

as a bribe for the nomination of the Rajah, it was received as a bribe for office. Which is the best or the worst, I shall not pretend to determine; or whether Mr. Hastings got it from Deby Sing for appointing him guardian, or for the judgment; but you find the Rajah in his possession, you find his house and education in his possession: this makes it necessary you should know, that after committing the family of the Rajah to him, he accepted the proposals Deby Sing made in the name of his son; “ and ” (say the Committee) “ his abilities and indefatigable attention to “ business are so well known, that we trust “ the measure will meet with your approba- “ tion, &c. § ” Here is an acknowledgment of his fidelity, and that he is a person to whom

§ This is a quotation from a letter written by Mr. Shore to the Governor General and Council in the month of November 1781, in which he relates the measures taken by the Committee of Revenue for letting the lands of Bengal. It appears by that letter, that the Zemindar of Dinagepore being a minor, the Committee had farmed the province to Deby Sing, upon this principle only, that he had offered what they thought the best terms for the Company, and being a man

whom no objection can be made. This present to Mr. Hastings is by him recorded, and sent to the East India Company. Mr. Hastings has recorded (though he publicly authorised Deby Sing's nomination to this great body of power) that he knew Deby Sing to be a man against whom the most atrocious iniquities were charged, that were ever charged upon man. Now, though it is a large field, and though it is a thing that I feel reluctance in mentioning, exhausted as I am at present; yet such is the magnitude of the subject, such the hurtful consequences of superseding all persons, to give the country into the hands of Gunga Govind Sing and Deby Sing, that I will proceed. It is not a subject for me perhaps to go into, unless I can prove to you that Mr. Hastings knew

man whom Mr. Shore had well known from his intimacy with Mr. Dacrell, and by Deby Sing's having been employed under Mr. Shore himself for many years at Moorsshedabad, he gives him that fair character, which he conceived him to merit. It was in 1772 that Deby Sing was accused of mal-practices during the famine of 1770, and in 1773 he was acquitted, chiefly on the testimony of Mr. Dacrell.

the man, and that he has avowed his knowledge of him, though he accepts him as a man against whom no possible objection could be made.

It is necessary to state to you who was this Deby Sing, to whom these great trusts were appointed and profits given. Deby Sing was a person of the tribe of Banyans, that is to say, the trading and merchant class of India ; and he was practised in all those little arts and frauds to get money, and was successful. He was employed by Mahomed Reza Cawn, while that great man had the management of all the affairs of state and revenue in his hands under the Company. Deby Sing paid his court to him with all the assiduity and subtilness which those who have no principle are very apt to use. When M. R. Cawn was brought down by Mr. Hastings and ordered on a strange charge to Calcutta*, Deby

* It is a singular fact, that as often as people in power in England have had a wish to carry a point against the East India Company, they have had recourse to the foulest calumnies. Mr. Burke here does justice to Ma-

Deby Sing lent him considerable sums of money, for this great man was accused of great crimes, and acquitted, £250,000 in debt; that is to say, as soon as he was a

homed Reza Cawn; but in 1773, when Lord North and his friends made Mr. Hastings *the single exception* to the universal abuse bestowed upon the servants of the Company, Colonel Dow wrote a book, in which there is the following passage reflecting upon Mahomed Reza Cawn: "Year after year brought new tyrants, or confirmed the old in the practice of their former oppression. The tenants being at length ruined, the farmers were unable to make good their contract with government. Their cruelties to those in prison recoiled at length on themselves. Many of them were bound to stakes, and whipped: but their poverty ceased to be feigned. Their complaints were heard in every square of Moorshedabad, and not a few of them expired in agonies under the lash." In 1783, at the distance of ten years, when another attack was made upon the Company, a similar unjustifiable calumny was repeated by Mr. Burke. Mahomed Reza Cawn, no longer in power under the British government, had recovered his character, but *our administration* in India was as bad as ever. "Were we to be driven out of India this day (said Mr. Burke in 1783), nothing would remain to tell that it had been possessed during the inglorious period of our dominion, by anything better than the Ourang Outang, or the Tiger."

great

great debtor he ceased to be a great criminal. Deby Sing obtained his interest, and one of the first great concerns intrusted to him was the province of Purnea : how did he shew himself there ? he so well acquitted himself in that place, that the province was totally ruined and desolated. To give you an idea of this, the revenue, that in one year was £90,000, fell the next year to £60,000 ; and he so completely dried up all the source of the revenue, that it produced not equal to half of what it had been originally let at. Now when the farmers, who were Calcutta Banyans, looked at the province in which they hoped to make their fortunes, they suddenly fled from it, and gave £10,000 to be rid of the bargain. The corruptions and oppressions were too abominable to escape notice, and accordingly this man was removed from his employment in 1773, but not from his profits, which he kept *. Stigmatized, but still in power, he obtains

* This alludes to a transaction which happened immediately after Mr. Hastings came to Bengal in 1773.

obtains the office of high Duan*, or deputy steward of the great province, the capital of the country : in short, the whole power of Duan fell into his hands.

The council consisted of young men, not, like other young men, of pleasurable dispositions, but, like young men in India, willing to possess pleasure, and the means of acquiring a good fortune, by the effects of ruin. Deby Sing took compassion upon them,

Deby Sing had managed the province of Purnea when it was superintended by Mr. Ducarell. A complaint was preferred against him to Mr. Hastings, in 1772, who ordered him under a guard to Moorshedabad. After a full enquiry, the complaint was proved to be ill-founded, and Mr. Ducarell (of whom Mr. Fox spoke in such high terms of praise) was the principal evidence to prove his innocence, and his merit. — Mr. Burke knows this just as well as the editor does.

* Deby Sing was appointed Duan to the provincial council of Moorshedabad, and Mr. Shore Persian translator to that council, in November 1773 ; the former continued in this office until the abolition of the provincial council in February 1781. Mr. Burke so confounds dates and places, that it is necessary to explain what he leaves so obscure.

and

and endeavoured to lead them to the ways of property, and pleasure. There is a tax in that country much more productive than honourable—a tax on public prostitutes, which Deby Sing imposed, and with that ability for which he has been so much commended, he selected those who had the greatest personal merit: the ladies were called Pearl of Price, Ruby of Pure Blood, &c. &c. &c. all those fine names that heightened the general harmony, and increased the vivid satisfactions of love, with all the allurements of avarice: and Deby Sing made frequent visits to the young gentlemen.—He carried this moving seraglio about with him wherever he went, and he supplied his guests liberally with the best wines of France, and exquisite entertainment; with the Indian perfumes, and every thing that tends to increase the luxuries of such a scene. This great magician amongst them, chaste in the middle of dissoluteness, sober in the midst of drunkenness, and active in the lap of drowsiness, brought these young men such papers to sign, as in a sober hour never could have been given; and accordingly

accordingly he conveyed to himself such grants, as never could have been made otherwise *. This keeper of brothels is the man that was chosen by Mr. Hastings as a proper man to superintend the young Rajah, to lead him in the path of all piety and virtue. Deby Sing knew that pleasure would not do alone, and he supplied pleasure under that species of entertainments which he knew very well how to manage, but it would not have done if he had not done something also for their necessitites ; and accordingly he got the sole and regular government : he got several provinces under various names, sometimes appearing in his own name, sometimes dis-

* We can take upon us to affirm that the whole of this account is a fable. This provincial council consisted of some of the ablest servants ever employed in the revenue line in Bengal. On its first formation, the second member of the government was the chief, Mr. Baber the second, Mr. Maxwell third, Mr. Hosea fourth, and Mr. Hogarth fifth ; some of those were succeeded by Mr. Cowper, now a member of the supreme council, Mr. David Anderson, whose merits are generally known, Mr. Moore, Mr. Foley, and others : but not one of that loose and detestable character described by Mr. Burke.

appearing

appearing and shrouding himself under others, as successful or detected villany gave him countenance, or made him timid*. My Lords, in this new case every situation was a new bribe; he oppressed the people, and in one of them he publicly acted by proxy. As for the farm at Dinagapore, he was given it with great apparent consideration: he was given it at an advanced rent, but he was to take care it should not be levied with any new contribution, and he was sent by Mr. Hastings† to govern these three great countries of Dinagapore, Rungpore, and Edaracpore. He did not lose a moment. If you can forget his character, you may easily believe that

* Not one trace of such transactions in the province of Moorshedabad, as Mr. Burke relates, is to be found.

† This is a very unfounded statement.—Deby Sing got the farm of Dinagapore from the Committee of Revenue, in May 1781, after much consideration, upon no other ground than this, that his terms were, upon comparison with other proposals, the most advantageous to Government, and the same for the other two provinces.—The acts of the Committee were confirmed by the Governor General and Council.

Deby

Deby Sing had not a more correct memory. The first thing he did * was to seize on all the gentlemen of that country, throw them all in prison, keep them in irons, and oblige them to sign a paper for the increase of their rents †.

The next step he took, was to lay on them a number of new taxes, which by his covenants he was not to have laid; those taxes amounted to as much as the increased rent of the landed gentry and freeholders of the country. Being thus in imprisonment, obliged to sign those bonds, and loaded with taxes, they became totally unable to pay, the next step was, to seize on and sequester the lands: those that pay no taxes are the demefne lands for themselves and their families, and those that pay rents, are those that wish to maintain an independance. These demefne lands were sold for one year's pur-

* This charge on the public investigation was disproved.—Mr. Burke states this, and all that follow, as if they had been facts proved by evidence.

† This also was disproved.

chafe, the price there is ten years*. Who were they sold to? You are ready to anticipate me: they were sold to Deby Sing himself, through one of his agents: they amounted in all, to the amount of £70,000 sterling a year†, but according to the value of money in that country, they were worth very considerable sums; but were sequestered, and purchased so much under their proper rate, that the fee simple of an acre of land sold for about seven or eight shillings, and the miserable wretches received the payment for the lands out of the money that was collected from them. The money was

* It was proved that the lands sold, which were very inconsiderable in their value, were sold at a fair price. Deby Sing was compelled to restore them, and to lose the purchase money, because he had acted without the permission of Government in making the purchases.

† We should imagine there must be a mistake here, as the lands sold, did not amount to seventy thousand rupees a year, and the Governor General and Council compelled Deby Sing to restore them all. The price of lands in Bengal is two, and not ten years purchase. The whole rent of Rungpore was not more than £120,000 a year.

put into a separate collection, and the moment it was paid, the rents were raised again, and the produce was reserved as a sacred deposit for himself, or some other person whom Mr. Hastings should appoint*. The next was the sale of the goods: they were obliged to carry them to market, and there is one circumstance that will especially call for your pity. Most of the persons who are principal landholders or Zemindars, happened at that time to be women. The sex *there* are in a state of imprisonment, but by their sanctity they are treated with all possible attention and respect. No hand of the law can touch them, but they have a custom of sending family bailiffs and family serjeants into their houses, and accordingly such persons came into their houses, and became masters of them; the men and women all fled; all the charity lands were sold at the same market. But this is not all; there were things yet dearer to them, the poor consolations of imagination at death, for all the substantial miseries of life. There were lands set apart for their funeral service; how dear they were to all

* There was no accusation of this sort made.

the people of India I hope you will know on further enquiry. But this tyranny of Deby Sing, more consuming than fire, more greedy than the grave, seized these lands also; and sold, indeed, almost all the Zemindars possessions. Their houses were burnt, their carts were broken up. These things are to come in proof*. This was the manner in which all the principal gentry, all the secondary gentry, all the women, and all the minors, were disposed of. What was the situation of the poor men, of the yeomen? I say, their situation is ten thousand times worse, if possible, if there are degrees of degradation in utter ruin. They were driven like horned cattle into the common prison, and there they were obliged to sign, as the principal Zemindars had done before; they were obliged to sign recognitions to their utter ruin; they were let out only to their destruction. There were such an incredible variety of new taxes imposed every day, that they were obliged to sell almost all the corn

* This was *impossible*, until the matter should be first charged in the House of Commons; that House, whose Delegate Mr. Burke was, *never heard a word of this story.*

of the country at once. It happening to be a year of fulness, and the markets overloaded, their crops did not sell for above one-fourth of the value, so that being overloaded with taxes, they came to the next resource; they were obliged to sell every where, and hurry to market all the cattle: those cattle that were worth 20s. or 25s. a-piece, five of them were known to sell for 10s. The next thing that they were to part with was the ornaments of the women. They were obliged to be parted with. They do not decorate themselves according to our mode, but their decoration was a resource upon emergency, and if they have got any gold, it may serve for assistance. They were all forced to be brought to market along with the cattle; so that gold and silver sold for 20 per cent. under its value. But some will say, gold and silver sold under its value! certainly, where there is an overloaded market and wicked purchasers.

Permit me, my Lords, to set before you the state of the people that remain, the victims of this oppression. What you are going to hear is an answer from the author, Deby Sing ;

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Sing; who being charged with this compulsory sale of the lands, says, " It is notorious
 " that poverty generally prevails among the
 " husbandmen, and the poor are seldom possessed of any substance except at the time
 " they reap their harvest; and this is the case,
 " that such numbers of them were swept
 " away by famine, their effects were only
 " a little earthen-ware, and their houses a
 " handful of straw, the sale of which was
 " not worth a few rupees—but it is still incredible that there should not be a want
 " of purchasers."—My Lords, I produce this strange testimony from the person himself who was concerned in racking these people, and I produce it to shew the state of the country. It is not bribes of £40,000 only. Those who give these bribes of £40,000 must receive four times that sum. The people, while they were harassed in this manner, sought that dreadful resource that misery is apt to fly to;—they fell into the hands of usurers. Usurers are a bad resource at any time; those usurers, to the hardness of that kind of description of people, added another that makes men ten times worse,

worse, that is, their own necessity. They had very little help against the oppression of power; they were obliged to pay, to answer the bribes and gifts given to Mr. Hastings, not 5, 10, 20, or 50 per cent.;—no such thing; 600 per cent. by the year; beggaring the people, therefore, was the only resource. Such is the consequence of bribery.—The poor unfortunate people, in this way stripped of every thing, land and cattle, their instruments of husbandry next go to market; after that, the persons attending them dragged them from their own miserable hovels, and their last homes were burnt to the ground. It was not the exaction of revenue, it was a cruel robbery; and there remained to the unhappy people of that country but two things, their families and their friends. Men generally console themselves with a satisfaction, in proportion as they are deprived of other advantages, that they still find a resource at home; but the most tender of parents, the most affectionate and tender husbands, could not console themselves with their children or their wives. This was the case of the country in respect of their penury.

I am

I am obliged to make use of some apology for the horrid scene I am now going to open. My Lords, you have already had enough, more than enough, of oppressions upon poverty, and oppressions upon property — And, my Lords, permit me to make the apology to you, that Mr. Paterfon made, a man that I wish, if ever my name should be mentioned to posterity, may go down along with his, if possible, though in a secondary degree

His

• It will naturally be supposed that this story of Mr. Burke's made a considerable noise in Calcutta. Mr. Paterfon, who is a man of honour and character, was by no means inclined to sacrifice truth, in return for Mr. Burke's eulogium; but wrote, the following Letter to Mr. Chapman, a Member of the Board of Revenue, inclosing in it a statement of facts, which proved that Mr. Hastings was absent from Calcutta during the course of the inquiry into the conduct of Deby Sing, though he was the *first* to order its commencement, and to turn Deby Sing out of all his employments, pending the inquiry :

“ DEAR CHAPMAN,

“ IT was with sincere concern that I saw my Reports on the Rungpore insurrection, produced as a charge against Mr. Hastings. How little he had to do in this business, you will see from the inclosed

His apology is this; it is mine: " that the
 " punishments inflicted upon the Ryots of
 " Rungpore and Dinagepore, were in many
 " instances of such nature, that I would ra-
 " ther wish to draw a veil over them, than
 " shock your feelings by a detail; but it is
 " substantially necessary for the sake of jus-
 " tice and humanity, and the honour of
 " Government, that they should be exposed,
 " to be remembered in future."

My Lords, let this be my anticipating apology. It is indeed a most disgraceful scene to human nature that I am now going to mention. When the people were stript of every thing, it was in some cases suspected,

closed statement of facts. You will find, that, as far as rested with him, his conduct was such as you would expect from a man of his humanity. I have no party interest to serve, but it must give you satisfaction to see a vindication of Mr. Hastings, from one who has no other motive for the step, than that of justice.

CALCUTTA,

Yours, &c.

Sep. 26, 1789.

J. PATERSON.

Charles Chapman, Esq.

This Letter, and the statement inclosed in it, are amongst the Records at the India House.

and

and justly, that they had hid some part of their grain. Their bodies were then applied to the fiercest mode of torture, which was this: they began with them, by winding cords about their fingers; there they clung and were incorporated together; then they hammered wedges of wood and iron between their fingers, till they * crushed and maimed those honest and laborious hands which never were lifted to their mouths but with a scanty supply of provision; these were the hands so tortured, out of which you have purchased a substance which has furnished this country with the entertainment of china, a substance drawn from themselves and their children, of which you and all this auditory, and all this company, have made that very luxurious meal, without a farthing expence to Great Britain, for 25 years. What was the return? Cords, ham-

The cruelties mentioned in this part of Mr. Burke's speech were charged to have been committed in a small district, called Dhee Jumla, dependent upon Dinagepore. No complaints were made from any other part of Dinagepore. The first accusation turned out to be false, after a solemn enquiry upon oath.

mers, tortures, and maiming was the return. This is the situation in which those hands were bound, which act with resistless power when they are lifted up to heaven, powerful in prayer against the authors of such confusion. Let us at least deprecate, and secure ourselves from the vengeance due to those who massacred them. Let us, for God's sake : it is a serious thought. They began there, but if they began there, there they did not stop. The heads of the villages, the leading yeomen of the country, respectable for their virtue, and age, were tied together, two and two : unoffending and thus helpless, they were then thrown over a bar, and beat with bamboo canes on the soles of their feet, 'till their nails started from their toes ; and were afterwards so beaten with cudgels, that their blood ran both from their noses, eyes, and ears*.

My Lords, they did not stop there ; bamboos, wangees, rattans, canes, commonwhips, and scourges, were not sufficient. They

* This charge was also proved to be false, after the fullest investigation.

found a tree in the country which bears strong and sharp thorns. Not satisfied with those other cruelties, they scourged them with that. Not satisfied with this, but searching every thing through the deepest parts of nature, where she seems to have forgot her usual benevolence, they found a poisonous plant, which is a deadly caustic, which inflames the bruised part, and often ends with death. This they applied to those wounds. My Lords, this we know, that there are men so made, that even the pains of the body fortify the sufferer to bear the pains of the mind. The mind strengthens as the body suffers, and rises with an elastic force against those that torture it. The mind gets the better of the body. Those people that are dealt with in this manner, people that can bear their own tortures, cannot bear those of their children and friends. The innocent children were brought and scourged before the face of their parents! cruelly scourged before their parents*!

* After a very full enquiry, this charge was found to be false.

They bound the father and the son face to face, arm to arm, body to body, and in that state, they whipt them with every refinement of cruelty; so that every blow which escaped the father, should fall upon the son, and every blow which escaped the son, should fall upon the father; so that where they did not wound the sense, they should wound and tear the sensibilities of nature. This was not all. Virgins that were kept from the sight of sun, were dragged into the public court, which should be a refuge against all oppression; and there in the presence of the day, their delicacies were offended, and their virginity cruelly violated, by the basest and cruellest of mankind *. It did not end there. The wives of the men of the country only suffered less by this, they lost their honour in the bottom of the most cruel dungeons, where they were confined †. These are wrongs to the people; wrongs to their manners, wrongs to their bodies, and the feelings of mankind; they were dragged out naked, in

Not a syllable of this charge was true.

This charge, and the next also, proved totally false.
that

that situation exposed to public view, and scourged before all the people.

My Lords, here is my authority *, for otherwise you will not believe it credible. My Lords, what will you feel when I tell you that they put the nipples of the women into the cleft notches of sharp bamboos, and tore them from their bodies †. They applied burning torches, and cruel slow fire, to their bodies.

My Lords, I am ashamed to open it; these infernal fiends, in defiance of every thing divine and human, plunged torches

* The authority thus quoted by Mr. Burke, was a translation of a complaint delivered to Mr. Paterson, and by him transmitted just as he received it, to the Board of Revenue. There was an *art* practised by Mr. Burke in this instance, of which we hope no other man in England is capable. How could the Lords or the auditors have supposed that all Mr. Burke's authority was an allegation not enquired into.

† The horror which this accusation excited in Bengal, induced the Commissioners to make the most strict enquiry into the truth of it, and it appeared that it was utterly unfounded.

into

into the source of life†. My Lords, this excites feelings, that modesty, which more distinguishes man than even his rational nature, bids us turn from the view of, and leave it to those infernal fiends to execute their cruel and diabolical tortures, where the modesty of nature and the anxieties of parents may not follow them. These are cruelties that arose from the giving power to such a man as Deby Sing, and his infernal villains.

My Lords, I had forgot, I have it here, the manner in which you may know the length, the breadth, and depth of these horrible cruelties. They took these unfortunate husbandmen whom they had imprisoned; they whipt them: I assure you, these details are not pleasant, but they are useful. These men were taken often out of prison, awoke from their sleep, and these tormentors watched for the moments when

† This charge excited equal horror; but on the fullest enquiry, it was proved to have been made without the smallest foundation.

nature takes refuge from life in a state of insensibility: they were awoke to be whipped* again next morning, in winter time, when the country was quite destroyed by frost; which to them is more terrible than to us. They were plunged into cold water, then led out into the villages, to see if they could raise any thing from the hands of the villagers.

My Lords, the people of India are patience itself; their patience is too criminal; but they burst at once into a wild and universal uproar and unarmed rebellion, from one end to another. The two provinces† broke out into general rebellion. The people fell,

* Of this charge no shadow of proof appears. Nor can I even find that such a charge was preferred to Mr. Paterson, or any other living.

† This is not a true statement. The fact is, that *Dinagore* never broke out into rebellion. That province paid a revenue of £200,000 a year, and the balance of the first year of Deby Sing's lease was not 6, and the second not £8000.—The insurrection broke out in *Rangoon* only.

as most commonly happens, on those less guilty, and murdered them; they destroyed the subordinate instruments of tyranny; then followed Mr. Goodlad, who had *been a patient witness* of all these things *. To say no more, he was a patient witness of the rebellion. He immediately sent for

* This is a most cruel and unjustifiable attack upon a gentleman of irreproachable character, who fills an important office in Bengal. Mr. Goodlad was the Collector of Rungpore when the rebellion broke out, but he never received a single complaint that he did not instantly redress.

Having finished our remarks upon Mr. Burke's statement of the cruelties, we earnestly call our readers attention to the following opinion of Sir John Shore, recorded by him, when judgment was pronounced upon Deby Sing in November 1788. "I cannot conclude without an additional remark, that there never was a cause which appears to have been more thoroughly investigated, or more impartially conducted. Every member of the existing government at the time*, it is notorious, had formed a decisive opinion against Deby Sing, in consequence of Mr. Paterfon's reports; and the measures adopted were conformable to those

* Messrs. Hastings, Wheeler, Macpherson, and Stables.

for British officers, who ordered military execution; and you may easily believe how soon

“ sentiments, and calculated to shew that, if proved
 “ guilty, he had no mercy to expect. It was under this
 “ decided and avowed disapprobation of Government,
 “ that the Commissioners reluctantly undertook an in-
 “ vestigation of this cause. Their proceedings, in my
 “ opinion, do equal credit to their integrity and to their
 “ understandings. Facts are not left to bare assertion
 “ for support. Every charge (and some not specifically
 “ pointed out to the Commissioners) is examined with
 “ scrupulous accuracy; and wherever evidence could be
 “ obtained, it has been sought for, and brought forward.
 “ The proceedings are not summary, but voluminous
 “ and minute; and if the conduct of any Zemindar or
 “ farmer in the country were to pass an investigation
 “ of the same nature, I may venture to assert, that he
 “ would not be deemed innocent.”

“ The transactions in Dhee Jumla*, being wholly un-
 “ connected with the proceedings in Rungpore, I have
 “ followed the example of the Commissioners, in con-
 “ sidering them separately. Their report is so full, clear,
 “ and decisive, that I shall content myself with referring
 “ to that in support of my opinion, which is, that Deby
 “ Sing, so far from being culpable in any instance
 “ alleged against him, appears to have been moderate
 “ in his demands for rent, attentive to the complaints

* Where the atrocious cruelties stated by Mr. Burke were said to have been committed.

soon regular troops got the better of unarmed despair. They were conquered, vanquished, and slaughtered; and Mr. Goodlad ordered, that of these miserable people, two or three should undergo the process of the law, and be publicly hanged up; and hanged up they were.

But, my Lords, though the rebellion seemed to be crushed, the country was in that situation that Mr. Goodlad was

“ preferred, and to have punished the persons proved
 “ to have oppressed the Ryots, on their complaints. *I*
“ am happy also to remark, that many of the worst accu-
“ sations preferred against him appear to have had no existence
“ whatever.”

(Signed) J. SHORE.

Though Sir John Shore acquits Deby Sing of having had any share in such acts of cruelty as were really committed in Dhee Jumla, while he states also that many of the worst accusations were utterly unfounded, yet the conduct of Deby Sing in *Rungpore* did not escape his censure; at the same time he thought it but justice to remark, that the actual guilt of Deby Sing bore no sort of proportion to the magnitude of the charges preferred against him.

obliged

obliged to write down to Calcutta, that there never had been so material and serious a rebellion in Bengal. This was in 1782, and it made a very great noise in Calcutta. But there is such a gulph between us and Calcutta, that I venture to say, not one of all the great and noble auditors present ever heard of it. On the contrary, it is a constant rule that, whenever any thing is quiet in Bengal, you are sure to hear of it. Here, the inside of Bengal Government was exposed to view. When they heard this, they thought it behoved them not to pass by such conduct, and which a poor easy man could not tell how to account for. They, therefore, cast about for a good-natured easy man, who should make that sort of report, which might lay faults on both sides; and, as a retrospect could only tend to renew greivances, that the criminal should be left in possession of his acquisitions, and the people of their possessions. They wished it might appear, that the material cause of the insurrection might be the determination of the Zemindars to pay no more rent. The Committee, however, thought it necessary to send a Commissioner to examine into the

cause of the insurrection, and they cast about to find a man that was fit to be a good representer of affairs, that so the channel of all this ferocity and wickedness should be concealed. Accordingly, they found out a man of a tolerable free character, supposed to be a man of moderation, almost to excess; mild, quiet, totally unconnected with party, and of peaceable character*. They thought that just such a man as that, was exactly the man for their purpose; and they took it for granted, that from him they might expect an account in which faults should be left out on both sides, and buried in oblivion; and it should be remembered, that a retrospect could only tend to renew grievances. They chose

* If it were of consequence to expose Mr. Burke's blunders upon all occasions, the writer of this note would observe, that the real character of Mr. Paterfon (except that he is a man of honour and integrity) is directly the *reverse* of Mr. Burke's description. He is a gentleman of uncommonly *lively parts*, a very neat poet, an excellent companion, and, with great good nature in private life, possesses an admirable turn for satire, as every man of letters in Bengal well knew. Mr. Paterfon was appointed the Commissioner on the recommendation of Sir John Shore, the latter being the acting Chief of the Committee, and Mr. Paterfon *one of his assistants*.

well;

well; but there never was a man so mistaken in the world. Mr. Paterfon, undert his quiet, honeft character, concealed a vigorous mind, deciding understanding, and a feeling heart. He is the fon of a gentleman of venerable age, and extraordinary character, in this country, who long filled the feat of Chairman of the Committee of Supply in the Houfe of Commons, but is now retired to an honourable reft in the neighbourhood; this fon, as foon as he was appointed to the commiffion, dreaded the confequences; but to juftify himfelf, he took out a letter that he had received from his father, which was the prefervation of his character, and the deftruction of his fortune; and this letter enjoined him to purfue fuch a perfect line of conduct, and to hazard every profecution rather than to difgrace truth, that he went up into the country in a proper frame of mind to do his duty. I beg to read from his letter, how that gentleman found that country on his arrival, and how he accounts for the rebellion. “ In my two reports, I have fet
 “ forth the general manner that oppreffion has
 “ provoked the husbandmen to part with
 “ their

“ their stock and goods; I mean not to
 “ enumerate them now; every day my
 “ enquiries serve to confirm the facts; the
 “ wonder would have been if they had not
 “ revolted, seeing it was not a collection of
 “ the revenue, but a robbery with criminal pu-
 “ nishment, and every instrument of disgrace;
 “ and this extended to every individual.—
 “ There is a period at which oppression will
 “ be resisted. Conceive the situation of the
 “ husbandman. Every thing they had in
 “ the world was dragged away; exposed
 “ to every exaggerated demand, and sold
 “ at so low a price as not to answer that
 “ demand; subjected to criminal punish-
 “ ment, with the loss of his women and
 “ cast.”

You will allow the full effect of prejudice
 on this subject; the consequence of a loss of
 the cast to these persons I have stated to your
 Lordships before; the loss of the cast there
 amounts to more than a complete excommu-
 nication, outlawry, or attainder, in this coun-
 try; the man or woman that has lost their cast
 are no longer the children of their parents,
 and

and they can survive only in the estimation of the lowest and basest of mankind. But there was an instrument of torture to them still worse: there is a kind of pillory, a disgrace in that country, particularly to the Bramins, which is, to be put on a bullock, with drums beating, and led through the town; this was so done*, and the people supplicated that the man should not be so cruelly treated. I have now stated the causes of the rebellion, and the opinion of the man when he saw that country; which was not a matter of inquisition, it was a matter of public notoriety. There is an expression of one of the men that went into it, that he passed twelve miles without seeing a light, and without finding means of fire to dress his neces-

* This punishment was inflicted, and very properly, upon a man called Basdeo Doss, who had of his own authority inflicted such of the cruelties upon some of the inhabitants of Dhee Jumla, as they really suffered. When Sir John Shore gave his opinion in November 1783, upon this cause, he remarked, that Basdeo Doss deserved the most exemplary punishment for his conduct.

fary food. All these hurtful calamities were the consequence of the government of Deby Sing; one would imagine that this drew upon him the severity of the Governor; that if ever there were any arbitrary power, it would be here exercised: we must not be too hasty in forming an opinion. The report of the Commissioner might be subjected to great mistakes*; Gunga Govind Sing, when it came before him, well played his part. On the first report, the committee were a little stunned; they did not know what to do with it, but at last, after that, came down a full report, with evidence in the full body of it†; as the Commissioner was a man of business, and of serious thinking, he made such a report, filled with such a body

* This alludes to a minute of Sir John Shore, which he presented in the Committee of Revenue, in which he expresses his doubts of the truth of the facts, and observes, that if they were of such a nature as Mr. Paterfon had stated, proofs might be procured without any difficulty.

† This is not the case—Mr. Paterfon merely transmitted the complaints as he received them, and was not responsible either for their truth or falsehood.

of evidence, as probably the records of that country cannot furnish. Reports of all persons who act in the government by its authority, in public functions, exercising public trust, are entitled to presumptive credit * for the truth of all they assert, and throw the responsibility and the burden of the proof on those that shake it; unless corruption, malice, or some evil disposition is found in the person who makes this report, it ought to pass in the opinion of those who ordered it as proof; but very different ideas prevail in this committee of Mr. Hastings. The first act of this executive body, neither having the right or the name of a judicial character, was to turn Mr. Paterfon into a voluntary accuser: having made a charge, they call upon him to prove it; they put Deby Sing against Mr. Paterfon; they take an objection, that the depositions are not all upon oath, they were never ordered to be upon oath, not one

* This is undoubtedly true; but it was not from any doubt of Mr. Paterfon's veracity, that Sir John Shore *required some proofs* of the assertions made by the Natives, who delivered the complaints to Mr. Paterfon.

word is upon oath ; they throw a doubt, a shadow, upon them all. In short, Deby Sing appears, as your Lordships imagine he will appear, a very difficulty, a very slur in the way of their commission, and they suppose that Mr. Paterfon has been carried away by the warmth of his imagination ; that he has assumed what is not to be proved : they allow that presumptive proofs are pretty strong against Deby Sing, and Mr. Hastings is of opinion, that there is nothing here charged against him, of which he is not guilty*. My Lords,

* Here again is one of those *misrepresentations* of which, we hope, Mr. Burke *only* is capable. Mr. Hastings never pronounced any opinion on the case of Deby Sing, because the enquiry was not completed during his Government ; but he was so much prejudiced against him, that he ordered him *to be removed from all his appointments pending the enquiry* ; and he declared, just before he left Bengal, that such was his opinion of Deby Sing, that he thought he *might* be guilty of the enormities alleged against him, and that he *might* be able to conceal them from Mr. Goodlad. This strongly confirms what Sir John Shore said, “ that every member of the “ Government had formed a decided opinion *against* “ Deby Sing, and that, *if proved guilty, he had no mercy “ to expect.*”

I am sorry to break your attention, it is a subject that pains me very much ; it is long, difficult, and arduous ; but, with the blessing of God, if I can, I will go through it to-day. The next step they took was their putting him into the shape of an accuser, to make good a charge which he made out much to their satisfaction.

The next step they took was a charge*—

February 19th,

IN CONTINUATION.

MY LORDS,

I AM convinced that my continuation of this cause has been attended with some dif-

* At this period Mr. Burke suddenly laid his hand upon his breast, and dropped down. His brother, his son, and other gentlemen came to his assistance. The Court broke up in the utmost confusion. Some ladies *fainted*, while others had sense and firmness to treat this *oratorical trick* as it deserved. An engraver has given us a view of the High Court in Westminster Hall during the height of this curious scene.

ficulties

ficulties to your Lordships, on account of my inability to proceed yesterday; but your Lordships' love of justice has removed every obstruction, and I therefore proceed with confidence to the business now before your Lordships. I think, to the best of my remembrance, the House adjourned at the period of time in which I was endeavouring to illustrate the mischiefs that happened from Mr. Hastings throwing off his responsibility, by delegating that power to a council, and in fact to Black Men, and the consequence of it, in preventing the detection and the punishment of the grossest abuses that ever were known to be committed in India, or in any other part of the world. I stated to you, that Mr. Commissioner Paterson was sent into that country; that he was sent, with all the authority of Government, with powers not only to hear, to report, but to redress the grievances which he should find; in short, there was nothing wanted to his power, but an honest Court to report to. He reported those things which I delivered to you, and did very imperfectly, very faintly, and shortly, according to my materials, state to you,

that,

that, instead of being furnished with that share of power which Mr. Hastings has endeavoured to use on other occasions against those who had incurred his private resentment, this man was put in all business of offence and defence, which the most litigious and prevaricating laws that ever were invented to screen speculation and power from the cries of an oppressed people could effect. Mr. Paterfon, who as I stated, was deputed, with all the authority of Government, to a great province, was now considered as a voluntary accuser, and to make good the articles of his charge against Deby Sing; but I believe Deby Sing did not long remain in the humble sinking suppliant situation of a man under charges, or in a secondary and subordinate situation, as answering those charges. By degrees, as the protection increased, his boldness grew along with it; he no longer took the tone of an accused person, he reverses the situation imposed on Mr. Patterfon; he becomes Mr. Paterfon's accuser; he began at first to say, he believed he was mistaken; took up things a little too warmly; he now steps forward, charges him with forgery,

and

and desires to be heard in this nominal Committee. This business has now taken a third shape; first, Mr. Paterfon is a Commissioner, to report; then he is to make good his charge; then he is accused and ordered to answer the charges; this is the third metamorphosis of Mr. Paterfon's situation. In this situation, which is what I will venture to say never happened before in the annals of mankind, he was ordered to bring Deby Sing to prison, that infamous character, that abandoned mortal, loaded with crimes by the Committee themselves. Deby Sing was committed under guard, but he was soon taken from under that guard, and he sat assessor by the side of Mr. Paterfon. In such a situation all human constancy would be shaken, and its manhood gone. To report the grievances of those that had been rich, but were now undone by oppressors, was invidious; the road of fortune was easy to Mr. Paterfon. I believe you are convinced, that the Committee would not have received a different report, as a proof of bribery; they would rather have received it as tending to soften and conciliate this difficult matter, and to settle the order of Government,

Government as soon as possible ; but this man, who withstood all temptations ; whose honour, fidelity, principle, and good character, received the thanks, and withstood the thanks of those that accused him ; this man was turned into the accused person in this Committee. In this situation, I must do him the justice to say, he never tottered one moment ; he stood like a hero* ; he was sent
as

* The whole of this part of the account is so extremely wild, that no man, without explanation, can understand it. Sir John Shore complained, that Mr. Paterfon's accounts were inaccurate or vague, and he censured him for disrespect to the Committee. Mr. Paterfon replied ; and after much altercation the Committee sent to the Supreme Council all their correspondence with Mr. Paterfon, and *every document and every information* which they had received from him, relative to the insurrection, and to the conduct of Deby Sing. The Supreme Council (*Mr. Hastings being at Lucknow*), viz. Mr. Wheeler, Sir John Macpherson, and Mr. Stables, met four days successively, morning and evening, and having read Mr. Paterfon's reports, and ~~the~~ documents, they unanimously resolved, *that three sworn Commissioners* should be appointed to go through this cause, and that Deby Sing should be *confined*, and his property *attached*, until judgment was pronounced by the Governor General and Council. The whole of
this

as a protector, when the people looked upon him as carrying with him the whole power of Government. He was forced to go back, to try whether among a miserable, ruined, undone, abject people, he was to find any who had courage enough to stand to their former accusations ; such treatment no servant of Government ever received. The next step was to appoint another set of Commissioners, to try the question between him and Deby Sing*, Who were those gentlemen

this proceeding is strictly *just, fair, and honourable* ; but were it otherwise, Mr. Hastings was *absent*, and *ignorant of every part of it*. Sir John Shore observes, in 1788, that every member of the Bengal Government, in 1783-4, had formed a *decided opinion against Deby Sing*, and that if found guilty, *he had no mercy to expect*.

* Here Mr. Burke closes his account of the complaints which were made from Rungpore. We will therefore, in a very few words, give a fair state of the transactions relative to that province.

In the year 1781, Sir John Shore and the Committee of Revenue conceived that the Government ought to receive about seventy thousand rupees a year from that province, beyond the rent of the preceding year: and at that advanced rent Deby Sing agreed to take it, entering into obligations not to impose any additional
taxes

men appointed on the commission? A set of juniors*. They were to enquire into the pro-

taxes upon the Ryots. This engagement was for two years. The first year's rent was paid without a balance, or a complaint. When six months of the second year were expired, an insurrection broke out in the province, and Mr. Paterfon was sent by Sir John Shore and the Committee to enquire and report the cause of it. He transmitted to the Committee several papers, in which certain Zemindars and Ryots stated the several facts which Mr. Burke has mentioned. To determine upon the truth of these complaints, the Supreme Council appointed three sworn Commissioners, and, after the fullest and the most minute investigations, by far the greater number were found to have no sort of foundation. In some instances, Deby Sing, following the example of *the Zemindars*, had collected the revenues with a rigour and severity very unusual under the British Government in India, and he was compelled to make complete satisfaction for every act of injustice he had committed; but, when the points in which he *was culpable* are compared with the *accusations* stated by Mr. Burke, the man must appear to be perfectly innocent. The unjustifiable deception of Mr. Burke was, in stating all the facts, as if they had been *proved* and established by evidence.

* The three gentlemen appointed were *three years senior to Mr. Paterfon in the service*; and, as Sir John Shore well observed, *reluctantly* undertook the office imposed upon them, and which it was not in their power to refuse.

H

ceedings,

Mr. Paterfon, feeing the minds of the people broken, fubdued, and prostrate under it, and that fo far from the means of representing his duty between the criminal and magistrate, he had not that of defending his own innocence, represented to thefe Commissioners, the junior fervants of the Company, that this appearance, and this immense retinue, tending to ftrike terror into the minds of the natives, had prevented him from executing juftice. The Council* fat upon it, and they found it was true that it would have an evil tendency. On the other hand, they fay, for they are very tender, he fhould appear under a guard; therefore, they take a middle way, and they ordered them to UNSKREW their bayonets, and to confider them as troops. The next ftep they took, was to releafe Mr. Paterfon from all concern in thefe tranfactions. One would have thought that it was only right for Deby Sing to be excluded. No, there he fat as a fovereign four years. They enjoyed the office, and

* That is, Mr. Wheeler, Sir John Macpherfon, and Mr. Stables, in the abfence of Mr. Haftings.

Deby Sing remained in honour, though in something like confinement*.

Now, my Lords, to bring all this business home to Mr. Hastings. I stated to you, before that I considered Mr. Hastings as responsible for the acts of the people he employed; doubly responsible, if he knew them to be bad. I charge him with putting men of evil characters in situations, in which any evil might be committed. I charge him as Chief Governor with destroying the institutions of the country; which were, and ought to have been, the check upon this peo-

* This concluding part of Mr. Burke's speech is unfortunately but too true; the special Commission of Enquiry was appointed in March 1784. Mr. Hastings, who was then absent, and did not return to Calcutta until November, and left India the first of February following, expressed his surprise that the report had not been made; and moved, that the Commissioners should be peremptorily ordered to make their report in two months. The enquiry was so *minute*, that it was not until February 1787 that they entirely closed all their proceedings; and it was not until the 26th of November 1788, that judgment was pronounced, which Lord Cornwallis justly laments as a great evil.

ple. I charge him with putting a person called a Steward, or *Dewan* of the province, as a controul on the Farmers General of it; so that no controul should exist; and that he should be let loose to rapine and destruction; for the two offices were both vested in him. It may be asked—Did Mr. Hastings order these cruelties? I answer, No. But if he had kept firm to the duty that the Act of Parliament had appointed, all the revenue regulations must have been made by him. But, instead of that, he appointed Gunga Govind Sing, and placed him in the seat of government. Mr. Hastings is responsible for destroying his own legal capacity; next for destroying the legal capacity of the council; not one of whom could have any knowledge of the country*. When he had done that, and had destroyed

* There is something so very foreign from the actual fact in this statement, that we shall offer a few remarks upon it. It has happened that Sir John Shore arrived in England in time to depose in Westminster-Hall, that the appointment of the Committee of Revenues did *not* tend to deprive the Supreme Council of all knowledge of a revenue; and that it did not tend to throw power into the hands of Mr. Hastings. The public official
accounts

destroyed all power in the country, he had every thing in his own hands; and for all things he is answerable. They could not possibly

accounts prove, that considerable advantages resulted to the public, by an actual increase of the revenues, at a time, as Mr. Hastings observed to the Directors, in May 1781, "when the preservation of the Company's interest in every part of India depended upon realizing the resources of Bengal." Without troubling our readers with confused and perplexed accounts of remissions, settlements, or balances, we shall content ourselves by taking from the records in Westminster-Hall the actual amount of the net money paid into the Company's treasury from the landed revenues, the three years *preceding*, and the three years *subsequent* to that plan of Mr. Hastings', which is supposed, contrary to truth, and the universal knowledge of mankind, to have involved Bengal in such a scene of distress as no other country ever experienced:

Preceding the new System.

Sicca Rupees.

1778-9, 1,93,15,618

1779-80, 1,90,83,547

1780-81, 1,80,08,723

5,64,07,888

Subsequent to it.

1781-2, 1,95,78,993

1782-3, 1,94,75,316

1783-4, 1,86,43,107

5,77,97,316

So that this country, so ruined and undone, by the change produced a net addition of 13,89,328 Sicca rupees

possibly have concealed from the public eye such acts as these; the Provincial Councils had removed, but Mr. Hastings destroyed, every charge. Having destroyed every controul, above and below, and delivered the whole country into the hands of Gunga Govind Sing, for all his acts he is responsible. I have read to you, and I hope, and trust, it is fresh in your remembrance, that Deby Sing was presented to Mr. Hastings by Gunga Govind Sing, namely, by that set of servants, as they call themselves, who act as they themselves tell us, and most naturally, as the tools of Govind Sing: and he is further responsible, because he took the bribe of Dinagepore, the country that was ravaged in this manner*. We shall prove he took

rupees, or £150,000 sterling; and the improved, and improving, state of Bengal, from that time to this, must convince any rational being, that there is no foundation for the many simple stories we have heard of the distressed state of Bengal; for if Mr. Hastings had violently kept up the revenue for three years by improper or oppressive exactions, those revenues must have fallen off in succeeding years; whereas, in fact, the country has continued progressively improving to the present time.

* We have already stated that *Rungpore*, and not *Dinagepore*, was the province in which the insurrection broke out.

bribes

bribes of some body or other in power of £40,000, through the medium of that person whom he had appointed to exercise all the affairs of the Supreme Council above, and of all the subordinate Council below.— So that you see, he had appointed a Council of Tools, at the expence of £62,000 to do all the offices, for the purpose of establishing a bribe-factor general, a general receiver, and agent of bribes, through all the country, and he is answerable for the whole*.

* Mr. Burke, in his most singular composition, assumes it *as a fact*, that Mr. Hastings had delivered over the whole kingdom of Bengal to Gunga Govind Sing, in whose hands the Committee of Revenue were *tools*; and, therefore, for all *his acts Mr. Hastings is responsible*.

But in this letter to the Court of Directors, remonstrating against the appointment of Sir John Shore to the government of Bengal, he affirms, that he finds Mr. Shore to have been materially concerned *as a principal actor and party* in the mal-administration of the Revenue Board; and that against him much criminal matter is, at this moment, at issue before the highest Tribunal in the nation.

Without attempting to reconcile to common sense such absurdities and contradictions, it will be sufficient to observe, that *no one act* of oppression alleged

to have been committed by Mr. Hastings, or by Sir John Shore, or by Gunga Govind Sing, has been *proved*; and, let the calculation be made in any possible way, it will be found, that in the three years following the establishment of the Committee of Revenue, the revenues actually *netted* considerably *more* than the revenues *netted* in the three last years of the Provincial Council.

That Mr. Burke most grossly abused the power *delegated* to him by the last Parliament, is *unquestionably true*. He confessed it, when he said, that he *ought not* to be expected, like Shylock, *to cut just the pound of flesh, and no more*. To shew the man's utter *inconsistency upon all subjects*, we insert the following passage from his "Appeal:"

"What can sound with such horrid discordance in
"the *moral ear*, as this position, that a Delegate, *with*
"limited powers, may break his engagement to his
"constituents, *assume an authority never committed to him*
"to alter things at his pleasure; and then, if he can per-
"suade a large number of men, to flatter him in the power
"he has *usurped*, that he is absolved in his own con-
"science, and ought to stand acquitted in the eyes of
"mankind. On this scheme, the maker of the ex-
"periment must begin with a *determined perjury*. That
"point is *certain*. He must take his chance for the ex-
"piatory addresses. This is to make the *success of*
"villainy the standard of *innocence*."

It is true, Mr. Burke was not a *sworn delegate*; but no man of honour needs an *oath*, to keep him to the strict line of his duty. He has well defined the

functions of a *delegate*; let us examine how he exercised those functions himself.

He was appointed *one of the delegates* of the last House of Commons. His duty was *defined*; namely, to make good *certain articles*, which *that House* had voted. Though the fact be true, that the House had never read by far the greater number of those articles, yet Mr. Burke had an undoubted right to expatiate, as he pleased, on every allegation in those articles, however irregularly or unjustly they were voted. But in manifest contradiction to his own sense of the moral obligations imposed upon a *delegate*, he introduced the episode of Deby Sing; a subject on which *his constituents* had never heard a word, and of course they could give him no instructions upon it. Nor was this all; he told his story most unfairly.

He imposed upon his auditors, by stating the facts, as if the *truth* of them was beyond all question, and that, consequently, the only matter for consideration hereafter would be, whether Mr. Hastings and Sir John Shore could be made *responsible* for the facts. Yet Mr. Burke *knew* that the *truth* or *falsehood* of the facts was a subject of a very long and solemn enquiry, the result of which was, as it has *since* appeared, that the facts charged were false in their most material parts. Where the charges were not without foundation, it was proved that they had been very greatly exaggerated.

THE END.