

Sir John Shore

business

Mr. BURKE'S SPEECH,

&c. &c.

Mr. BURKE's
S P E E C H,
IN WESTMINSTER-HALL,

On the 18th and 19th of February, 1788,

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

THIS SPEECH CONTAINS WHAT MR. BURKE, IN HIS LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, CALLS "THOSE STRONG FACTS WHICH THE MANAGERS FOR THE COMMONS HAVE OPENED AS OFFENCES, AND WHICH GO SERIOUSLY TO AFFECT MR. SHORE'S ADMINISTRATION, AS ACTING CHIEF OF THE REVENUE BOARD."

WITH
A P R E F A C E,

CONTAINING MR. BURKE'S LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN, ON SIR JOHN SHORE'S APPOINTMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, AND REMARKS UPON THAT LETTER.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRET, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

MDCCKXIII.

P R E F A C E.

DURING the recess of Parliament, when Mr. Burke has no authority to interfere in his senatorial character, in the concerns of any public body in the kingdom; he has addressed a letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, to the following effect:

“ That he has heard, and read the report
“ is generally credited, that Mr. Shore is
“ in nomination, or actually appointed, to the
“ office of Governor General of Bengal.—
“ That

“ That, having been appointed by the House
 “ of Commons, a Member of the Com-
 “ mittee, to impeach one of their late Go-
 “ vernors General, he thinks it his duty
 “ to inform the Chairman, that in the ex-
 “ ercise of the functions imposed on that
 “ Committee by the House, they had
 “ found Mr. Shore to be materially con-
 “ cerned *as a principal actor and party in*
 “ *certain of the offences charged upon Mr.*
 “ *Hastings*; namely, in the mal-adminif-
 “ tration of the Revenue Board; of which,
 “ under Mr. Hastings, he was for some con-
 “ siderable time the acting Chief.

“ That he thinks it incumbent upon him
 “ also to inform the Chairman, that some
 “ of the matters charged as misdemeanors,
 “ in which ~~it~~ *appears that Mr. Shore was*
 “ *concerned*, are actually in evidence before
 “ the Lords.

“ That other facts of a very strong nature,
“ which the Managers for the Commons
“ *have opened as offences*, are upon the Com-
“ pany’s records; copies of which are in
“ the possession of the Managers, and, that
“ they go *seriously to affect Mr. Shore’s ad-*
“ *ministration, as acting Chief of the Revenue*
“ *Board.*

“ That, the Committee of Managers can-
“ not consistently with their duty, in making
“ good the charge confided to them by the
“ House of Commons, avoid a proceeding
“ on those matters, or taking such steps, both
“ for supporting the evidence already before
“ the Peers, as well as putting the other, and
“ not less important matters, into such a course
“ of proceeding, as the ends of justice and
“ the public policy may require. That the
“ Managers have not in any instance deviated
“ from their duty.

" That, in this situation, it is for the
 " Court of Directors to consider the con-
 " sequences, *which possibly may follow*, from
 " sending out in offices of the highest rank,
 " and of the highest possible power, *persons*
 " *whose conduct appearing on their own records,*
 " *is, at the first view of it, very reprehensible ;*
 " *and against whom such criminal matter, on*
 " *such grounds, in a manner so solemn, and by*
 " *men acting under such an authority as that*
 " *of the House of Commons, is partly at issue,*
 " *and the rest opened and offered before the*
 " *biggest Tribunal in the nation."*

Mr. Burke, in the first paragraph of his
 letter appears to be ignorant of what every
 man knew, who looked into a newspaper,
 a month ago.

On the 18th of September the intended
 appointment of Sir John Shore was announced.
 On the 25th he was unanimously appointed.

On

On the 2d of October his Majesty was pleased to create him a Baronet of Great Britain; so that he came under that description of persons, whom, to use Mr. Burke's words, "The King delighteth to honour" and we should have imagined, that so loyal a subject as Mr. Burke, would have delighted to know the King's pleasure. On the 3d of October Sir John Shore kissed hands on his creation, and on his appointment; and dined on that day with the Court of Directors, and the King's Ministers. On the 11th of October he was at the Queen's Drawing-Room. On the 12th he left London. On the 14th, the day Mr. Burke's letter is dated, he was at Bath, and quitted it, to proceed to Falmouth, on the 17th.

But, Mr. Burke is so much in the woods, that he heard not one single word of these several circumstances, though he does say, that the account is generally credited, of his being in nomination, *or actually appointed.*

If

If he believed the last report, he very well *knew*, that, whether the *first idea* of Sir John Shore's appointment originated in Leaden-hall-street, in Mr. Dundas's apartments, at Somerset House, or at Mr. Pitt's seat at Holwood ; it could *only be made* with the *full, complete, and entire approbation of the King and his Ministers*. The public must look to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas for the propriety of Sir John Shore's appointment. Mr. Burke's letter is therefore a direct attack upon those ministers ; whom he has ventured to threaten with the future vengeance of Parliament, for preferring a man whose conduct *he, and he alone*, has represented as, at the first view of it, *very reprehensible*.

We are confident that so strong an instance of presumption, in an individual, is not to be met with. Mr. Burke has no right at this moment to use the name or authority of the House of Commons, for
any

any purpose whatever; still less, for that of intimidation. Either his letter was intended to stop Sir John Shore's appointment, to annul it, if it had taken place—or it was an unmeaning rhapsody. But, Mr. Burke does not know that the House will *re-appoint* him a Manager. It is even possible, that the House may say, "We will not be the
 "tools and instruments of corrupt, revenge-
 "ful, or factious men, of any party
 "or description. Above £60,000 has, by
 "this time, been expended in a disgraceful
 "persecution of an individual. We voted to
 "continue the impeachment of Mr. Hastings,
 "not from any knowledge *we* had of the
 "charges preferred against him, for *we*
 "never looked into a *single* allegation; but,
 "because *we* thought a dissolution did not
 "of necessity abate an impeachment; and,
 "because we had so much confidence in *the*
 "sense and justice of the last House, as to
 "believe that they did not place an implicit
 "credit

" credit in the assertions of any man; but that
 " they had *sober and rational* grounds for be-
 " lieving that Mr. Burke *spoke truth*, when
 " he told them, that Sir John Shore was a
 " *creature of Mr. Hastings*; that, kingdoms
 " which Mr. Hastings found flourishing, he
 " left *desolate*; that a *whole people happy* at
 " his accession, he made miserable for
 " thirteen years; and that the *public re-*
 " *venues* which were *productive* on his ar-
 " rival, declined *rapidly* under his adminis-
 " tration. But, to our *astonishment*, the
 " King's Ministers have promoted to the
 " high office of Governor of Bengal, the
 " very man whom Mr. Burke has *called the*
 " *creature of Mr. Hastings*; and whom Mr.
 " Burke so strongly censured in Westminster-
 " Hall. We find that this gentleman, so
 " selected, has solemnly deposed before the
 " Peers, that Bengal had greatly *improved* in
 " *population and agriculture* during the go-
 " vernment of Mr. Hastings; that under
 him

“ him *property* was better protected, and the
 “ natives happier, than under their own So-
 “ vereigns, and that of Mr. Hastings the
 “ Natives *had a very favourable opinion*.
 “ Have the King’s Ministers selected a man
 “ for so high an office, who is capable of
 “ laying *perjury on his soul to serve Mr.*
 “ *Hastings?* and if not, if Sir John Shore is to
 “ be *believed upon his oath*, we disgrace our-
 “ selves, and our Constituents, by suffering
 “ such execrable falsehoods to continue to
 “ stain the journals of the last Parliament.
 “ Nor is this all : the King’s India Minister
 “ has annually presented accounts of the
 “ state of Bengal to this House. We have
 “ ourselves seen by those accounts the pro-
 “ gressive improvement of the revenues of
 “ Bengal during his government, and since
 “ his departure ; and they *prove*, supposing
 “ the accounts to be *correct*, that Sir John
 “ Shore has sworn the truth. Whatever
 “ motives the King’s India Ministers may
 b “ have

“ have for acting so *inconsistently*, we
 “ ought to be actuated by a love of justice
 “ alone. As Representatives of the peo-
 “ ple, it would be disgraceful to us, to
 “ vote away their money annually, and to
 “ oppress, in a manner unexampled in any
 “ age or nation, a meritorious individual,
 “ because infamy must rest somewhere,
 “ if any part of this prosecution has been
 “ wantonly, maliciously, or carelessly un-
 “ dertaken. But the infamy will fall upon
 “ our heads, if after such clear and decisive
 “ proofs, that Bengal was *not* in the situation
 “ described by Mr. Burke, we still permit
 “ him to say, in the name of the Commons
 “ of Great Britain, that the country has
 “ been desolated, its inhabitants plundered
 “ and destroyed, and its revenues diminished
 “ by Mr. Hastings.”

We think it much more natural for the
 House to declare these manly sentiments, be-
 cause

cause they are the sentiments *universally prevalent amongst their constituents*, than to find them ready to second Mr. Burke's attack of Sir John Shore, or to vote alternately with Mr. Dundas, that white is black, and black is white.

But can Mr. Burke in this instance depend upon Mr. Pitt? and was it an article in that curious treaty*, which so completely *neutralized* and *dulcified* Mr. Burke, that for two years he has ceased to abuse Mr. Pitt in the gross terms which he formerly applied to him: was it, we ask, an article of the treaty, that the national purse, the national honour, the honour of the King, and even of Mr. Pitt himself, should be ceded *for ever* to Mr. Burke? Though Mr. Pitt may have listen-

* We state this fact of the treaty, on the authority of a pamphlet which is in every body's hands. We have no doubt of the truth of it, because Mr. Burke declared in the House, that Mr. Pitt *had neutralized and dulcified him by his conduct on the impeachment of Mr. Hastings.*

ed with calm tranquillity, or with secret satisfaction to Mr. Burke, while he spent his rage upon his old connections, or upon Mr. Hastings, yet he will hardly be pleased with so very direct an attack upon himself.

It was a duty *imposed by the law* upon Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, to examine with the closest attention every transaction of Sir John Shore's public life, before they *acquiesced* in his appointment. We are *confident* that in this instance they performed their duty; and we believe that *they*, and not the Directors, were induced to *solicit* Sir John Shore to accept the office, because he appeared to them to have acted with the strictest integrity and honour, and for the national interests, in all those transactions, which, Mr. Burke presumes to say, appeared, on the first view, *very reprehensible*.

We are indeed well aware that Mr. Burke has brought Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas into

an

an unfortunate dilemma. Sir John Shore's appointment *does throw some little disgrace upon that impeachment* for which those Ministers voted; but, in justice to all parties, we will state *how far they were concerned.*

The whole of that immense mass of matter, which was called "Revenues," was opened by Mr. Francis, in a Committee of the whole House, on the 19th of April 1787. The charge, in substance, was, that between 1772, and 1785, Mr. Hastings had violated private property, had oppressed most grievously persons of all ages, ranks, and descriptions, had annihilated the nobility and country gentlemen of a great empire, and had materially injured the public revenues, by his various and oppressive modes of collecting them.

Mr. Pitt most eloquently and strenuously opposed every allegation in the charge. He
declared

declared that Mr. Francis's description of Bengal was utterly *unfounded*, that country being in a most *flourishing* and *prosperous state*, and that his statement of a *declining revenue* was *disproved*, by the evidence of figures.

Mr. Fox, with much vehemence, supported Mr. Francis, and expressed his concern that Mr. Pitt, *who had lately been in the habit of agreeing with them*, should differ upon this, *the most important of all their charges* *. He was supported warmly by Mr. Burke.

Upon the division, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Grenville, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Mulgrave, the

* Mr. Fox undoubtedly was right, that this was the *most important of all the articles*. It was so stated by Mr. Burke originally, who declared, that if Mr. Hastings *had* improved the face of a country, had made a numerous people happy, had extended commerce, and encreased population, and the Public income; *he* never would have conceived the idea of entering into a *minute scrutiny* of the conduct of such a man. If this were not mere *verbiage*, what can Mr. Burke say, after having heard the evidence of Sir John Shore ?

four

four India Ministers, with their Secretary, Mr. Rouse, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the Law Officers of the Crown, were in a minority. Fifty-five voted with Mr. Pitt, seventy-one with Mr. Francis, who consequently carried his question by a majority of fifteen.

To those who do not know what was the *routine* of business, in the *last Parliament*, it may be necessary to explain *how* such a circumstance occurred.

It was the custom of the Treasury to send notes to their friends, to request attendance, when the Minister was anxious to succeed in a question, and the Opposition had some active partizan who took the same means *to collect their forces*. Mr. Francis being a man of some consequence, on their side, the party were summoned, *and they came in a body to his support*.

Whether Mr. Pitt from delicacy did not issue his Treasury notes, as it was a judicial question, or whether he was determined that his influence should never be exercised *for Mr. Hastings*, though he took ample pains, on many occasions, to exercise it *against him*, the fact is, that from a thin attendance of Mr. Pitt's friends, he was left in a minority.

But there were *other stages* in the course of this article when Mr. Pitt might have thrown it out, had he pleased ; for it was not presented to the House in its *present form*, until the 10th of May, and the Tuesday following was appointed for taking it into consideration: At this time, Mr. Dundas had opened his first India Budget, and, to a man of *reason*, it was perfectly clear, that unless Mr. Dundas *imposed false accounts upon the House*, the Revenue Article was a gross libel on the Government of Bengal.

A Member, who believed Mr. Dundas told truth, and that the article was filled with false assertions, took the liberty to speak to Mr. Pitt on the 10th of May, upon this subject, and also to Mr. Rouse. He reminded Mr. Pitt, that he had voted against the Revenue article *in toto*. He pointed out how glaringly it falsified all Mr. Dundas's assertions, and all his accounts, and he asked Mr. Pitt if he did not intend to oppose it on the Tuesday, and to endeavour to throw it out altogether. Mr. Pitt told that Member, in reply, that he should give no further opposition to the article, but he did not condescend to explain *his reasons* for being silent; so that, *in point of fact*, Mr. Pitt *actually* voted in direct contradiction to sentiments forcibly and eloquently delivered by himself: any opposition by an unconnected Member to an article which Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox supported would have been idle in the extreme.

But if Mr. Pitt had given *notice*, that he would oppose the revenue article on *its third reading*, and if then he had pointed out how materially it cut up all that Mr. Dundas had said, we are confident that the article would have been totally rejected. We remember to have seen Mr. Pitt a little ruffled on being left in a minority, on a question relative to the African Carrying Trade ; he told the House that he would oppose the clause which had been carried against him, *on the Report* ; and *then*, an irresistible phalanx crowded down, which insured his success.

As the matter now stands, we allow that the last Parliament agreed with Mr. Francis, that Bengal was *irretrievably ruined*, and with Mr. Dundas, *that it was the most flourishing country in India*.

But *this House* is not at all responsible for the *absurdity* or the *injustice* of the last ;
what

what has this House ever heard about Bengal, except from Mr. Dundas? and *his communications* have been most flattering, indeed, to Mr. Hastings; and to Sir John Shore, who acted under him.

Of the revenue article voted by the last Parliament, this House *knows nothing*, for the best of all possible reasons; because it would not condescend *to inquire*.

This House voted two Resolutions: The first, that the Impeachment of Mr. Hastings was *depending*; or, in other words, that an impeachment existing at a dissolution, was not *abated* by that dissolution.

The second Resolution was, that this House would proceed no further in the Impeachment beyond those articles *on which the Managers had already closed their evidence*, excepting *only to Contracts, Pensions,*

* The first on the 19th of December 1790, the second on the 14th of February 1791.

and *Allowances*; and those were finished in six days, in Westminster Hall.

Beyond this, the present House has not gone. The articles voted by the last House may have been very well, or very ill founded; very true, or very false.—They might have been considered with great care and attention, or by far the greater number may not to this moment have been read by the Members who voted for them—This House neither knew, nor cared, about them—They *lent the authority of their name to all that the Managers had done in the last Parliament, of which they could know nothing, and they tied up Mr. Burke from proceeding beyond certain specified points in future.*

We conclude it was an article of the treaty with Mr. Pitt, which the latter insisted upon, that Mr. Burke should not go on *eternally*, because he *lamented in the House**,

* The 14th of February 1791.

that he was *compelled* to yield to the criminal impatience of the times, and to give up all the remaining articles, the Contracts excepted.

Mr. Burke, therefore, cannot stir one step without the *authority of the House*—No consequences hostile to the Directors, or to the King's Ministers, can follow from Sir John Shore's appointment ; unless he can persuade the House to *rescind* their last resolution. The House may undoubtedly prefer *new articles*, even while Mr. Hastings is upon his defence—The House *may* prolong the trial as long as it lives, and its successors may also continue it until a hundred more of the Judges make a journey to the other world—There is nothing *substantially unjust*, that the House may not do according to the strict forms of Parliamentary Impeachments ; but Mr. Burke has no right to presume that the House *will* suffer him to move an inch beyond a *Reply*, upon the matter

now

now at issue. If there is common sense in his letter, he must move to impeach Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, for reducing to *contempt* the impeachment of Mr. Hastings, by nominating to the office of Governor General, a man who has been a *principal actor and party* in the mal-administration of the revenues; but we confidently affirm, that he has not a *shadow* of foundation, on which to rest a charge against the King's Ministers, or the Court of Directors. The King's Ministers never would allow that the revenues had been ill administered.

Mr. Burke writes to the Chairman, "The Managers for the Commons have
 "opened *facts of a very strong nature*, which
 "go *seriously* to affect Mr. Shore's administration, and they *offered* evidence upon
 "them to the Lords."

It is true, that *Mr. Burke* did open such facts, as he calls them; but, in the first place,

place, he acted without authority in opening them—and secondly, the facts, or by far the greater number of them, *were not true*—and thirdly, Sir John Shore cannot be responsible for such facts as were true, in any possible point of view. He certainly *did* reflect very *seriously* upon the character and conduct of Sir John Shore ; but in so doing *he exceeded his powers*, and it was neither more nor less, than the groundless calumny of an unauthorized individual.

To prevent, therefore, *all further misrepresentations*, we now publish *those facts of a very strong nature*, which Mr. Burke *opened*, and we print them from minutes taken at the time by a short-hand writer. There may still be some errors, owing to the rapidity of Mr. Burke's utterance, but they cannot materially affect his argument: those who have read Mr. Doddsley's abstract in his Register, will find how clearly both accounts agree in all essential points.

If Mr. Burke's doctrine were to prevail, what would be Mr. Pitt's situation!! A Manager, on an India Impeachment, has but to select all the meritorious servants of the public, and if he can, like Mr. Burke, call names with the fluency of a Marat, or a Parisian Poissarde, he may apply the epithet *Creature* to one man, *Secret Agent* to a second, *Bribe Broker* to a third, *Murderer* to a fourth, *Corrupt Instrument* to a fifth, *Captain General of Iniquity* to a sixth, *Villain* to a seventh, and so on, until he forces Mr. Pitt to have recourse to the Ranks of Opposition for a Governor General.

Many years ago Mr. Burke played the same game, though he then acted by authority.—As soon as the Rockingham Administration were in power, he drew out a Parliamentary Report*, in which he most violently attacked the Directors for appointing Sir John Macpherson, and Mr. Stables, to the Supreme

In 1782.

Council,

Council, and the Hon. Mr. Stuart, and Mr. Sullivan, to a succession, upon vacancies.

He imputed to Sir John Macpherson, a design to support the Nabob of Arcot, by bribing the King's Ministers, and Parliament itself. Mr. Stables was an improper person, because he had not been in the Civil Service; Mr. Stuart was an accused man; and Mr. Sullivan was the son of the Chairman.

As Mr. Burke, however, has once more thought proper to allude "to the offences "opened by the Managers," that is, *by himself*, the story shall be told in intelligible language*.

The day after he had concluded his account of *those offences*, the late Lord Chan-

* The Managers knew nothing of this story until Mr. Burke told it in Westminster Hall, and he himself only got the hint of it, from Mr. Francis, two days before the trial commenced.

cellor (for the trial, after surviving almost a hundred of its Judges, has now outlived the President of the Court) stated in the House of Lords, " that the new matter introduced
 " by Mr. Burke in his opening speech, was
 " of such a nature that, compared with it,
 " the articles, important as they were, *sunk to*
 " *utter insignificance* ; and that Mr. Burke
 " would be a *calumniator*, if he did not put
 " it into such a form as might enable Mr.
 " Hastings to refute it ; if he could not re-
 " fute it, then no punishment in the power
 " of their Lordships to inflict, could be
 " adequate to his offences."

The Duke of Richmond took the same line ; and added the epithet " base," to that of calumniator.

Of these speeches Mr. Burke took no notice. In the next year, 1789, Mr. Burke, in one of his rants, called Mr. Hastings " a Murderer ;" Mr. Hastings complained

to the House of Commons next day of this scandalous outrage ; he complained also, of the introduction of the story of Deby Sing in the preceding year, and he prayed the House to frame both accusations into articles, if *they* thought there were grounds to do so ; if not, to redress the injury which he had sustained.

The House censured Mr. Burke for the first offence against decency and justice ; but they rejected the second complaint, not because it was *unfounded*, but because Mr. Hastings had not complained of the injury, as soon as he received it.

Mr. Burke affirmed, *upon this occasion*, that he was *determined* to go into this story of Deby Sing.—The year passed over, *and he did nothing*.

In the next year*, 1790, evidence was offered upon it, as he tells the Chairman ; but, however, in such a manner, we will venture

* On the 18th of May.

to say, as no *lawyer* could have advised ; for instead of going to the House of Commons, and there stating *the grounds* for implicating Mr. Hastings in any transactions of Deby Sing, as a foundation for an additional article ; either Mr. Burke, or Mr. Anstruther, called for an opinion delivered by Mr. Hastings in January 1785, in which he says, “ that he so well knows the character and “ abilities of Rajah Deby Sing, as easily to “ conceive it was in his power to commit “ the enormities laid to his charge, and to “ conceal the ground of them from the “ English Resident, Mr. Goodlad.”

Upon this opinion, the Managers said, “ they would next proceed to shew what those “ enormities were, which might be concealed “ from the English gentlemen residing there, “ and which might be committed without “ their knowing any thing of the matter.”

This miserable attempt was instantly opposed by the Counsel of Mr. Hastings, who at the same time pressed Mr. Burke to go to the Commons, and if he could persuade *them* to accuse Mr. Hastings, they would most eagerly, and gladly meet the accusation; but they would neither allow Mr. Burke to make charges of *his own authority*, nor permit him to adduce evidence upon charges so made.

The opinion of the Lords was called for, and they *instantly* determined, “ That it is
 “ *not* competent for the Managers for the
 “ Commons to give evidence of the enor-
 “ mities actually committed by Deby Sing,
 “ *the same not being charged in the Impeach-*
 “ *ment* †.”

A rational man would have supposed, that after such a decision, Mr. Burke would have done one of two things—either that which his

† Printed evidence, page 1251,

character and his *honour* required : namely, to bring the subject *fully before the last House of Commons*, or to have been silent for ever. He did not adopt the first and best measure ; nay, as it respects *Mr. Hastings*, he has totally dropped it ; but as soon as his Majesty had honoured Sir John Shore by his favour, and when the King's Ministers had selected him, " for an office of the highest trust, and " the highest possible power," then Mr. Burke revived this story of Deby Sing, in his letter to the Chairman, in order to make an impression *against Sir John Shore*. To rescue *his character*, therefore, from the calumnies of Mr. Burke—to rescue the character of the British nation in India, from the reproach which Mr. Burke has so unjustly cast upon it ; we have printed his speech, and we have added explanatory notes, in order to prove that no one English gentleman can be responsible for the conduct of Deby Sing.

It has been rumoured in the vicinity of St. James's, that Mr. Burke has complained
of

of Sir John Shore's appointment to Mr. Dundas in very strong terms. To this worthy gentleman, his complaints are not improperly addressed. In return for Mr. Burke's important services to Ministers, he might have expected a continuance of that cordial support which Mr. Dundas has hitherto given him, in carrying on the impeachment.

Mr. Burke may have addressed Mr. Dundas with great propriety, in the following terms : To support you in office, I have given up character, principle, and consistency. No very long period has elapsed since I affirmed, in the face of the House of Commons, and of my country, " That all the acts and
 " monuments in the records of pecula-
 " tion, the consolidated corruption of ages,
 " the patterns of exemplary plunder in the
 " heroic times of Roman iniquity, never
 " equalled the gigantic corruption of a single
 " act," conceived and executed by you and
 Mr.

Mr. Pitt. I solemnly pledged myself to be “ a steady, earnest, and faithful assistant
 “ to any one who should bring forward any
 “ plan that might tend to a subversion of
 “ that most *corrupt* and *oppressive* system for
 “ the government of India*,” which you and Mr. Pitt have established under the sanction of Parliament; but so completely was I “ *neutralized* and *dulcified*” by your support of the impeachment, that I have now *forgot* all my former speeches, though I printed them publicly, and though Mr. Doddsley has very lately sent a fresh edition of them into the world.

The system which I censured so loudly, is still continued in all its parts; but I have *long since* ceased to sound the trumpet of alarm; and you may violate Treaties, you may disgrace the honour of Great

* The passages marked by inverted commas, are taken from the speeches printed by Mr. Burke himself.

Britain; in short, you *might* have done *any thing*, provided you had given me all the money, and all the time, and all the influence I wanted to carry on the impeachment. But it was not enough that I ceased to be your determined and persevering opponent; I have lately rendered you most essential services. I have lost no opportunity of exposing the weakness of that party, to whose interests my best days were devoted. I have used every means in my power to scatter them to atoms. I have so far *succeeded*, that the *people* now believe there is hardly one honest public man in this nation. I have supported your Proclamation. I have excited the fears of the Aristocratic Whigs, and I have made the Houses of Wentworth, Cavendish, and Bentinck, your own.

In return for these important services, you have disgraced me in the opinion of

every man of honour in the nation. You ought to have remembered the high tone which I affected, when I originally moved the Impeachment of Mr. Hastings. I did not venture at once to accuse him of spending half a million improvidently, in thirteen years, while he added millions to the public resources—with all the extravagance of the American war before their eyes ; with the pensions, sinecure places, and Peerages, so lavishly bestowed by Ministers of late years, open to their view ; the Country Gentlemen would have scouted every idea of a criminal prosecution upon so contemptible charge ; I, therefore, played a deeper, and a more artful part—I began by telling them, that provinces, oncemost flourishing, Mr. Hastings had desolated—that countries, once eminently peopled, were now inhabited only by beasts of prey—that institutions, sacred in the opinions of nations, he had publicly

licly violated—that commerce he had destroyed, and that the revenues by his mismanagement had greatly declined. The Country Gentlemen believed me, and they voted with me. My work from this time was easy, in the House ; but out of doors, your annual budget, in which you so pointedly contradicted all my statements, hurt my reputation considerably ; and as if that were not enough, you have now taken a step which has *ruined me*, and will materially injure *you*. Had you *no recollection* of the evidence which *the new Baronet* gave in Westminster Hall ? The man, whom *you* have made Governor General, has sworn, that from 1770 to 1789, including every year of Mr. Hastings's administration, Bengal had progressively improved in agriculture and *population*, that the natives were *happier*, and their property *better protected*, in that period, than under their own sovereigns, and that

of Mr. Hastings they entertained *a very favourable opinion*. How can I affirm hereafter, that Mr. Hastings was a tyrant, an oppressor, a murderer, a captain-general of iniquity, or that India, on his departure from it, felt relieved from a weight under which she had long groaned? It will be said to me, if the solemn testimony of a man, whom *your gracious sovereign delighteth to honour*, and whom his confidential servants have appointed Governor General of India, is to be believed, you, Mr. Burke, have been imposing upon, and deceiving us. What answer can I make? unless I am ready to pronounce that next to that act which I so violently censured a few years ago, this appointment of Sir John Shore is “the most gigantic instance
“of corruption” ever committed in the world!

But though you and Mr. Pitt had no
consideration

consideration *for me*, you might have been alarmed *for yourselves*. Though it be true, that you differed most widely from me as to the state of Bengal, and when I declared it to be ruined irretrievably, you pronounced it to be most *flourishing* and *prosperous*, yet it is equally true, that you *ultimately voted* with me, and you have paid the Solicitors bill, for very heavy charges incurred by my orders, in an attempt to prove *legally* what *you* have publicly declared to be utterly *unfounded in truth*.

You ought to have recollected, that since this most unhappy business in France, the people of England have had the insolence to think, and to speak what they think, with much more freedom than formerly. There is no longer a blind reverence paid to great names, or to great authorities—Remember my words in Parliament, prophetic they were, and the prediction is almost accomplished.

plished. I said, that in this impeachment of Mr. Hastings, " Infamy must necessarily rest somewhere." It will not be from me alone, that the public will ask, how it happens that sixty thousand pounds of their money has been expended? that the first principle of Magna Charta has been violated by the extension of a criminal trial to a period unknown *in former times*, and which no man could have suspected would have happened *at any time*? They will say, that you have proved your disbelief of the *foundation* of this impeachment, by preferring a man who has destroyed *that foundation* by his evidence; or they will take up the argument in my letter to the Chairman, and totally condemn the appointment, so that in either case, *you* cannot escape the censure of the public—and was this a time to turn politics into farce? The mysteries of Government should be concealed from the too prying eyes of the swinish multitude. I have

in my time been guilty of great indiscretions, but I have repented, and have made every reparation in my power. The time was, when I affirmed, and took care to let the whole world know, “ that Kings * were naturally lovers of low company.” The time was when I censured the University of Oxford, for its unconstitutional address to the Throne †. The time was when I complimented the republican Thomas Paine, as the great and successful champion of American independence ‡. The time was when I gloried in my correspondence with good Dr. Francklin §, though the law pronounced him a rebel, and declared such correspondence to be illegal. The time was when the King’s friends were disgusted by certain intemperate words, which fell from me, during

* Mr. Burke’s speech on the Reform, February 1780.

† In May 1776, on the American war.

‡ Mr. Burke’s letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, in 1777.

§ Mr. Burke’s speech in December 1781.

his indisposition, but I am now the avowed champion of monarchy, of the church, and of aristocracy throughout the world. Indeed, my dear friend, you have acted inconsiderately to give no harsher term to your conduct. This was not a time to expose me, or to risque your own situation. What conclusion can sober and thinking men come to? They will say, that Mr. Hastings having been made, as you well know, the ladder by which Mr. Pitt and yourself climbed to power, you took the first opportunity to shew *ministerial gratitude* for favours conferred. They will say that *my old friends* having lost *their situations*, by attacking that man, felt a resentment which is *venial* at least, and that they have acted under the influence of that resentment. Of myself, ~~they~~ will say, that my enquiries have been so very deep, that I must have known the true state of India to be, as *you* have described it, in the House of Commons. In short, when they

they consider, that no one person whom we have represented as having been injured by Mr. Hastings, has been redressed by you or Mr. Pitt—that no one *resource* which Mr. Hastings procured, has been *abandoned* by government—that no one *system* which *he* framed, has been altered essentially *by you*—that the man* whom I described as having entered into a corrupt collusion with another person, whom I painted as the most execrable of villains†, has been selected by you, for the government of Bengal—that this man, so selected, was for many years the principal Manager of the Revenues under Mr. Hastings, and has borne testimony to the prosperous condition of Bengal, the happiness of its inhabitants, and their regard for Mr. Hastings : When they consider, that the credit of the two great parties of England, and of the last Parliament, is implicated in the decision of the impeachment, and that with all the

* Sir John Shore.

† Deby Sing.

influence, and all the money, employed in more than five years, we have not been able to procure *one solitary individual* to prefer a complaint against Mr. Hastings *from India*; but, on the contrary, have received the most *damning proofs* of the respect and veneration in which the natives of India hold this persecuted man; what will be the conclusion? what can be the conclusion which the people will draw? It must be this; that we have been actuated by private motives, in thus persisting in error, and ought to be responsible to our country, for so unprecedented a protraction of a criminal trial.

Mr. Burke might well express these sentiments to Mr. Dundas. He has favoured his late Fellow-Managers with a copy of his letter to the Chairman, and it would be *to their edification* if he would *also* give them the contents of his letter to Mr. Dundas.

Mr. BURKE's SPEECH,

&c. &c.

DINAGEPORE, my Lords, is a country pretty nearly as large as all Yorkshire together, and has a prince at the head called the Rajah, or Zemindar, of Dinagepore. I find that about July* 1780, the Rajah died, leaving a half brother and a son. A litigation instantly arose in the family; and this litigation was intirely to be referred, and it must finally be decided by the Governor General and Council, being the ultimate autho-

* He died in April 1780, and his adopted son was on the 20th of June 1780, ordered to succeed to the zemindary, by an unanimous vote of the board, Messrs. Hastings, Francis, and Wheeler.

rity for all the revenue questions there, and they were to proceed on the opinion of the register in their decision. It came before Mr. Hastings, and I find he * decided the question in favour of Sudernand Sing, son of the Rajah, against his half brother. I find on that decision a rent settled, and a fine paid, so that all this transaction is fair and above board, and I find along with it many extraordinary acts, for I find that Mr. Hastings took a part in favour of the minister Hyderbeg, agreeable to the principles of others, and contrary to his own ; and on his establishing the authority of the minister Hyderbeg, I find he gave the guardianship of this son to the brother of the Rajah, as he is called, the brother of the wife of the late Rajah deceased ; and when the steward of the province was coming down to represent his case to Mr. Hastings, Mr. Hastings † not only sent him back, so far from hearing him fully, but he ordered him actually to be turned out of his office, to bring in another that could only increase the family dissension.

* That is, the whole Board.

† The whole Board.

I find he has taken a sum of £40,000 in 1780, for this account seems to begin in July 1780, or somewhere thereabouts; and to the same period in 1781 there was a regular payment; so that if it refers to the money paid to him from the Rajah, it is a sum of money corruptly taken by him. As judge he receives it for judgment: but whether the judgment be right or wrong, true or false, he corruptly receives the sum of £40,000 for that judgment*; he received it, you will observe, through Gunga Govind Sing, who was the broker of agreements: he was the person that was to receive it by monthly instalments, and to pay it to Mr. Hastings. Gunga Govind Sing's son had in his hand all the papers and documents, so that Mr. Hastings takes a bribe from an infant of five or six years old, through the hands of the register, whose opinion was to have the whole weight in settling the judgment. This was not a public tribute or fine; so that in fact,

* This assertion could not be true, because this money began to be received on the 11th of August 1779, eight months before the death of the old Rajah, and, as appears by the managers' evidence, was principally paid in the year 1779.

through the register of the country, the keeper of the records, he receives a bribe from a family in point of judgment in disinheriting the brother. I do not say whether it was proper or not, I know these questions of adoption are the most curious in the Gentoo law; this I know, he succeeded for a bribe, through a man who was in the office of record: this I contend, and I find very soon, other parties concerned.

My Lords, I found very soon after this that the man who gave it, and all the officers under him, were turned out of their employments by Gunga Govind Sing. My Lords, we find them all accused without any appearance or trace upon record, of the mismanagement of his affairs, and accordingly to prevent the relations of his adopted mother, to prevent those who might be supposed to have interest in the family, from abusing him in the trust of his affairs and management of his fortune, Gunga Govind Sing, for I hope you will not suffer me, if I had a mind, to name that tool of a thing called the Committee, of £62,000 a year: Gunga Govind Sing,

Sing, I will do him justice to say, that if he had known that there was another man more accomplished in all iniquity than Gunga Govind Sing, Mr. Hastings would have given him the first place in his confidence, turns them all out of office: but then there was another next to him, a person called Deby Sing, he ranked under Gunga Govind Sing. This man, although he had in former transactions in Purnea forsook the very shape, rules, and names of virtue, yet Mr. Hastings is to acquit him of this—they were reconciled on this occasion. Deby Sing came into office, superseding all the others.—There is an English gentleman, one Mr. Goodlad, whom you will hear of presently; they appointed him, and the first act they do is cut off £1000 a month from the Rajah's allowance, because he is stated to be extravagant, and to have a great number of dependants to maintain: in short, there is such a flutter and bustle, there never was such a tender guardianship and superintendence as Deby Sing uses, *always with the knowledge of Mr. Hastings*, to this poor Rajah, who had just given £40,000 (if he did give £40,000) for his inheritance to Mr. Hastings; but probably because that money could not
come

come out of the surplus of his affairs, Mr. Goodlad had taken £1000 a month from his establishments, which will go very handsomely to the payment of any private fine : but Mr. Hastings should at least have examined before they were turned out, whether it was proper or no. Now they are turned out, and when I come to enquire, I do not find that the new guardians have brought to account one shilling of the money they received ; there is not a single shadow, no not one word, to be found in the accounts of Deby Sing and Mr. Goodlad. They first put Deby Sing in possession of the Rajah's family, and the management of it ; and the very next step, in the course of one year, is to give him the farming of the whole receipt of these three provinces*. If the *Peshcush* was not received

* Mr. Burke makes an important mistake here.— Deby Sing took the farm of Dinagpore in May 1781. In September 1781, Mr. Shore entered a minute on the Committee Proceedings, stating the enormous expences of the Zemindar of Dinagpore, an infant of six years of age, and recommending a reduction of those expences. In consequence of this minute, Deby Sing and Mr. Goodlad had the superintendence of the family. Mr. Hastings had been *three months absent from Calcutta* at this time, and did not return until February 1782.