of instances in which that modification has been acted upon, in which persons, not immediately descended from native mothers, have been appointed to situations under the Company ?

I know certain instances, in which the appointment was refused on that ground on former occasions.

Since the year 1827, has there been no alteration in that respect in the Regulations of the Company ?

I see that the phraseology of the prohibition has been altered within the last two years or so.

It is restricted to the immediate descendants of the mother, is it not ?

I think it is. There has been no formal Regulation or Notification



on the subject ; but I gather the fact from the parase employed, which has been modified of late.

With regard to the subordinate and inferior offices, which do not come under the head of superior and covenanted offices, is there any exclusion of the Petitioners ?

There is a certain class of situations, which are confined by usage to the natives of the country, and in which we have no share or part whatever. It would be considered irregular to appoint us to these situations.

From their being filled by native officers ?

Yes.

Does that apply to offices in the Judicial Department, such as Moonsiffs ?

Yes.

Are they appointed to act as Pleaders in any of the Courts ?

No ; that is confined to natives.

With regard to the Military Department, how are they situated ?

They can hold no commissions in the Company's or King's service.

Are they excluded from being non-commissioned officers ?

They are employed as Drummers and Fifers, and so forth.

Can they advance to the rank of Corporal ?

I am not aware of any instance, in which they have been so employed.

Is there an order of the Commander-in-Chief in force, which prevents their holding any commissions in the Indo-British Army ?

There was an order passed by the Commander-in-Chief, in the year 1808, to that effect.

That you conceive is still in force ?

Yes, practically so ; it has never been repealed.

Therefore, they can hold no commissions either in the King's or the Company's Army ?

No, certainly not.

Are there no instances of any deviation from that rule ?

There were some of our class, who were admitted both into the Civil and Military services, prior to the prohibition ; the Quarter Master General of the Army, for instance, who is an East Indian ; but he was admitted prior to the year 1791 ; and there is Mr. Achmuty, of the Civil service, who was also admitted prior to the prohibitory Regulation.

Does Colonel Skinner hold a commission in the Company's service ?

He holds a local rank in the Company's service.

Is he descended from a native mother ?

He is.

Colonel Skinner is an officer, who has served with great distinction ?

Yes, he has signalized himself on many occasions.

Are you aware that there was any disinclination to serve under Colonel Skinner, on the part of the natives of India?

I am not aware of such a thing.

You never heard of any objection being raised against him, on the ground of his mother having lost caste?

No, I am not aware of that.

There is also a complaint with regard to non-employment of the persons of your class by Native Powers; that there is a restriction upon your employment by the Native Powers?

Yes.

Do you know any instance of any persons of your class being employed by Native Powers?

There were many employed by the Mahratta States; and I believe there are some still in the service of some of the Native States.

Do you refer to the independent Mahratta States, over which the Company has no control?

Yes.

In those States, over which the Company has a control, are persons of your class employed, without obtaining permission from the Government?

It is generally understood that they cannot be so employed, without the permission of Government.

Has that permission been refused, to your knowledge, when applied for?

I am not aware of any particular instance, in which it has been refused.

If that permission be granted, it is always liable to be recalled; is it not?

Yes; should any disturbance arise, or any war break out, they are required to return to the Company's territories. The Mahratta officers, who were employed in the years 1801 and 1802, were invited back to the Company's territories, upon the promise of being pensioned. There were some who availed themselves of the pension, and came to the Company's territories; there were others who were barbarously murdered by the Native Princes, the moment they came to the knowledge of the circumstance.

The treaties with the Native Powers only prevent Europeans being employed; therefore under what head do you come, as you are not recognized as Europeans in the interior?

We are sometimes recognized as Europeans, and sometimes as natives, as it serves the purposes of the Government; there is no precise character affixed to us in that respect.

You are generally recognized as natives, except within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court?

Yes ; and yet those officers who were employed by the Mahratta States, were threatened to be dealt with as traitors, if they did not return to the Company's territories on the announcement of the order.

What Mahratta States were those ?

Scindiah and Holkar.

Are there any Institutions in Calcutta for the education of the children of persons of your class ?

There are both public and private schools.

Is the expense of those schools defrayed by yourselves, or do you receive any assistance from Government ?

We have never received any assistance from Government, in any shape whatever.

There are funds applicable, by Act of Parliament, for the education of the natives ?

There are ; but we are not included in that grant. We have never received any assistance from Government in the education of our offspring.

Therefore, the expense is entirely defrayed by yourselves ?

Entirely so.

Is there any other grievance, which you wish to state to the Committee ?

With regard to our not being employed by the Native States, I know of some instances where a penalty bond has been taken from persons going out from this country to India, under two securities, that they should not enter into the service of any of the Native States. East Indians who have come to England for education, when they have applied for permission to return to their native country, have been allowed to do so, but under a penalty bond, that they should not enter into the service of any Native State.

Can you state the number of persons of your class in the province of Bengal ?

I should think that the number would not be over-rated, if I estimated it at about 20,000, more or less, in Calcutta and all the provinces. There was a Police Committee Report made in the year 1822 ; and the Christian population in Calcutta alone was estimated at 13,138, of which there were 2,254 Europeans ; consequently we are included in the remainder ; that is, about 10,884. The number must have increased considerably since 1822.

The number increases in proportion to the number of Europeans employed ?

We out-number the Europeans very considerably, certainly.

More Europeans being employed in consequence of the increase of territory, your numbers are upon the increase ?

Yes, and from the offspring of intermarriages.

You stated that, in the provinces, you, being Christians, were subject to the Mahomedan criminal law ; is not that law much altered and modified by the Company's Regulations ?

Yes, it is considerably modified.

Are not all native-born subjects of the King subject to the same law for any offence less than felony, in the provinces ?

I am not aware of the extent to which they are. They are not understood, certainly, to be subject to the criminal law of the Mofussil Courts.

Are they not liable to be punished for offences less than felony by the Company's Magistrates in the provinces ?

I am not aware of that circumstance. I have not resided in the interior to know the fact.

Will you turn to the Act of Parliament of the 53d Geo. 3d, Cap. 155, and state what enactment is contained in that clause, with regard to criminal offences committed by British subjects in the provinces ?

By this it appears that they are liable to be punished for any offence, not being felony, by the Magistrates of the Zillah Courts. I do not know that that has ever been put into practice, which made me doubt the fact.

You have stated that, although subjected to the Mahomedan criminal law, you are not permitted to avail yourselves of the Mahomedan civil law, being Christians ; will you state under what civil law you consider yourself to be placed in the provinces ?

What I meant to say, was this ; that, as Christians, the Mahomedan civil law does not apply to us, so as to render it desirable for us to avail ourselves of it. It is exclusively applicable to Mahomedans ; it applies to their case, not to the case of Christians. It is a singular anomaly, that a Christian subject, under the British Government, should be subject to the Mahomedan civil code. The Mahomedan civil code goes entirely upon the principles of the religion professed ; it is based entirely upon the Koran.

Are you acquainted with Regulation III. of the year 1793, by which all natives and other persons, not British subjects, are amenable to the jurisdiction of the Zillah and City Courts, and those Courts are empowered to take cognizance of all suits and complaints respecting the succession or right to real or personal property, lands, rents, revenues, debts, accounts, contracts, partnerships, marriage, caste, claims to damages for injuries, and generally all suits and complaints of a civil nature. By the same Regulation, in cases coming within the jurisdiction of those Courts, for which no specific rule may exist, the Judges are to act according to justice, and equity, and good conscience. By the same Regulation, in suits regarding succession, inheritance, marriage, and caste, and all religious usages and institutions, the Mahomedan laws with respect to Mahomedans, and the Hindoo laws with

regard to Hindoos, are to be considered as the general laws by which the Judges are to form their decisions. Do you apprehend that, under that Regulation, any Christian engaged in a civil suit, would be obliged to have that suit determined according to the law which was solely applicable to a Mahomedan ?

I certainly think so.

What civil code is in use in the provinces, as regards Hindoos ?

If the party be a Hindoo, there is the Hindoo code for him ; if the party be a Mahomedan, there is the Mahomedan code for him ; but there is no express provision made for Christians.

Supposing a person of the half-blood to be the son of a Hindoo mother, do you apprehend that that person would be considered as a Mahomedan, and that his civil suit would be tried according to the Mahomedan law ?

I think that they are generally taken for Mahomedans, and dealt with accordingly.

Do you not think that, under the Regulation of which the substance has been stated to you, the Magistrate would have a power of acting in such a case according to justice, equity, and good conscience ?

It may be so ; but that is a very dubious principle ; and it would be left entirely to the Magistrate's own sense of justice, or his own feelings on the subject. The Magistrate may certainly act upon the new principle with regard to Christians, if so inclined.

Are you aware of any practical grievance that has been sustained by persons of half-blood, in consequence of the present state of the law of the provinces, in regard to civil suits ?

I have not resided in the Mofussil, and therefore my acquaintance with the practice of those Courts is very limited ; but what we complain of, is the principle of the thing, more than the practice : the principle is odious.

Will you state what description of offices are now held by persons of the half-blood ?

They are principally employed in subordinate capacities in the public offices of Government.

They are employed very extensively as writers, are they not ?

They are.

And as clerks ?

Yes.

As clerks in merchants' houses ?

Yes.

As clerks in the Customs and the Revenue Department ?

Yes.

And in the Judicial Department ?

They are generally employed as clerks in the different Departments.

In the Military Department?

As clerks in all the different Departments of Government.

Can you state whether they are employed in the Police of the country?

They are employed as clerks in the Police department.

Are they employed in the Irregular Corps?

They have been so employed; but the Corps were disbanded, and they were thrown out of employment.

As long as they existed, they were employed in the Irregular Corps?

For a time they were, during the Nepal war; that is, as long as the exigencies of the Government required their services.

Can you state the highest salaries received, in any case, by a person of half-blood?

They have received salaries as high as four and five hundred Rupees per month.

That is about £ 600 a year, is it not?

It is; these are very rare cases indeed; there are not many such cases.

Are there many persons of half-blood, who, in your opinion, are qualified to hold high situations by their education?

Certainly. I say so with the most perfect confidence.

Can you give the Committee any idea of the number of persons, whom you consider qualified to hold higher situations than those now filled by persons of that class?

I dare say we might collect about 500 persons of that description, calculated to hold situations of trust and responsibility.

How are those persons now employed?

They are employed, as I have before stated, as clerks in different public and private offices.

Your opinion is, that a well-educated clerk is fit for a much higher situation?

I mean to state that their talents are not brought into proper exercise.

You have stated the number of persons so employed as clerks to extend to 500?

I should think there must be about 1,000 or more of them, altogether.

Do you mean in Calcutta alone?

Yes, in Calcutta alone; in the different public and private offices.

The total number of persons of the half-blood you stated at 20,000?

Yes.

Can you state the number in public offices?

There may be five or six hundred.

Are they extensively engaged in trade?

Some of them are.

Are they engaged in the maritime trade of the country?

Yes, they are.

To any great extent?

To a pretty considerable extent, as a beginning.

Is any large portion of the trade between Calcutta and China conducted by persons of the half-blood?

Not a considerable portion.

Are they, in any cases, Officers and Captains of ships engaged in that trade?

Some few of them are.

Are there any wealthy Mercantile Houses in Calcutta?

There are some.

Can you state the amount of the property of any House of persons of the half-blood?

Baretto's House was considered one of the wealthiest Houses in India; besides which, there are Lackersteen's, Brightman's, and Bruce and Allan's Houses.

Persons of half-blood, as the law now stands, and under the Regulations of the Company, can purchase land in any part of India; can they not?

Yes, they can; but under all the disadvantages of the case, arising from the imperfect state of the law, and from the corrupt administration of justice in the Mofussil Courts.

And they are not liable to be sent out of the country?

No, certainly not.

Therefore, they have those advantages which are not possessed by Europeans?

Yes, such as they are.

What establishments are there for the education of persons in your condition in Calcutta?

There is the Military Orphan School, which is supported by the subscriptions of the Army; and there are the Parental Academic Institution, and the Calcutta Grammar School.

How many persons may be educated in those three establishments?

There must be about 500 or 600 in the Military Orphan School, (the Upper and Lower Orphan Schools;) perhaps 800, including both sexes. There are about 130 or 140 boys in the Parental Academic Institution, and about 40 or 50 in the Grammar School; and there are private schools besides.

How high is education carried in those three establishments you have mentioned; to what age do the children continue there?

The age of seventeen or eighteen in the boys' school.