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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES JAMES FOX.

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L E T T E R

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES JAMES FOX,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S

PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE,

BY

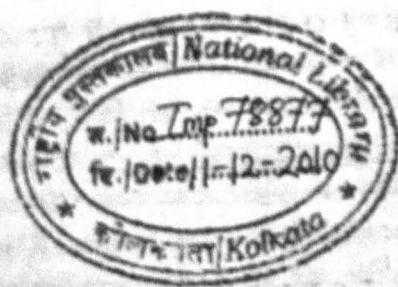
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1783.



LETTER, &c.

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

WHILE the iron claw of ministerial encroachment is stretched out over the delegated powers, the chartered Rights, the very corporate existence of all public bodies in this kingdom, while an universal alarm for *the safety of our admirable Constitution*, and for the *essential Liberties of Britons* sits pallid upon every countenance, and trembles upon every tongue, it is become my peculiar and unavoidable province to excite (if I can) a momentary attention to *subordinate concerns*, to set up a separate plea of my

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own, on account of my immediate principal; and while the cause of Mr. Hastings goes hand in hand with that of the public, I cannot tamely suffer the animadversions unmeritedly cast upon *him*, to operate, (as it is meant they should,) to the annihilation of the East India Company, to the perpetuation of *your* ascendancy, and to the establishment of corruption *by Law*. It is indeed very extraordinary, that while all your Argument in support of your present Bill is so palpably personal, so pointedly harsh against the Governor General of Bengal, you should call repeatedly upon the House to leave the defence of Mr. Hastings out of the question. Nothing can exceed your Artifice, but the plausibility by which it is masked—You bring in a Bill for a Reform of the East India Company—In support of the necessity of that Reform, You adduce various specific abuses said to exist in India, and You charge those abuses separately and collectively to Mr. Hastings. You then insinuate something of corrupt influence acquired by that gentleman, even on a part of the Legislature: and having with wonderful management engrafted the Company's difficulties on *his* conduct, You in the same

breath

breath disclaim all hostile intentions towards him : You insist that opposition should *generalize* the whole of its reply : You would banish even the name of Hastings from the other side of the House, and after pronouncing your own harangue, You would arbitrarily dictate the measure and the terms of the answer.

In fact, therefore, because gentlemen are unwilling to lie under the obloquy (however unjust) of intriguing in favour of a man, whom You profess not to attack, (even while you are stabbing him to the heart) all the principal topics of this grand question must necessarily pass untouched. Even the public prints are instructed to stile all the virtuous members, who from any cause whatever oppose your bill, "The partizans of Mr. Hastings:" when it is obvious, that the line of your attack is and must be the clue to their resort; when it is most notorious, that nothing but the impossibility of throwing any light upon the subject, *as stated by You*, without a reference to the measures of Mr. Hastings's administration, could have overpowered their reluctance to admit any personalities whatsoever in a debate of

such general, of such national importance. But that which in every other man in the kingdom might be misrepresented as proceeding from partial or improper motives, and which, if it could not be proved *corrupt*, would at least be branded as *efficious*, is in me the plain simple outline of duty to my employer, the immediate function of my appointment. I am not fit, Sir, to cope with Your talents: and it is in full sense of my own insignificance that I venture my appeal to the public against a Minister of State.

But as the whole scope of your reasoning turns equally upon two points, the pecuniary distress of the Company at home, and the instant calamities arising from the misconduct of Mr. Hastings abroad, I know not why in one case the Company's property should be under-rated or frittered away at your pleasure, to exhibit an artificial bankruptcy; nor in the other, why a manifest mis-statement of our political situation in India should be at all events admitted, because an impartial and more comfortable account would necessarily include some portion of Mr. Hastings's merits. I have avowed myself, Sir, as Mr.

Hastings's

Hastings's political agent: but it is not only in that capacity that I have now the honour to address you; I am also a *Proprietor of India Stock*: My property, my bread is involved in the consequences of your bill, together with that of many hundreds; My privileges, as holden under a royal charter, my rights, as sanctioned by the faith of Parliament, are attacked in common with those of every member of every corporation in England. I examine your bill not with the calm criticism of a speculative reasoner, not with the dispassionate eye of an unconcerned spectator, but with the breathless curiosity of home-felt alarm, but with the trembling calculation of personal interest. Would to God the contents of Your bill for vesting the affairs of the East-India Company in the hands of certain Commissioners had answered my expectations, and the flattering promises of the title, in disclosing something that would be for the benefit of the Proprietors and the Public!—But neither in the bill itself, nor in any of Your speeches on the subject, have I been able to discover a single item from which I can promise to myself any benefit as a *Proprietor*:—nor indeed can I divine, how a forcible transfer of the whole concerns of

a commercial body from the hands of twenty-four Directors (mostly bred in commercial habits) to those of seven Commissioners (of whom the greater part most certainly were never instructed in business at all) should ever have passed upon the public, as a probable mode of rendering those concerns more productive.

Profit is the life of *commerce*; and my stock is staked upon the Company's commerce. What is it to me, that the Company's books be better kept, that the compting-house be more decently arranged, that the shop-men be more ingeniously distributed, by your new bill, and under your Commissioners, if its *trade* produce no additional *gain*? Had you pointed out new sources of wealth, new channels for commerce, new markets for our commodities, you would have been deservedly hailed as the friend, as the saviour of the Company. But is there any thing like this in your Bill? on the contrary, whenever the present servants of the Company come forward with their estimates fairly drawn up, and state to the public the different objects on which they found their expectations of the Company's future responsibility, and the vari-

ous articles, which while they form the credit-side of their account, comprehend their whole and ultimate means of solvency—You with emphatical industry attempt to deny and invalidate them all—You affect to prove, and you lay your whole stress on proving, that under every posture of events the Company is and *must necessarily* become bankrupt for eight millions—yet you would flatter me with hopes of deriving *benefit* from the appointment of your Commissioners. If a bankruptcy must ensue, I, as a creditor, do not mean to resign my right of becoming a trustee for management and recovery of the bankrupts effects. Men are always most quick-sighted in their own immediate concerns: and you may be assured that no stockholder will risk (if he can help it) the loss of his stock. It cannot possibly therefore be for the benefit of the Proprietors, that seven Commissioners should be appointed to manage their concerns, who (not possessing nor being bound to possess a farthing of stock) would not lose a single farthing by the Company's ruin. But at the very moment in which you declare the Company to be bankrupt in eight millions, you would set aside that property which is stated on the credit-side of its account: as if a bankrupt's estate could be accurate.

ly exhibited, without a compleat enumeration of the several articles which compose that estate. To me, as a Proprietor, who on the Company's bankruptcy can only look to the reimbursement of my capital — it is perfectly indifferent whether the Company's effects be sold by auction, or seized by your Commissioners — provided their true and intrinsic value be fairly brought to account: But it is a new refinement in commerce, that your seven Bailiffs should come expressly by act of Parliament, “ *immediately to enter in and upon, and*
“ *to possess themselves of all lands and tenements,*
“ *houses, warehouses, and other buildings whatever,*
“ *of or belonging to the said United Company,*” and that the said Company should not be permitted to charge the authentic valuation of those lands, &c. in account current with its own creditors. I repeat it, that all the *benefit* which you offer me as a Proprietor, is the fallacious benefit of Parliamentary security for my dividend of 8 per cent. *fallacious*—because if the Company's affairs be not desperate, I am entitled to that dividend without your interference: and because, if the Commerce cannot afford to pay the dividend, I am one of the public who must be assessed my proportion

portion to make up the deficiency of my own dividend as a Proprietor. How then will your bill in any light *benefit the public*? By an appropriation of the revenues of India to the national exigencies. But how will you render those revenues productive here? You cannot remit them in specie: for that would impoverish the Colonies an hundred-fold faster than it would enrich this country. You cannot import them through the medium of commerce, unless you find a new vent and increased consumption for its commodities: which, if the commercial sagacity of the present managers cannot discover and turn to account, I must doubt if it be within the power of your political penetration to suggest; you can only shift it to your own—Friends. I am indeed utterly lost in tracing to substantial existence any one article by which you can hold out the prospect of *benefit to the public*. The items of the Company's credit you in general depreciate: Its houses, warehouses, &c. you strike off from the account; the debts due from the Vizier of Oude, from the Nabob of the Carnatic and the Rajah of Tanjore, you would incline to pay from our sinking fund, rather than suffer them to be gradually liquidated

on the spot ; and all that can possibly be deemed of advantage to the public, is the difference between 4,200,000*l.* sterling lent to Government (*as sterling*) by the East-India Company, and the present value of the 3 per cents, which this very bill has already tended to reduce.

But how much soever the *public* might abstractedly be *benefited* by the new plan, it will most assured be injured in a much greater degree by the blow thereby given to all public credit. Charters, which not long ago were held as the strongest ties upon the justice of the Legislature, as the most sacred security upon earth, are now to be infringed — openly, avowedly, in the face of God and man, ostentatiously infringed. Former violations (which in truth and reason exaggerate the crime) are triumphantly pleaded in defence of subsequent violation. “ The act of 1773 was a
“ violation of the charter, those of 1779 and
“ 1780 were equally so ; ” and the necessity of the measure (of which necessity neither the Cabinet, nor the Parliament, nor the nation, could, perhaps, ever form a decisive idea) was the warrant of its execution. I believe, however, that
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the present is the first instance in which so *problematic a necessity* was ever produced in the House of Commons as a persuasive for a breach of parliamentary faith, and a previous absolution of national perfidy. Such was not the ostensible doctrine of opposition to the India bills, formerly brought in by a noble Lord now high in office. Such political necessity was never admitted by the strenuous patriots of that day, as a valid apology for such turpitude; and none but themselves could have set up as precedents for their own conduct, those tyrannical and unjustifiable measures, which themselves had so repeatedly and so forcibly exposed.

Let me now, Sir, humbly request your attention to the case of Mr. Hastings: much has been said, and much more insinuated against that gentleman's influence in the House of Commons, as well as in the Court of Proprietors; and *this influence is attributed to money*. The *personal friends* Mr. Hastings may have in either place, are proportionate to the very slender opportunities he has ever enjoyed of cultivating friendships in his own country. Those independent characters who ho-

nour him *as Governor General* with their support, give it upon *public grounds*: and I am sure they need not blush to avow their motives. Unintelligible, Sir, as the language I am now about to use, may appear to you, I do not hesitate to affirm, that Mr. Hastings has a soul that would startle at the very suggestion of such a scandalous traffic, that would re-gorge at the nauseous influence that could be put up to sale. I now pledge myself to take my oath (whenever called upon) at the bar of the House, that Mr. Hastings has never, to my knowledge, expended one shilling, directly or indirectly, in the purchase of any influence at all, not even of a *drop of ink*, but what I have paid for *to the press*: and that if it will tend to undeceive the public with respect to the mode by which his character has been established in this country, I am ready to deliver in *open oath* to the House of Commons, my accounts for every farthing disbursed by me, as his agent, and chargeable to his estate, up to the present day. I will add, that being his political agent only, I am not entrusted with the receipt and disposal of his private property; but that the gentlemen whom he has appointed to execute that charge

charge (Sir Francis Sykes, Mr. Waller, and Mr. Woodman) are also prepared at any time to lay before the public, a full and accurate account current, of the whole fortune (in England) of their principal, with every article of expenditure, since the first instant of their management. Mr. Hastings's fortune as much precludes him from the power, as his principles estrange him from the wish of recurring to such iniquitous means of support. It is the influence of meritorious services, operating on the public opinion, and *nothing else*, that has enabled him to withstand so many parties, and so many Ministers; an influence, which as bribes did not collect, you find it out of the power of bribery to dispel.

In Your endeavours to establish the necessity of Your new Bill on the mismanagement of the Company's affairs in Asia, You have selected a number of occurrences more or less connected with the Governor General's Administration; And by a happy confusion of dates, of circumstances and of persons, have at once thrown a very undeserved odium upon him, and drawn a most unfair and distorted picture of the state of

India.—And here I cannot but feel with double anxiety the mortifying disproportion of my powers to the magnitude, to the celebrity of my subject: and how can I comprize an epitome of Mr. Hastings's Government for twelve years, and a connected account of the present situation of our settlements—within the narrow boundaries of a few pages? much more, Sir, how shall I venture to exhibit in its native purity, that canvas which your masterly colouring has so effectually disguised?—You will, I trust, pardon my presumption, for this effort of duty, and my incapacity, for the faintness of the sketch I shall produce.

Mr. Hastings arrived in Bengal as President and Governor of Fort William in 1772. His plan was that of peace, his system was that of economy, his views were those of internal reform. On the instant of his taking the chair, our Frontier Brigade was marching to assist the Vizier Sujah Dowlah at the very extremity of the Rohilla Country, on the requisition of Sir Robert Barker, then Commander in Chief, and without previous communication with the Presidency. Mr. Hastings instantly issued orders for the return of the
brigade

Brigade—and the greatest part of it actually returned to its cantonments at Dinapore—Does this argue an inordinate thirst for conquest, an unjustifiable ambition to extend our dominions? Three battalions, however, belonging to the brigade had pushed forward with such rapidity as to escape the countermanding order: they joined Sujah Dowla, and put a stop to the incursions of the Marattas. The march of the remainder of the brigade next season, the junction of the whole body with the Vizier, entitled him to forty lacs of rupees, which the Rohillas had bound themselves by treaty, under the guarantee of Sir Robert Barker, to pay the Vizier as the price of their defence. This very money was the cause of the Rohilla war, which you have once again called up to condemnation. The Company's Commander in Chief had pledged himself to the Vizier for the performance of the treaty, and it was therefore *not unjust* that the Company's troops should enforce its articles on those whom that very Commander in Chief had styled in his letters to the Governor and Council “The most faithless and treacherous of men.” On this state of the case, it would hardly have been decent in

Mr.

Mr. Hastings to withhold the Company's aid; but while he sacrificed his own pacific system to the support of that guarantee granted by Sir Robert Barker, he at the same time essentially consulted the interests of his employers, by stipulating that the Vizier should *pay the whole expense* of the troops furnished for his assistance: and thus removed the grand political objection to the employment of our forces on distant service, while their support had been hitherto constantly remitted in specie, to the great impoverishment of our own provinces. The Rohilla war, therefore, arose from *their* breach of that treaty of which we were guarantees; and the Rohillas, a tribe of Afghan Tartars, who had invaded, subdued, and settled in the province of Rohilkund not forty years before, were forced to relinquish their ill-gotten conquests. The Gentû natives, the Aborigines of the country, continued in the peaceable exercise of agriculture and of their several trades during that war, and continue there to this day. They were before subjects to the Rohilla Chiefs, and they are now subjects to the Nabob Vizier: and the one has at least as good a claim as the others. But as the effects of that war have no longer

longer any influence upon the mass of Indian politics, a mention of it was by no means necessary or pertinent in a detail of the present state of India. And if it be true, that the principle of that war was condemned by the Court of Directors and Proprietors in 1775, it is also true, that in 1779 and 1780 Lord North, with this condemnation before his eyes, twice proposed in Parliament, the man to whom that war had been generally (I will not add *justly*) imputed, for Governor General of Bengal—Mr. Hastings had been found so able in other respects, so useful a servant to the Company, so meritorious a subject to the Crown, that the single demerit of the Rohilla war was of no weight in the opposite scale; a reference, therefore, to that war at this distant period, can never impress the public with an opinion of your candour—can never influence, now that the subject is so remote; can only be intended to stifle cool argument, by an appeal to the passions: an affecting picture of the calamities of any war, since or before that of Troy, would have served just as well.

It is Mr. Hastings's peculiar misfortune, that being most zealously attached to the arts and to

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the enjoyments of peace, he has been under an almost constant necessity of engaging in involuntary hostilities. You loudly blame him for the Maratta war, and yet you know it originated at Bombay in 1776. You know that it was suspended, rather than concluded by the treaty of Poorunder, and that upon a dispassionate revision of the recrimination of each party, it may yet be doubted whether we or the Marattas were the first aggressors in its renewal. But at all events you must allow, that the treaty of Poorunder, in the loose indefinite style of its articles, contained the seeds of future dispute; that the Presidency of Bombay, the Governor General of Bengal, and the Court of Directors, equally reprobated its terms, and that the Company's servants were in general encouraged to seize the first decent plea for not abiding by it. After all, it was incumbent on Mr. Hastings to counteract the intrigues of the French agents at Poonah. Positive intelligence, and that from the highest authority of this country, assured him, both of the existence and of the danger of those intrigues, and his exertions on that occasion were no less approved by his Majesty's Ministers, than by the Court of Directors.

Directors. But you now criminate the Governor General as author of the renewal of the hostilities, for not consenting to the cession of Salsette in 1779; yet you are not to be informed that Bombay derives its immediate support, its daily bread from that island, and that the Company were anxious to risk almost any thing, or every thing on that side of India, for its acquisition. I repeat it again and again, Mr. Hastings was not the author of that war, he was not the promoter of it; *but he has an exclusive merit in the Maratta peace*; in that peace which, by his efforts, has been ratified upon honourable terms to the Company, when I would stake my existence on the belief, that no other man could have procured any peace at all: In that peace, which an apostate to his duty in the Company's service, an interested convert to the principles of your new bill, has insidiously asserted to have been purchased by the inglorious sacrifice of Broach, worth 16 lacks of rupees per annum. Let him cloak his iniquity, and palliate his misrepresentations as he may, but I here tell him from the records at the India house, that the territory of Broach produced, of nett revenue,

In 1779,	— —	270,000 rupees
In 1780,	— —	240,000
In 1781,	— —	77,000

and he knows that six-tenths of this sum was ceded to the Marattas, *unexceptionably* and by treaty, and Scindia's guarantee is surely more than a counterbalance for the rest.

You, Sir, have objected to the Maratta treaty, on very different grounds—on grounds, which while I cannot acknowledge them to convey the smallest reflection on Mr. Hastings's politics, at least do not discredit your understanding nor impeach your veracity: You have objected to it, on the danger of its eventually provoking fresh hostilities with France, by the possibility of our junction with the Peshwa in protraction of the war against Tippoo Saib on the spirit of the ninth article of the treaty. It was prudence, it was policy, it was necessity that dictated the terms of this article, and at any other moment you would have been the first to applaud it. At the signing of the preliminaries, as late as the ratification of the definitive treaty with the Marattas, we were at war equally with the French and with Tippoo Saib



Saib — It was impossible for Mr. Hastings to foresee and provide for the articles of a peace to be settled among the belligerent powers of Europe. We had an undoubted right of reprisals on the Myfore country for the devastation caused by Hyder Ally in the Carnatic — we had a laudable motive in diverting the attention and arms of the restless Marattas to a new object; we had a formidable French force to oppose both by sea and land. I will answer for the Governor General's caution in avoiding all cause of umbrage or offence to the French in India, from the instant that peace shall be promulgated between the two nations, and for his steady compliance with ~~every~~ stipulation of the treaty.

In your efforts to invalidate the debts of the Company as charged in the late estimate to different powers in India, you have particularly enlarged on the connection with the Nabob Vizier of Oude: and, as usual, you have attributed all the misfortunes which he appears to have incurred by that connection, to Mr. Hastings. To this debt, which the Company states at 730,000l.

you

you at once declare, that eternal oblivion ought to be annexed, notwithstanding the very latest advices from Mr. Bristow give assurances that the whole will be very speedily recovered. But perhaps you rely on the probability of this recovery having already taken place, and are therefore the more unguarded in advising an unconditional release. The cruelties which you have so pathetically painted (if Woodfall be correct) as being the necessary consequence of an attempt to recover the Company's debts in India are most shamefully misstated and most unwarrantably exaggerated. The Continent of India, like the continent of Europe, comprehends ~~many~~ different nations, in very different degrees of civilization: and in very few of them is to be found that regularity of police, or that refinement of manners which is the charm of the western world. The districts *on the coast of Coromandel*, under the sway of those subordinate Chiefs called Poligars, are inhabited by a particularly rude, brutal, and savage race — and the very letter which you caused to be read from Colonel Bonjour, incontestably demonstrated it.

But

But you surely would not by your exclamations against extortion, inhumanity, and oppression, insinuate that all force is unjustifiable in the recovery of a just debt: nor is the desertion of the peasants from an Indian village any proof of the exercise of great cruelty or monstrous rapacity. Some abscond, because they find an occasional concealment less irksome than a faithful discharge of their engagements; some because they will not be pressed to carry baggage—and some merely from an abhorrence of intercourse with strangers. Even in more flourishing times of the empire, the march of the Mogul's army through his own country never failed to cause a temporary depopulation. No revenue is ever collected in India without some degree of force, and the whip is there at least as necessary an instrument to the tax-gatherer as his inkhorn: I will add, that at no period, in no part of India, has severity been so sparingly applied to the operations of finance, as in Bengal since the period of the Company's government. But you could not resist the temptation of a *touch* at the revolution of Benares—At that revolution, which,

while

while it stands perfectly justifiable on the grounds of propriety and expediency, is proved beyond the possibility of cavil to have originated with Cheyt Sing and not with Mr. Hastings—is proved to have commenced in massacre, and concluded in rebellion :—is proved to have been founded on lying pleas of poverty, and gross instances of disobedience. But on your principles the demands of the Company for all debts, however incurred, are at once to be cancelled. I believe indeed the race of *creditors* in general has but small obligations to your justice, or your compassion—but I am astonished that you should be so ready to take the bare assertion and interested *ipse dixit* of the Vizier of Oude, or the Rajah of Tanjore, or of any of the Company's renters, on a plea of incapacity to pay their debts. I can discover but two circumstances, which can reasonably be supposed to operate against the claim—*Either* that the charge is exorbitant, usurious, ill-authenticated, *or*, that the contracting party laboured at the time under some known incapacity and disqualification for binding itself in an obligation to pay. Neither of these objections can fairly be urged against the demand

mand on Afoph ul Dowla. His debt was incurred for articles fairly furnished, for troops regularly employed in his service for his defence, and upon a stated allowance settled by treaty at the express motion of General Clavering and his majority. The former treaty with the late Vizier Sujah ul Dowlah, was, as you know, upon very different terms—and *that* was the treaty of Mr. Hastings. No encroachments were *there* attempted to be made upon the independence of that Prince ---the whole stipulation consisted in his agreement to pay 210,000 rupees per mensem for one of our brigades, so long as it should act under his orders, or, in conjunction with his forces. This treaty, as it stood at his death, the Governor-General thought binding upon us, and upon his successor. Not so the majority of that day, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis. *They* pronounced upon the propriety of a new treaty, and *they* dictated the articles. *They* obliged the Vizier to cede to the Company the sovereignty of Gauzipoor and Benares in perpetuity: *They* saddled the Vizier with an additional charge of 50,000 rupees a month for the subsistence

tence of the auxiliary brigade; and under *them* (through the channel of *their* resident, Mr. Bristow) were British officers appointed to command the residue of the Vizier's troops. All this was in 1775. In 1779 the Vizier refused to grant assignments for the pay of those very troops thus *officered*; and Mr. Hastings was only prevented from immediate compliance with his request for disbanding them, by the necessity of holding out an ostensible balance to the armies of the Sieks, and of Nejes Khaun, then in the field in great force.

It was on the subject of this refusal that the Vizier, during the interval of a cock-fight or a horse-race, dispatched the very *poetical chapter of lamentations*, with which you have so animatedly warmed the feelings of the House. That he was very sore upon the refusal, I do not doubt; and this establishment of British officers was certainly as well a severe check upon his independency, a great derogation of his dignity in the eyes of the native Princes, as an intolerable burthen upon his finances.

Mr.

Mr. Hastings however was neither answerable for the measure by which those officers were appointed, nor for the several circumstances, by which their conduct might irritate the Vizier and oppress his country. But in *September 1781*, the instant that political necessity permitted him, *He disbanded them.*

You were particularly pointed on the late resumption of the Begum's Jaghires—a measure which you also attribute exclusively to the Governor General—as if it were impossible for a despotic monarch to have the slightest principle of independent action, or the most trivial attention to his own concerns. Even so long ago as the year 1775, and very soon after the Vizier's accession to the musnud, the predominating influence of the Begum was a thorn in his side—And he observed to Mr. Bristow, that “two rulers were too much for one country.”—A negotiation was at that time entered into for substituting a regular payment of the value of the Jaghire in money, instead of the possession of the land itself and the troublesome management of

the collections : but the old lady had too deeply tasted the sweets of uncontrouled dominion, to part willingly with so flattering a prerogative ; she refused to listen to any terms of resignation, and supported her servants in a conduct of disaffection, opposition and contumacy, that at last, on the revolution at Benares, broke out into open rebellion. Can there be a doubt but that the Vizier felt the indignity offered to his government, and the danger that involved his throne ? Can there be a suspicion that he would fail to discover in the military jurisdiction and unjustifiable encroachments of his Jaghiredars the true source of the mischief, can there be a motive assigned why it should not equally be his wish as it was his interest to suppress the very possibility of future disturbance ? I will be bold to say, that the Vizier *ought* to have resumed the Jaghires—and that the advice of Mr. Hastings (if indeed the Vizier had no plan of conduct, no policy of his own) was perfectly wise, political, and expedient. It is an additional proof of the necessity of the measure, that the servants of the Begum should have presumed to oppose *their* *lawful* .

lawful Sovereign in its operation. Nothing can so strongly evince their full conviction of the existence of "two rulers in one country" as their most unwarrantable and rebellious appeal to the sword: nothing can so unanswerably establish the propriety of an instant remedy to the anarchy that prevailed in the Subah of Oude. The Begum was therefore on the justest of all pleas dispossessed of an authority which she had constantly perverted to the very worst purposes, but the nett amount of her collections was secured to her by a new agreement; the treasures of which she had possessed herself by very suspicious means, by a fraudulent concealment of her husband's will, or an artful appropriation of a deposit, those treasures which had always been understood to belong to the state, and which our Resident at Oude reported in 1775 to have been notoriously set aside for the supply of political emergencies, she *consented* to restore to her son, for the wants of his government, after twelve days of reflection upon the loss of her ill-exerted authority, had reconciled her to a just notion of her subordinate situation. We have the Resident at Oude's testimony

mony, in the appendix to the tenth report from the Select Committee, that her treasures were *surrendered by agreement*.

In your indiscriminating search for arguments in defence of your new bill, you have not omitted to state the discordant situations of our different governments in India, and your particular apprehensions for your very valuable friend Lord Macartney. You not only fear that he may have been deposed from his government, but *even* that he may have experienced *the fate of Lord Pigot*! I ask you in your candour, Right Honourable Sir, if *that fate* were any thing more than *disposition*? and I flatter myself, I may for this time presume to answer for you in the negative — at least Mr. Hastings cannot by the most extravagant stretch of insinuation be implicated farther than in the *suspension*, which (if Woodfall be right) you are pleased to term a *deposition*: and even here there is nothing in the Company's records, nor in private intelligence, to warrant your conclusion. On the news of certain propositions having been offered to Tippoo Saib, equally unsatisfactory to the Com-
mander

mander in Chief and to the Council General, Mr.
 Hastings in Council, desired to know " whether
 " the Members thought that the President and
 " Select Committee of Madras had or had not in-
 " curred the penalty of the act of the 13th of the
 " King, by deputing the Tanjore Vakeel to
 " Tippoo Saib to treat of peace on the condition
 " of ceding to him a part of the Carnatic?" This
 question was determined in the negative; and on
 this simple ground, did your informer in this bu-
 siness, Sir Henry Fletcher, build his assertion,
 that Mr. Hastings's proposal *for the suspension of*
Lord Macartney had been carried against him by
 a *one* only; as if a *majority of one* were in the Su-
 preme Council any other than the ordinary and
 almost necessary consequence of the smallness of
 its number. But the discordant situations of our
 governments abroad might be most easily recon-
 ciled at home without the interference of your
 bill, or the annihilation of the Company's charter.
 The Supreme Council at Calcutta is *by law* to have
 the sole and entire control in all political negoci-
 ations and matters relative to war and peace, ex-
 cept in cases of the most urgent necessity. Did
 that

that necessity exist when Lord Macartney and the Select Committee assumed the liberty of proposing a separate treaty with Tippo Saib? Sir Eyre Coote positively and pointedly denied it.

I cannot here deprive myself the pleasure of contributing my humble mite of gratitude and applause to that worthy and gallant old general, who to the inflexible virtues of the man, joined the most exalted talents of the soldier, who redeemed us from utter ruin in the Carnatic, who sacrificed the declining years of a most active life, to the difficulties and labours of war, rendered doubly severe by the severities of an Asiatic climate, and who lived but to the moment when his country had just begun to flatter itself with the possibility of sparing his exertions. Methinks I see the wonderful veteran reclined on his laurels, struggling in the very arms of Death, and collecting the last remnant of his exhausted strength, while he dictates to the disconsolate Secretary the animated conclusion of the forcible minute he delivered on this occasion: "Though for my part" says he "I may with propriety say that I have one
" foot

" foot in the grave, and the other on the verge of
 " it, I trust in God I shall retain sufficient strength
 " both of body and mind to put an advantageous
 " and glorious end to this destructive war in India,
 " instead of having our national honour and
 " military credit degraded by any solicitation
 " for peace to an enemy already dismayed :---and
 " therefore I trust that this Board will never con-
 " sent to so degrading and unjustifiable a measure,
 " as is now proposed by the President and Select
 " Committee of Fort St. George." Alas! great
 and fortunate commander, your country's ser-
 vice can but ill brook your loss! ---But you have
 at least left us Mr. Hastings: and you are now
 looking down with a smile of complacency on
 those spirited exertions, to which, even in the mo-
 ment of rival emulation, you had the generosity
 to ascribe the preservation of the Carnatic! Peace
 and glory attend your shade!

However meritorious Lord Macartney's con-
 duct may have been, however strict his care and

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cautious

cautious his attention to obey the Company, he has most certainly been involved in differences and disputes upon almost every public question since the commencement of his government. He reminds me of the venturous scholastics of the sixteenth century, who in the fury of disputation, supported theles *de omni Scibili* against all opponents: We have Lord Macartney *versus* the Supreme Council, Lord Macartney *versus* Sir Eyre Coote, Lord Macartney *versus* Sir Edward Hughes, Lord Macartney *versus* General Stuart, and Lord Macartney *versus* the Nabob of the Carnatic. I have an unfeigned respect for his Lordship's character and abilities; but I cannot help lamenting that his exertions should be so unfortunately cramped, and so confined to perpetual struggles against his associates in the public service.

I shall now take the liberty, right honourable Sir, to conclude with a few words on the present state of our affairs in India: my description will, undoubtedly, form something of a contrast to
your's,

your's, and with profound humility I acknowledge that the *ingenuity* is all on your side. Bengal is certainly in a flourishing condition; its revenues productive; its government united; its internal tranquillity secured. The same may be said of Benares. Oude is slowly, but gradually recovering from a relaxed system of policy, from disordered finances, from domestic anarchy.

—The debts due from thence to the Company are liquidated—or in the way to speedy liquidation (no prejudice I hope to our sinking fund.) It has resumed in a great degree its proper rank of respectability among the powers of

India, and its frontiers are on every side in peace.

—Tippoo Saib has evacuated the whole of the Carnatic; and it now depends on the combined exertions of our government and of the Nabob of the Carnatic to restore by every species of encouragement, the population of the country, and the advantages of commerce.

On the Bombay side, Peace is effectually ratified with the Marattas—and on terms, which while they are not gallingly severe on either party, are most likely to be permanently observed by both. Tippoo Saib is said to be still formidable in that quarter, but every dispatch from Bombay teems with confidence in the success of their efforts, which they are now free to direct in full force against him. The province of Bednore we have lost by the fortune of war, as we most probably should have been obliged to relinquish it on the conclusion of a peace. It is even likely that we shall confine all our exertions to the acquisition of a specific sum from Tippoo Saib, as a compensation for the ravages of his father's arms—and this seems our wisest policy—But this circumstance will not be at all promoted by the provisions of your Bill—and if I might venture to play the statesman (as precedents are not wanting to encourage me) I would roundly assert, that there is as little mismanagement, corruption and oppression in the different seats of the British government

vernment in India, as are to be found in any part of the world—that a few years of peace will restore the India Company's affairs to the highest prosperity in Asia:—and that if your Bill were *lost* to-morrow, every corporate body in this kingdom, and every man who values his birth-right and the freedom of his country, would have reason to triumph in the event.

I remain with the greatest respect,

Right Honourable Sir,

Your most obedient

And most humble Servant,

JOHN SCOTT.

LONDON,
November 30, 1783.

THE END.

IT has been boldly asserted, that if the India bill should pass, the Minister will acquire no accession of patronage, but will enjoy that power openly, and with responsibility annexed to it, which Lord North, when the Minister enjoyed in secret. It would have been honourable in his Lordship had he contradicted so bold and so ill-founded an assertion — as he did not do it, I will explain what portion of patronage Lord North did, and what he did not enjoy.

All appointments to the command of ships, and of inferior officers in that branch of service, have been under the Court of Directors, without any interference on the part of the Minister. — All appointments to offices in the India Houses or the warehouses — all contracts for supplying the East India Company with stores of every kind for their settlements in India, comprehending a most extensive patronage, have been solely under the management of the Court of Directors, without any interference on the part of the Minister.

All appointments of writers, officers, cadets, surgeons, &c. &c. to the several governments in India, have been made by the Court of Directors—In fact the great and principal inducement to almost every gentleman in the direction, to obtain his election, has been that he might have his share of this species of patronage—Most, if not all the Directors have sons, or brothers, or cousins, or intimate friends, whom they wish to provide for, and the Company's service abroad has hitherto afforded an honourable and an advantageous provision for the relations or the friends of the Directors—Consequently they have been exceedingly tenacious of this branch of the lawful patronage annexed to their offices. Lord North when Minister, has not at all times been able to send a writer to India, and if the lists of gentlemen appointed to the civil and military service of India, since the year 1773 were examined, it would be found, that his Majesty's Ministers have been complimented with about one twenty-sixth part of such appointments, *and no more!* This assertion is capable of proof or refutation.

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The patronage of India has been hitherto in the gift of the respective governments abroad, except in a few instances where the Directors have interfered, namely, in the cases of Mr. Bristow, and Mr. Fowke, the son of Mr. Gregory, the nephew of Sir Henry Fletcher, and a few more instances, in which a faction among the Directors has sacrificed the public interest in order to serve their friends : but in general the Directors have faithfully discharged their public duty, by appointing the servants who are to be employed, and by leaving it to the respective governments to employ them as they thought proper.

This is the present state of the patronage of the East-India Company, and widely different indeed from that which the bill now before the House of Commons means to throw into the hands of the Minister. He nominates seven Commissioners with absolute power to direct, order, govern, appoint, and remove all persons, of all ranks employed by the East-India Company both at home, and abroad---and the patronage thrown into his hands by so bold a step, is rated very low indeed, at two millions sterling a year.



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