



which the Company stood towards the Nabob of the Carnatic. They declared that the terms of the late peace had been imposed upon them by imperative necessity, to which they had acceded from a conviction, that the result would only prove less disadvantageous than a continuance of hostilities, with means wholly inadequate to their vigorous prosecution.

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Had the negociation with Hyder related to the Company's interests alone, most of the difficulties which arose during the discussions would have been obviated. So far as the Company were concerned, Hyder was said to have evinced an earnest wish for peace and friendship; but had the Company observed a neutrality, and left the Nabob to protect his own country, the Carnatic would have fallen to the first invader. Although in this powerless condition to defend his territories, the Nabob possessed, in its fullest extent, the government of the country; the appointment of, and command over, the persons entrusted with the departments, and the entire disposal of its productions and revenues: on all points connected with the Carnatic, it was necessary that he should be consulted; in fact, nothing could be done without his concurrence. His desire had been to continue the war, notwithstanding the absolute want of all *matériel* for the purpose. The treachery of his sepoys, in surrendering every fort that was attacked; the extension of the cruel ravages

Embassy's
views of the
Nabob of the
Carnatic.



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ravages to which the country had been exposed ; a rooted hatred to Hyder ; a desire to extend his own possessions, and a belief in the Company's inexhaustible credit and resources in Bengal, supplied the motives by which he had been actuated. He never spoke of Hyder but as Hyder Naigue, although the Nizam and others had, as it suited them, used towards Hyder the title of Nabob. Hyder as resolutely refused to use the term Nabob of the Carnatic, but designated him Mahomed Ally, often accompanied with opprobrious terms. The Nabob absolutely declined being made a party to the treaty, as he would not submit to give Hyder the title of Nabob. The Council were, therefore, constrained to conclude and engage for the Carnatic.

The Nabob was desirous that the Company should disband their troops and retire within their possessions, leaving him to defend the rest of the Carnatic with his own means. The Council observed on the long friendship which had existed between the Company and the Nabob ; their promises and engagements to support him and his family ; the large debt which he owed to them ; the probable detriment to these affairs, should the Carnatic fall into other hands ; and the certainty of that event, if not prevented by the interposition of our power, were urged as reasons for employing the Company's troops whenever the country might be attacked. Arms, once taken up, could

not

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not be laid down at pleasure; and although it might be nominally the Nabob's cause, it would, in point of fact, be that of the Company. From the first of his connexion with the Company, in 1746, to the reduction of Pondicherry, in 1761, the Carnatic had been a continued scene of war, in which the Nabob had been reduced to the greatest extremities. The revenues had been wholly inadequate to the expense of the wars up to 1761. Before any reductions could be introduced, the defection of Usoff Khan in the Madura country, and the subsequent hostilities with Hyder, had still further embarrassed his resources, besides the debts which he had contracted to individuals. The Council, therefore, solicited the Court's views as to the future course of policy to be observed towards him, as, after all, he depended solely upon the Company for support; as he had not a friend in the Nizam, the Mahrattas, Hyder, or the king of Tanjore. They stated, that they felt it necessary to put forward the facts; deductions from them being matter of opinion.

The Nabob was apprehensive, to the greatest degree, that, sooner or later, some pretence would be found by the Government to seize the Carnatic, and establish such a system as had been introduced in Bengal. Although the day was, in all probability, far distant, when he would be enabled to discharge his debts, and insist upon the
Company



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Company evacuating his forts and country, the Council desired to possess the Court's opinion, in the event of such a state of things arising. The value of the Company's acquisitions, including the Circars and Jaghire, was estimated at about thirty-five to forty lacs; the Nabob's, between seventy and eighty: but this was not founded on any clear data.

The Directors communicated their sentiments on the treaty with Hyder, and the views of the Council, in a despatch to Madras, in March 1770:

“In your letter to the Nabob, dated 16th July 1767, you say, it has been your intention, ever since 1761, to embrace the first favourable opportunity of securing the several passes into the Carnatic. That you then had a favourable opportunity, because the Mahrattas had already struck a terror into Hyder's forces; therefore, you urged the Nabob to exert his utmost to get this accomplished. You afterwards promised him the government of the Mysore country. Your field deputies pompously appointed him phousedar thereof; and then you accuse him of having an *insatiable desire of extending his dominions*. He finds himself, by following your advice, reduced, disappointed, and almost despised; and then you blame him for want of temper.

“You have attempted to explain away the
value



CSL

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value of almost every thing for which you have ventured to plunge us into a war with a view to obtain. To such a degree of irresolution and disability had your ill-conduct of the war reduced you, that necessity obliged you, at last, to give Mr. Andrews, in his instructions to treat with Hyder, a very extraordinary *carte blanche*, nearly to this effect: ‘If Hyder will not relinquish places taken, we must relinquish pretensions thereto.’

“ You say the Nabob has the Bengal transactions always in his mind :—we wonder not at it. You have, contrary to our express injunctions, afforded but too much reason for all the country powers around you to suspect us of encroaching designs against their possessions and tranquillity, and gained no one advantage thereby.

“In the first article of your treaty with Hyder, you include, in general words, *all the friends and allies of the contracting parties*, ‘provided they do not become aggressors;’ but if they become aggressors, they lose the benefit of such treaty.

“ Now as, by the treaty with the Soubah, Bazalet Jung is prohibited expressly, at any time, from yielding Hyder the common formal civilities necessarily practised by country powers who are at peace with each other, we cannot conceive how Bazalet Jung can fulfil the condition by which he holds his circar, and yet continue on good terms with Hyder, as all our allies must do, if they act

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conformably to the first article of your treaty with him.

“ By your letter to the President and Council of Bengal, 21st March last, and their reply thereto, of the 31st of the same month, we find a plan has been concerted between you, for establishing a fund for military resources, by a reduction of the investments on which we had so much reason to depend. However salutary it might be to provide against future exigencies, after your investments shall have been carried to their full extent, yet it is with the utmost astonishment we see that our servants (apprised, as they are, of the obligation the Company is under to pay £400,000 annually to Government, exclusive of the indemnity for tea, which may be estimated at near £200,000) could entertain an idea of depriving us of the only means we could have to discharge the same, together with such dividends as the Proprietors might reasonably expect from our late acquisitions, and at the same time enable us to provide for the payment of bills of exchange, or our common and necessary consignments, and the other important occasions which must indispensably be complied with.”

Circars taken
under Compa-
ny's manage-
ment.

As the term for which the Circars had been let to Hussain Ally and Joquey Pundit expired in the ensuing September, the Council resolved upon taking the whole under the Company's management, and to settle with the Zemindars for their jumma-



jummabundy. When originally let to Hussain Ally, two only of the four Circars had acknowledged the Company's authority; and the Zemindars of those two, notwithstanding their assurances of fidelity and attachment, were ready to seize every opportunity to distress a government, to which they only submitted through fear. By the plan proposed, a competent knowledge of their mean value would be obtained, though the expenses of collecting the revenues might render it less advantageous for a time. The distinction between zemindarry and government lands was first pointed out. "The zemindarries are lands held by certain rajahs or chiefs as their hereditary estates, paying a certain tribute to the Government, and being subject to suit and service, in manner very similar to the ancient feudal tenures. The tributes ought to be certain and invariable, though that has not always been strictly observed, and changes in government have also introduced changes in the tributes; which, indeed, is of no great consequence, for, besides these fixed tributes (supposing they were so), the Supreme Government has always demanded, and custom has given sanction and title to, a further sum as a *nazar*, or free gift; and these two sums, the tribute and *nazar*, are what we mean when we speak of settling the *jummabundy* with the Zemindars. Besides these zemindarries, or hereditary estates, there are certain lands (more in the Chicacole than any

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Zemindarry
and Govern-
ment lands
described.



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other of the Circars), which are called *havely*, or Government lands, and are the property of the state, or lord paramount. Such are your *jaguer*, &c. lands, in the Carnatic; and these are the lands which we purpose to let out, even should we, by way of trial, endeavour to settle ourselves the *jummabundy* with the Zemindars for their lands.”*

Litigious and
violent pro-
ceedings of the
Grand Jury.

The introduction of English law had, at this early period, been productive, as in later times, of much inconvenience and annoyance to the Government as well as to the natives. At a moment when the Company's affairs on the coast demanded the utmost attention of the Council; when the whole of the country from Tinnevely to the Kistna was involved in troubles, and when the enemy were ravaging the Carnatic, the Council were harassed by the violent and litigious proceedings of some members of the Grand Jury, who obstinately persevered in pressing matters and presentments, which threw the settlement into contentions and embarrassments; whilst on other occasions they declined to make a return to any of the bills of indictment brought before them.

The jurisdiction of the Mayor's Court, under the charter, became matter of doubt and dispute; the one party construing the word *factory* in the most extensive latitude, the other taking it in its literal and strict sense.

“ If,”

* Letter from Fort St. George, 27th June, 1769.



“ If,” observed the Council, “ the charter should be understood in the extended sense, including not only all the old districts, but the newly-acquired jaghire and all the circars, and, consequently, that we should be required to govern and manage these countries according to the laws of England, we hope your honours will pardon us if we frankly confess, that we are utterly unable to undertake such a task. It would be introductive of more disorder and confusion than we can now describe: but, as we do not think that the charter can, by any natural construction, be extended thus far, we have only to hope that it may be understood not to extend beyond the places actually named without dependencies; that is to say, Madraspatnam, or the Black Town, and Fort St. George, or the White Town, and so of every other factory. We are of opinion that, whether the Company hold their possessions by one tenure or another, it was never intended by the grants, to abolish the usages and customs of the people, or the forms of administering justice.”

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The whole subject was referred by the Directors to the consideration of counsel, who, after entering very fully into the various points, stated:—

“ I have no doubt that the charter of justice does not extend to any territories or places acquired since that charter was granted; consequently, the Presidency of Madras may be relieved from their apprehensions, that the jaghire lands

Counsel's opinion on conduct of the Grand Jury.

are



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are within their jurisdiction. The extent of their power seems to be very exactly described in the forty-fifth paragraph of their general letter.

“ If any of the Grand Jury had complained to the court of their fellows for refusing to go on with their business, and nothing had appeared to justify such refusal but what is said by the three memorialists in the court, it was the duty of the judges to set fines upon them, and commit them until the fines were paid. The court have also a power of fining those who refuse to attend the juries, who are liable to be called upon after they have been legally summoned : but fines are at the discretion of the judges, and in such cases £30 has been set. Nothing can be more illegal or insolent than the address of the Grand Jury to the justices of Oyer and Terminer, 26th April 1769 ; there was no punishment in the power of the court they did not deserve. But when a grand jury is dismissed for misbehaviour, and another summoned in its stead, the second is not to consist of any part of the first jury so dismissed ; and the taking a larger number at first into grand juries will prevent this inconvenience.

“ It is proper I should make some observations on the memorial sent to the Court of Directors, and the conduct of the memorialists. They, after they had found one bill of indictment, stopped short in the business, because they apprehended they were not qualified to act, the court, in their opinion,

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opinion, having illegally dismissed a former jury. It is impossible to conceive a circumstance more foreign to their province as jurymen, or the business then before them. With equal propriety, they might have dated their disqualification from some misconduct in the Nabob of Arcot. It is again to be observed, that these gentlemen had been sworn on the Grand Jury, and as such had found an indictment. They imputed, and by their memorial impute, the interruption thus given to the public justice of the country, to the feelings and dictates of their conscience, and could not by virtue of their oaths as jurymen (though with the same breath they declare themselves not qualified as jurymen) give any reason for their conduct. How this explosion was felt at Madras, I know not; but sure I am, that if it had burst in the King's Bench in this country, these gentlemen would not have been permitted to plead conscience for their outrage. If these feelings of conscience are real and genuine, the owners of such consciences are, indeed, disqualified for every important connexion with public society, as they have not the least power and control over themselves. Could it be imagined, that assisting in the administration of justice could offend the most tender conscience? Can any employment be more innocent or honourable? Against such qualms, so sudden, so unexpected, and so destructive in their operations, human foresight has



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no protection. But if, on the other hand, these feelings of conscience are not sincere or genuine, but are only used as a cover, under which resentment, detraction, and malice conceal themselves, the owners of such consciences are the pest of all public society."

The Court dismissed three of their civil servants and one military servant, who had been principally concerned, and were parties to the memorial, leaving it to the Council to restore either or all, provided their conduct, in the intermediate period of the complaint, and the receipt of the Court's order, had proved entirely satisfactory to the Council.

Conduct of the
French.

The French were at this period busily engaged in fortifying Pondicherry, under the pretence of security from the country powers. Two of their transports had gone to the Cape for provisions, after having been at the Mauritius, full of men and warlike stores. They had also made a settlement on the eastern coast of Madagascar for the better accommodation of their troops.*

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BOMBAY.
Operations
against Hyder
on coast of
Malabar.

The armament sent from Bombay against Hyder's possessions on the Malabar coast, in the month of February, has already been noticed.† That expedition consisted of five hundred Europeans and eight hundred sepoy, under the command

* Letter from the Council, 26th June, 1769.

† *Vide* page 230.



mand of Major Gowin, the marine force being placed under Mr. Watson, to whom was added Mr. Sibbald, long resident at Onore, for the purpose of forming a committee to conduct any negotiation that might arise during the service.

Mangalore, Onore, and Fortified Island, had been successively captured in the month of March. On the 9th of May, a considerable body of Hyder's forces were reported to be within a short distance of Mangalore, commanded by the Nabob in person. They were shortly afterwards discovered posted on the hills, and bringing up their cannon with elephants and oxen; their number amounted to six or eight thousand foot, and four thousand horse. Captain Boyé, who commanded at the fort, was consulted, and joined with the Committee in opinion that the fort was untenable; that any attempt to attack the enemy in the field would be fruitless and unsuccessful, and that measures should, therefore, be concerted for withdrawing the troops. Arrangements were accordingly made for that purpose; but from great mismanagement in bringing up the boats, and the the irregularity and precipitancy with which the troops advanced to embark, one lieutenant, two ensigns, eighty-four Europeans, and one hundred and sixty-two sepoy, were either killed or fell into the hands of the enemy.

The Council considered the whole transaction to call for strict investigation. They ordered a general

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BOMBAY.

Company's
troops abandon
Mangalore.



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Several officers
dismissed.

general court-martial to assemble in November, for the trial of the officers, who had given their opinion to the council of war assembled at Mangalore that the place should be evacuated, and also for the irregular and disgraceful manner of conducting the evacuation, in leaving the sick and wounded to the mercy of the enemy. The finding of the Court led to the dismissal of several of the officers from the service.

Treaty with
Hyder and
Presidency of
Bombay.

The treaty concluded with Hyder, by the Council at Madras, was not deemed conclusive as regarded Bombay. A vakeel reached the latter Presidency from Hyder, on the 3d November, desiring that two members of the Board might be appointed to treat with him: Messrs. Church and Sibbald were accordingly nominated for that purpose. After protracted negotiations, a treaty was agreed upon, in the month of August, consisting of thirteen articles. The Company were allowed to build a fort at Onore, and to have the sole right of purchasing pepper in the Nabob's dominions. The amount, or as much of it as the Company chose, was to be made good in guns, muskets, saltpetre, lead, and gunpowder, and the balance in ready money; the Company were to export from Mangalore what rice they might want; to cut and purchase timber at Onore, and to be exempt from anchorage-dues; the Nabob was not to assist the enemies of the English, nor the English the enemies of the Nabob.

The



The Court disapproved of the article of the treaty, which related to the supply of warlike stores to Hyder; as it not only enabled him to strengthen his own power, but led to the belief that Mhaderao, with whom the Court were anxious to preserve a strict neutrality, might take umbrage at the condition, which permitted Hyder to add to his military means.

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CHAPTER VI.

1765-69.

Attention of
Parliament
directed to the
Company's
affairs.

To preserve a correct narrative of the proceedings of Parliament, in connection with those of the Company and of their governments abroad, reference must now be had to the acts of the Legislature, immediately following the acquisition of the Dewanny in 1765.*

Intelligence of that event reached the General Court during its meeting on the 18th June 1766. After the despatches had been read, a motion was made to increase the dividend from 6 to 8 per cent. The Court of Directors were opposed to the motion; they represented that, although the advantage of the new acquisition was undoubtedly important, yet the expenses incurred in the extended military operations that had been carried on, had entailed on the Company a large and heavy expense, and they recommended, that before any increase was made on the ground of the supposed enlarged profits, they should first discharge their incumbrances. The unanimous opinion of the Directors led to the withdrawal of the motion at that meeting, but a similar proposition was

* *Vide* page 146.



was renewed and carried on the 26th September, notwithstanding a report from the Directors to the Proprietors strongly urged the prudence of abstaining from the measure. On the following day the House of Commons called for a copy of the proceedings. At this time a negociation was pending with His Majesty's Government for a general arrangement of the Company's affairs. Parliament determined, before entering upon the more extended subject, to pass a law forthwith for regulating the dividend. The bill brought in provided against the declaration of a dividend but by the ballot, and that seven days' notice should be given before such ballot took place. In May 1767, the Proprietors determined to petition against the bill; the Court of Directors were strongly opposed to this course, whereupon the General Court demanded a ballot to decide the question, and that it should take place instanter. The votes were accordingly taken between the hours of eight and eleven in the evening, the majority being in favour of the petition against the bill for regulating the dividend. So far however from the Proprietors obtaining their object, the House of Commons called for a copy of their further proceedings, and passed two Acts, the one prescribing the mode in which a declaration of dividend should be made; the other limiting the power of voting at the ballot to Proprietors who should have had their stock six months, and also providing

1766.

1767.



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providing that no ballot, on any question, should be begun within a less space of time than eight hours after the adjournment of the General Court in which the question might be proposed, and that in no case should the ballot commence at a later hour than twelve at noon, nor close earlier than six in the afternoon.*

The regulation regarding the qualification of a proprietor to vote arose out of the mischievous practice which had prevailed of splitting large quantities of stock into sums of £500, (the then only qualification) by which separate and temporary conveyances were made. Thus dividends were declared, Directors elected, and important questions regarding India decided, under the existence of a practice subversive of every principle upon which the General Court was constituted, and which, if continued, would have left the permanent interest of the Company liable to be sacrificed to the partial and interested views of the few and perhaps temporary proprietors.

These legislative measures were followed by further and more important proceedings regarding the Company.

In the month of September the Court of Directors received an intimation from the first Lord of the Treasury that it was most probable the Company's affairs would engage the attention of Parliament

* Act 7 Geo. 3, cap. 48 and 49.



1767.

liament in the ensuing session. A committee was accordingly appointed in November, who called for the Company's charters, their treaties with and grants from the country powers, together with all their letters from their servants and agents in India, and also a statement of their revenues. Lengthened discussions took place—the question of the right of the Crown to the territories acquired by the Company was felt to be of too much importance to be lightly touched upon, and the Minister* declared fully against the trial of such a right in the House of Commons.

The Company having petitioned Parliament, and submitted proposals for an agreement, the same were acceded to, an Act being passed by which the Company were to pay £400,000 a-year to the public, and to export a given value of British produce.†

1769.

This agreement was renewed in 1769 for the term of five years.‡ At that period a general state of the Company's affairs; the contents of the dispatches received from the three Presidencies, which announced the deputation to Shuja Dowla, in Bengal; the prosecution of the war on the coast against Hyder, and the mission of Mr. Brome from Bombay to Poonah, were communicated to the Proprietors. They were also acquainted with, and fully

* Lord North.

† 7 Geo. 3, cap. 57.

‡ 9 Geo. 3, cap. 24.



1769.

fully concurred in, the determination adopted by the Directors, to send out a special commission, composed of three gentlemen of ability and experience (Henry Vansittart, Luke Sraffton, and Francis Forde, Esqrs.), to superintend all the presidencies and settlements, with full power to correct all abuses, and to dismiss or suspend such servants as might appear to have been concerned in such proceedings. They also resolved, that the Directors should apply to the Crown for naval aid in India.

Government propose to arm the King's naval officer with powers of a plenipotentiary.

Application was accordingly made to His Majesty's Government, but they were not disposed to grant a naval force, unless its commander was invested with powers, as plenipotentiary, for treating with Hyder Ally, the Mahrattas, &c. The Company were averse to arming him with such powers. Government were still of opinion that they should be conceded; but subsequently suggested that they might be confined to his having a voice on all questions connected with peace and war. The objections of the Directors and Proprietors to this modification not being removed, it was urged by Government, that the commission proposed to be sent out by the Company was illegal; and, moreover, that his Majesty could not consent to permit his forces to be subject to possible employment, contrary to the engagement by treaty, to acknowledge the legal titles of the Soubah of the Deccan and Nabob of the Carnatic.

Lord



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Lord Weymouth, who conveyed such intimation to the Directors, desired that the sense of the General Court should be taken upon it. On the 15th of August, the day appointed for the General Court, another letter was read from his Lordship, in which he recapitulated the object contemplated in his former communication, and concluded by stating that, "The difficulty of a sole plenipotentiary, if ever it existed, is removed: the Crown does not desire to interfere with the powers of the commission; wants no authority over your servants, nor any direction or inspection of your commercial affairs; disclaims even a recommendation of any person to be employed in it; in short, only wishes to be enabled to assist you effectually; and, in order to that, finds it necessary to have a share in the deliberations and resolutions of the Company, merely with regard to the two objects of peace and war, when his Majesty's forces are to be employed."

The proposed commission was declared by the Attorney-general and the Company's counsel to be free from any legal objections. The question of giving a voice to the naval commander-in-chief, in discussions as to peace and war, was considered in successive General Courts, and finally rejected on the 13th of September.

Sir John Lindsay was nominated commander-in-chief of the King's ships in India; he was likewise appointed by the Company to take the com-

Sir John Lindsay appointed to command King's ships in India.



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mand of all their vessels of war in the Indian seas, and to treat and settle matters in the Persian Gulf. The commissioners were permitted to embark on board his Majesty's frigate *Aurora*. Although no official intimation was received of any King's ship being ordered to India, it appears that two frigates, of which the *Anson* was one, were dispatched for that station.

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The *Stag*, ship of war, reached Anjengo, with Sir John Lindsay, in February, the *Aurora*, with the commissioners, had left the Cape in December preceding, but no tidings having been received of her in India in the month of September, the Council apprehended that some fatal accident had befallen her.* They, therefore, determined to despatch the *Lapwing* to England in September, by which conveyance they announced to the Court that, in consequence of the non-arrival of the commissioners, they had resolved to carry into effect the Court's orders of June, 1769, on the subject of the Dewanny revenue.

✓ Revenue system opened.

The Select Committee contended, that the power of acting was vested in them; but the Council at large considered that, as the Court's orders

* No intelligence was received of the *Aurora*, or her passengers, after quitting England. In March 1772, a motion was made in the House of Commons for a new writ for Reading in the room of Mr. Vansittart. The house refused to grant this writ, several cases being cited where members having been absent four years had returned.



orders were directed to the Supervisors, and not to the Board or the Select Committee, if they were to be taken up, it should be by the President and Council at large. Councils of Revenue were accordingly appointed at Moorshedabad and Patna. Their instructions were framed in conformity with the Court's orders of June, 1769, and may be considered as the introduction of the Company's revenue system. The Court observed :—

“We have attended to the several informations and proceedings on the subject of the revenues ; and from the result of our observations, we see reason to flatter ourselves that, with care and industry, great improvements may be made in the Dewannee collections. We find the revenues of the Calcutta lands, as well as of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, have been considerably augmented : and this increase gives us a sensible pleasure, because we perceive the number of inhabitants has increased at the same time, which we regard as a proof that they have found in those provinces a better security of their property, and relief from oppressions ; and it is with particular satisfaction we can attribute these advantages to their being more immediately under the Company's management, and under the constant and minute direction of our covenanted servants. The like abuses, which have been corrected in these districts, are still severely felt through all the provinces of Bengal and Bahar, where the

Court's orders
as to the revenue
management.



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BENGAL.

numerous tribes of Foujedars, Aumils, Sirdars, &c. practise all the various modes of oppression, which have been in use so long as the Moorish government has subsisted. To correct abuses of so long a growth will require much time and industry, and, above all, a patient and moderate exertion of the powers vested in us by the grant of the Dewannee : for we do not mean, by any violent and sudden reform, to change the constitution, but to remove the evil by degrees, by reducing that immense number of idle sycophants, who, for their own emolument and that of their principals, are placed between the tenant and the public treasury, and of which every one must get his share of plunder, the whole mass of which must amount to a most enormous sum.

“Our intention is to proceed in this work, without taking off from any of those profits and emoluments which have usually accrued to the Zemindars, who have inherited lands from their ancestors, much less to add any thing to the rents to be collected from the tenants ; on the contrary, we mean to better the condition, both of the one and the other, by relieving them from many oppressions which they now labour under.

“But a plan of reformation of so extensive a nature cannot be effected by one man ; it must be the constant attention of many ; and for this purpose we have resolved to establish a committee
of



of some of our ablest servants, for the management of the Dewannee revenues, at Muxadavad for the Bengal province, and at Patna for that of Bahar.

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“The gentlemen to be so appointed shall be comptrollers for the management of the Dewannee revenues under your direction, and they are to have so many other of our junior covenanted servants for assistants, as from time to time may be found necessary to be sent into the several provinces, to correct abuses and maintain the intended reformation.

“The object of this council must be, first, to inform themselves of the real state of the collections in every part: that is to say, what rents are at this time actually paid by the tenants, and what was paid formerly; what is the nature of the cultivation, and what the chief produce of each district, and whether, in that respect, there seems a prospect of improvement. They are next to inform themselves of the amount of the charges of collection for some years past, in as particular a manner as possible; and you are then to judge how many of the Aumils and other officers, among whom those immense sums have been divided, may be spared. This saving, as far as it can reasonably be carried, at the same time that it will be a profit to the Company in point of revenue, will likewise be a relief to the tenant: for it cannot be doubted but that these numerous instruments



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instruments of power lay the inhabitants under contribution in various secret ways, over and above what appears upon the face of the accounts.

“In this reformation, you are to proceed with a moderate, steady, and persevering spirit of inquiry, looking rather to the prevention of frauds for the future, than the punishment of those offences which have already passed, and which, if not justified, are at least much palliated, by the immemorial custom of the Moorish government.

“The councils so to be appointed at Moorshe-dabad and Patna are to have the control of all the business relating to the revenue; but Mahmud Reza Cawn, or some other principal person of the country, must be appointed Naib Dewan for the Bengal province (that is, the Company’s deputy), and all the business must be carried on through the Naib, and under his seal and signing; and, in like manner, Shitab Roy, or some other principal person, at Patna, for the Bahar provinces.

“The Council of Revenue are to sit daily, or as often as may be necessary for the most minute attention to this important branch of business. The Naib is to give his advice and opinion of the measures necessary to be taken, the officers and collectors requisite to be sent to the different districts, and the orders and powers to be given them; but the council are to consider and determine the whole, and no appointments are to be made, nor the Naib’s seal put to any orders, with-

out



out their approbation ; and copies of all such orders and appointments are to be entered upon their diary, or a book apart, and to be transmitted regularly to England.

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“ We have said, in a former part of this letter, that we have no view to prejudice the rights of the Zemindars, who hold certain districts by inheritance ; but when any of these die without heirs, the lands are to be let for a term of years, and upon such conditions as may encourage improvements in the cultivation. In like manner, where lands lie waste, you should propose terms for settling them, giving the undertakers every advantage possible, to enable them to proceed in a work so beneficial to the community in general, and yielding to the Company, in process of time, a certain increase of revenue.

“ Before we close this subject, we cannot help remarking, that there seems to us to be great danger and impropriety, in having the powers of revenue and the powers of justice in one and the same person, which seems to be the case in the officers of the Foujedary, and, as we apprehend, in most other of the public offices of the several districts. This will be an object worthy of further inquiry ; and if the case is as it appears to us, those powers should be separated and distinct lines drawn.”

Separation of
judicial and
revenue
powers.

These instructions, far from evincing a spirit of rapacity, appear to have been framed with an
anxious



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anxious desire to acquire the fullest information on the state of the revenue, and to act under it with the utmost consideration towards the natives : most especially in separating the executive and legislative power which had been vested in the hands of one individual.

Mahrattas and
Jauts.

The Mahrattas had constrained the chiefs of the Jauts to come to a settlement, by paying sixty-five lacs at given periods, besides an annual tribute of fifteen lacs, or a cession of lands to that value.* They then advanced and took possession of Etawah. Two of their detachments entered the province of Corah, seized the town of Bettoor, and laid claim to part of the Vizier's dominions, waving, for the moment, the conquest of Delhi.

Measures of
Council.

These aggressions constrained the Council to depart from the principle which they had adopted of non-interference. The dominions guaranteed to the King and Vizier had been attacked or laid claim to by the Company's most formidable enemies. In accordance, therefore, with the treaty, and without waiting for a requisition, the Council determined to give immediate assistance; they felt that delay would only increase the danger, and whatever aid ought to be extended, would prove infinitely more efficacious if promptly afforded. They felt that energetic

* *Vide* page 205.



getic measures on the part of the Company might infuse some degree of vigour into the timid councils of the King, and prevent the Vizier taking advantage of any of the events which frequently arise during a period of confusion, favouring the views of a man of enterprizing and ambitious spirit. The security of the Company's possessions was also involved in the determination. The force at Dinagepore was accordingly ordered to march to the banks of the Caramnassa, and the garrison at Allahabad to be reinforced, to ensure the safety of that fortress, in case of sudden attack during the absence of two of the King's battalions, which had marched from thence, at the requisition of his Majesty.

In the month of February, the Mahrattas raised the blockade of Furruckabad, and proceeded in separate bodies, with great rapidity, towards Delhi, of which city they took possession, together with several branches of the royal family. It appeared from incontestable proofs, that this step was adopted not only with the concurrence, but actually under the advice and recommendation, of the King himself, his Majesty subsequently admitting that he was prompted to suggest that course, in order to prevent their proclaiming the Shah-zada in his room. It soon became evident that the King's intention was to join the Mahrattas, in the hope that he should effect his long-cherished object of gaining his capital

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Mahrattas take
Delhi.

Project of the
King.



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capital and being seated on the throne of his ancestors. It was apparent, that he would rather see his capital in the hands of the Mahrattas, than in those of either Zabta Cawn, son of Nujib-ud Dowla, or his Vizier. The latter, in communication with Sir Robert Barker, proposed that the Company's forces, with those of the King, and his own, should march without delay, and join the Rohillas and Patans, for the purpose of placing the King on the throne at Delhi. The Select Committee, although satisfied that the proposition could never be effected, concurred in it rather than appear to weaken the ties between the Company, the King, and the Vizier, as well as to preserve the King from falling into the hands of the Mahrattas. His Majesty at first acquiesced in the plan, but abandoned it shortly afterwards, and resolved to throw himself into the hands of the enemy. Sir Robert Barker endeavoured to dissuade his Majesty from pursuing such a step, and to induce him to join in the spirited measures apparently adopted by his Vizier for his restoration. It was likewise proposed, that he should send forward the royal standard, accompanied by one of the young princes, rather than undertake the project himself, until affairs appeared more favourable.

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The King, resolutely bent on carrying into effect his plan of proceeding to Delhi, disregarded all the arguments urged by Sir Robert Barker, who



who had pointed out to him the consequences which would probably ensue; and quitted Allahabad on the 15th April, for the purpose of joining the Mahrattas.

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BENGAL.

His Majesty's separation from the Company appeared unavoidable. Any act on the part of the Council, to restrain him, would have induced the Mahrattas to place the Shah-zada on the throne, and might also have irritated the King against the British interests. The Council, therefore, resolved, as a mark of gratitude and respect, that Sir Robert Barker should attend him to the frontier of his province, and pay him every mark of attention. The King felt very sensibly this demonstration, and, at his own request, was permitted to take with him the four three-pounder field-pieces attached to his troops.

King joins the
Mahrattas.

The Vizier, unable to effect any change in the mind of the King, felt it to be his duty to aid him, both with money and troops, in order to promote a measure which he could not prevent; but he, at the same time, manifested a due regard to his own interests: it being discovered that, in consideration of this aid, the King was to deliver over to him the fortress of Allahabad. The negotiation for this object had been conducted so secretly, that the Council were not aware of it, until they received intelligence of the terms on which the cession had been made. This act, on the part of the King, was totally at variance with his professions



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BENGAL.

Court's views.

sions towards the Company, and, at the same time, evinced the determination of the Vizier to avail himself of every opportunity for strengthening his own power. The Council instructed Sir Robert Barker to point out these facts to his Majesty, and to endeavour to obtain the almost impregnable fort of Chunagur for the Company, as a counterpoise to the cession made to the Vizier. The possession of this fortress, and the King's residence in the Lower Provinces, had been strongly urged on the attention of the Council by the Court in 1771 : *—“ These, and such further arguments as shall appear most conducive to the end, will, we hope, prevail on the King to establish his residence at Rajah-mul, or Mongheer, or such other place, with the provinces, as may be thought most proper for the purpose, and most likely to preserve to us that influence which is so essential to the Company's welfare.

“ The political interests of the Company make us no less solicitous to obtain from Shuja Dowla an exchange of the territories of Bulwunt Sing, for the provinces of Khorah and Allahabad, now held for the King, since by such an exchange our frontiers would be more easily defended, a greater influence would be preserved by us over the neighbouring powers, and we might possibly be relieved from the necessity of keeping up so large
and

* Letter to Bengal, 10th April 1771.



and expensive a military establishment as we have at present in Bengal.

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“ We are not insensible to the difficulties which may oppose your negotiations on this subject. These, however, we persuade ourselves, may, in time, be overcome, by a proper attention on the part of our servants, and by their availing themselves of the circumstances which may occur, either in the situation, desires, projects, temper, or wants of this prince; and we recommend to you, to lay hold of every opportunity which may offer for accomplishing, by a friendly negotiation, so desirable an end.

“ There is another object, of the most essential consequence, which calls for the utmost exertion of your abilities; we mean, the obtaining from Shuja Dowla the absolute cession to us of the fort of Chunagur.

“ As we have experienced the strength of this fortress, and are sensible of the vast importance the possession of it would be to the Company, you must use your utmost endeavours to acquire, by friendly means, what could not be retained without violence; we, therefore, enjoin you not to leave unessayed any effort which prudence can suggest, for obtaining from Shuja Dowla, the cession of Chunagur Fort. But as our view is to acquire it by treaty, not by force, and considering also the situation, power, and influence of this Soubah, your negotiations must be conducted with the
greatest



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greatest caution and delicacy ; and you must strive, by every fair and honourable means, to strengthen his friendship and engage his confidence ; nevertheless, you must not abate of your attention to all his motions, nor forego any opportunity to impress him with an opinion of our activity and power.

“ And here we take occasion to observe, that should we at any time obtain from him the cession of this fortress, you must not fail to keep in it a strong garrison of Europeans, under the command of an able and experienced officer, which possession would enable you to do ; since the security, which our possessions would thereby receive, would admit of a reduction in our other garrisons.

“ Sensible of the difficulties which opposed your endeavours to obtain the removal of M. Gentil from the court and councils of Shuja Dowla, we approve of the delicacy with which you have acted towards the Vizier, in your requisitions on this subject ; but, as we cannot see a person of the abilities of M. Gentil (a natural enemy of this nation, as well as of the Company) continuing in possession of a power to promote the designs of France, and not be alarmed for the consequences of his influence at the Soubah's Court, you must, therefore, lay hold of the first favourable opportunity to renew your request to Shuja Dowla, to remove M. Gentil from his service.”

The

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The King left in the hands of the Council two of the young princes, as the best pledge of his faith, and proceeded by slow marches through the Corah province. Sir Robert Barker attended him to within seven coss of its boundary, and on the 30th June had his final audience of leave. His Majesty gave the strongest assurances of friendship for the English nation, and of the grateful sense he entertained of the support and assistance they had at all times afforded him. The Council entreated his Majesty to be convinced of the attachment which they felt towards him, and of the readiness with which the Company would receive and protect him, should any reverse of fortune compel him once more to return to his provinces.*

The Vizier had formed an alliance with the Rohilla chief, Hafiz Rhamet, to guard against the Mahrattas, who threatened to deprive him of the Vizerat, unless he joined the King's standard at Shahjehanabad,† where his Majesty arrived on the 6th January, 1772. He had also encouraged Frenchmen to enter into his service: the model of a new fort, intended to be erected by him, having been prepared in a masterly manner by a French engineer. These steps were not to be considered as manifesting any doubt on his part of the sincerity of the English feeling towards

him,

* Letter, 31st August, 1771.

† Delhi.



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him, but as indicating an apprehension of the Mahratta power, which was, in some measure, participated in by the Council.

Carnatic liable
to irruptions.

The Council at Madras advised the Court, that Mhaderao, the Mahratta chief, had expressed great dissatisfaction at the conclusion of the treaty with Hyder,* in August, 1769, as he had meditated an attack on the Mysore country, or on the Carnatic, in conjunction with Janojee, with whom he had come to terms. "Thus situated, amidst powers whose ambition will never suffer them to remain quiet, and whose interests lead them to disturb the peace of their neighbours, whenever their interest incites them to do so, it may easily be conceived how liable to interruption the peace in the Nabob's possessions must be." The Council stated that they expected to be pressed by each party for aid; but as the Court had drawn the line "which appeared most eligible," they determined to pursue the course pointed out, as far as possible.

Hyder seeks
aid against the
Mahrattas.

Hyder, in the month of December, urged the Council to assist him against the Mahrattas, and referred to the treaty of 1769 as the ground for such demand. The Council evaded compliance, asserting that they could not be called upon to assist him, when it appeared that he was the aggressor—his refusal of the *chout* being cited in
proof

* *Vide* page 266.



proof that such was the case. The inconvenience of the treaty now forcibly pressed itself upon the Council. They were glad to avail themselves of any plea, to avoid being involved in fresh expense and hostilities, whether as principals or allies, being in daily expectation of the arrival of the Supervisors, to whose decision they desired to leave the matter.

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The Mahrattas entered Mysore in February. Hyder endeavoured to take post and secure the passes, to prevent their penetrating into the Bid-denore country. At this juncture, a vakeel arrived from Mhaderao, and expressed to the Council a strong desire, on the part of his master, to cement the friendship between him and the Company, referring, at the same time, to the Nabob of Arcot with regard to other points. These proceedings of Mhaderao grew out of the mission of Mr. Brome to Poonah, already noticed.* The Council felt embarrassed by the Mahratta chief referring to this circumstance. The mission of Mr. Brome had been resolved upon by the Council as a last resource, in the hope that some fortuitous event would set it aside. Such proved to be the case, as the treaty with the Mahrattas, the Nizam, and others, was concluded before the propositions, with which Mr. Brome was entrusted, were made known. Still, the object of the mission became sufficiently

Mahrattas
enter Mysore.* *Vide* page 241.



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sufficiently public to authorize Mhaderao to claim, upon the ground of reciprocity, equal consideration at the hands of the Council. The latter felt themselves bound by the Court's orders, and admitted that, if it were practicable for them to remain passive spectators, and permit the native powers to exhaust each other, it was the most prudent course. They knew the Mahratta to be the most dangerous power; and that even the united forces of the Company and of Hyder would not reduce them, whilst it might lead to their making a conquest of the whole of Mysore, and thus establish, at the door of the Company's possessions, a more powerful foe than even Hyder. On the other hand, were they to join Hyder, they were aware that a more advantageous offer from his enemies would draw him off the next day.

Nabob desires to join Mahrattas; supported by Sir John Lindsay.

The Nabob of Arcot was anxious to act with the Mahrattas. In this critical situation, the Council, desirous to avoid taking any part, assured Hyder's vakeel, that if they could not act with him, they would not act against him. The Soubah advanced to the banks of the Kistna, and there waited to see which party prevailed.

The non-arrival of the Supervisors, and the circumstances connected with the debts of the Nabob of the Carnatic, increased the difficulties of the Council, the Nabob's private creditors infusing into his mind an idea that they had power and influence to overrule the Court of Directors at home.

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home. Their embarrassments were enhanced by the conduct of Sir John Lindsay, who, having arrived from Bombay, assumed, under what he considered to be plenipotentiary powers, a right to inquire into the conduct of the late war, and to hold direct communication with the Nabob. By this proceeding, the Council were not only placed at direct variance with his highness, but colour was given to the idea that there was a superior authority to the Company, to whom the Nabob could resort, as occasion or caprice might dispose him. Sir John Lindsay went so far as to require the Council to attend him when he proceeded to deliver the King's letter to the Nabob : he also desired them to furnish him with such papers and documents of the Company as he might see fit.

The Council determined to support the authority of government, and not to "degrade themselves" by being mere attendants on a functionary, of whose powers they were not satisfied. They felt that there was no medium. They observed, "we either must have delivered to him our papers and records, or not;—we must either have rendered him an account of our transactions, or not;—we must have admitted him to have shared in our deliberations, or not. There appeared to be no room for hesitation. We were charged with the Company's affairs—we had no instructions from our constituents. Their rights were attacked : we

Difference with
Sir John
Lindsay.



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must either have supported, or basely surrendered them. Our fortunes may be at stake in the issue; but were our lives at equal hazard, we should, without a moment's hesitation, have taken the part we have taken. The die is cast; we must stand the issue." Such were the terms in which the Council announced their having declined to obey the unauthorized requisitions of Sir John Lindsay.

A mission more pregnant with danger to the Company's interests on the coast could not have been well devised.

Conduct of
Court as to Sir
John Lindsay.

The advices from Madras, which announced these differences with Sir John Lindsay, reached the Court of Directors, by the *Lapwing*, on the 22d of March 1771. On the 8th of April, they addressed the following letter to the Earl of Rochford, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State:

Letter from
Court to his
Majesty's
Minister, as to
Sir John
Lindsay.

"The late advices from India, brought by the *Lapwing*, are of so very interesting and alarming a nature, that we think ourselves indispensably obliged to lay the purport of them before his Majesty's Ministers, together with our sentiments on the present state of the East-India Company's affairs upon the coast of Coromandel, produced as we have reason to apprehend, from the exertion of powers which, till within a few days past, we could not have the least reason to conceive were ever delegated to Sir John Lindsay, in any quality he holds from his Majesty in the East-Indies.

Sir John Lindsay, my Lord, in express contradiction to the assurance given to the Company by his Majesty's Secretary of State, your Lordship's predecessor in office, has,
under



under his hand, insisted that he has his Majesty's authority and plenipotentiary powers from the Crown, to execute any treaty with the *Princes of the country*, which may be judged necessary to preserve peace *in India*.

He has also, in like manner, insisted that his Majesty has been pleased to appoint him his minister, and to invest him with *plenipotentiary powers* to treat with the Princes of India. The first intelligence this Company received of their existence, was communicated to them by their Presidency of Madras, by advices which arrived so late as the 22d ultimo. If they appear alarming now, well might they be thought in the utmost degree perplexing and distressful to the Company's servants there, who are told by Sir John Lindsay, that he is commanded by the King to apply to the Governor and Council of that settlement for a full and succinct account of all their transactions with the Nabob since the Treaty of Paris (concluded near eight years before this requisition); that it is his Majesty's pleasure he should enquire, with the utmost care, into the causes of the late war with the Soubah of the Deccan and Hyder Ally, and the reason of its unfortunate consequences; and he, therefore, makes no doubt but they will, with the utmost alacrity, put him in possession of the original papers, or authenticated copies *of all their transactions* since the said Definitive Treaty, in order to enable him to render a faithful account thereof to the King; and that the wisdom of Government may co-operate with the prudence of the Company, to establish a lasting peace in India.

We beg leave to express our hopes, that our servants, in the situation and circumstances they found themselves, will stand fully excused in your Lordship's sight, as they do in ours, for not considering themselves warranted to comply with such a demand. At the same time, we must beg leave seriously to affirm, that the *promulgation* of the plenipotentiary powers,

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powers, claimed by Sir John Lindsay, must necessarily end in the total loss of authority and consequence to the Company in India, where all princes being despotic, they will never be brought to believe, that when the King of England delegates his power to a minister, the representatives of the East-India Company are entitled to any confidence, regard, or attention. Such, in truth, my Lord, are the consequences already, in no small degree, felt by this Company.

The Governor and Council of Madras, in their letters, affirm, that since the arrival of Sir John Lindsay, and the operation of his extraordinary powers, their influence is greatly diminished, and that the most fatal consequences to the Company are to be apprehended. It is our duty, as representatives of the East-India Company, concurring with our Presidency abroad in their sentiments, to lay before your Lordship our apprehensions also, that unless some speedy remedy be applied, the ruin of the Company, from the loss of their consequence, influence, and credit, will infallibly ensue."

Lord Rochford's reply was dated St. James's, 20th April 1771:

"In answer to your letter of the 8th instant, I must inform you, that the repeated complaints made by the Company of the mismanagement and disobedience of their servants in India, which caused them to desire from the Legislature more extensive powers for their coercion, and induced them to send out Supervisors invested with the highest authority, first suggested to his Majesty the expediency of giving his commission to a person of confidence, to procure the fullest information on the spot, of the manner in which affairs had been conducted in that country; the thorough knowledge of which the King could not but consider as a principal
national



national concern, as well as of the greatest consequence to the interest of the Company. His Majesty was the more called upon, in this case, as his own honour, pledged for the performance of the engagements entered into by him in the last Definitive Treaty, was in the hands of the Company's servants carrying on the government in India.

His Majesty has reason to apprehend, that the Governor and Council of Madras gave themselves the first rise to the opinion of a contest between the King and the Company, by their improper reception of Sir John Lindsay, and their refusal to do the usual honours to the delivery of his Majesty's letter and presents; which opinion, if it should at first starting be worked up by the ignorance of the people of that country, and their ideas of despotism, into prejudices hurtful to the consequence and influence of the Company, cannot but be checked in a short time, by the positive instructions given to Sir John Lindsay to avoid, as far as possible, even the appearance of any dispute with the Company, which might produce the most unfortunate consequences in the present state of affairs.

The King, in his last letter to the Nabob, has been pleased to express his confidence in the Company, and his desire to connect them inseparably with that prince; and Sir Robert Harland, whom his Majesty has appointed to succeed to the commission of Sir John Lindsay, besides the particular orders given him to promote, as far as possible, a strict union between the Nabob and the servants of the Company, and to remove every suspicion of the Company's lying under the King's displeasure, received instructions to make the support of their importance and honour in the eyes of all the powers in India, a principal point of his attention.

I have received his Majesty's commands to repeat those instructions, and to guard against any mistake of the real extent

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extent and meaning of the powers given Sir Robert Harland, by conveying to him such an explanation of them as will leave no reason of apprehension to the Company; but on the contrary, will, whenever they shall be exerted, be a convincing proof of his Majesty's paternal care and regard for their interests, by shewing them to be the object of his protection and support."

Reasons for
inserting pro-
ceedings at
length.

It may be remarked, that a reference to matters of so remote a date might have been spared, as they have long ceased to possess the interest which belonged to them when the events occurred. The same remark will apply with equal force to all historical records. In tracing the chain of events which took place in the extension of our power in India, it cannot be uninteresting to many who have been associated in the administration of the affairs of that empire, to learn the difficulties with which the home authorities had to contend, and the course which they followed, in maintaining their rights, and in meeting those difficulties, before they became subject to the legislative control which was engrafted on their chartered privileges; and although that control circumscribed their powers, it so identified the interests of the State with those of the Company, that the latter were relieved from a recurrence of the embarrassments which they had experienced in early times from the want of aid in most critical and trying junctures.

Council dis-
pute powers of
General Coote.

The Council had injudiciously involved them-
selves in a dispute with Major-General Eyre Coote,
who



who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the Company's forces, by the Court of Directors. A difference of opinion arose, as to the terms in which the General was to be announced in orders to the army, on assuming the command.

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The Council proposed that the same terms should be used as on the occasion of General Lawrence's appointment: to this General Coote objected. The Council, impressed with the necessity of preserving the supremacy of the civil power, suggested, in order to obviate the greater evil, that in lieu of a general order being published, letters should be addressed to all the commanding officers, to make their returns to General Coote. The General would not consent to this; and he determined to remain in a private capacity, until he received the opinion of the Councils at the other presidencies.

As the remodelling the military establishment required that no time should be lost, Brigadier-General Smith was requested by the Council to take the command of the troops on the coast; but believing that General Coote intended very shortly to proceed to Bengal, he suggested that the order might be deferred until his departure. General Coote did not remain in India: he quitted Madras for Bombay, from whence he proceeded to Busso-rah, and thence to England *via* Paris. The Court condemned, in strong terms, the conduct of the Council towards General Coote, who was re-
quested

General Coote
returns to
England.



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Rajah of Tanjore, and the Nabob of Arcot's claims on him.

quested to hold himself in readiness to return to India.

The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore had been animadverted upon by the Court of Directors, in consequence of his backwardness in joining the Company's forces with his horse, during the hostilities with Hyder, and, that when they did join, they had been of little or no use. The Rajah had received protection at the hands of the Company, and his country had enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity; it was, therefore, considered unreasonable, that he should withhold all contribution towards the preservation of his possessions, which were very fruitful, affording abundant means for supplying the troops engaged in the defence of the Carnatic, an object in which he was deeply interested.* The Nabob had made strong representations to the Council, in support of his claims on the Rajah of Travancore, and the Court of Directors had enjoined the Council to give the Nabob every assistance, consistent with justice, in prosecuting them.

Correspondence of Hyder with Tanjore.

The Council were at this time apprised that a correspondence had been carried on between Hyder and the Rajah. The former had promised to obtain a remission of the *peshcush* due from the Rajah to the Nabob, in consideration of the assistance the Rajah had offered him. A communication

* Letter to Madras, 1769.



tion was stated to have been made to the Nabob's vakeel from Hyder that, although it was not the intention of the English to afford him any assistance, he should nevertheless use his endeavours to obtain it. There was also reason to believe that Hyder was in correspondence with M. Law at Pondicherry.

In this state of affairs, the Council addressed the Court in the following terms:—"We are surrounded with difficulties, which we cannot, dare not, venture to explain or even suggest; but should our apprehensions not be completely verified, by the failure in any one instance, the whole might seem the effect of prejudice. The views of the ministry, such as they appear to us—the secret transactions between the Nabob and Sir John Lindsay—the fluctuating state of the Company's affairs—the prepossession in favour of the Nabob, which he knows full well, and even more, we believe, from private than public assurances—all these create doubts which, in better times, in all our difficulties and all our dangers, we should oppose with resolution, firmness, and perseverance, were we even but sure of support from the Court of Directors. With respect to ourselves personally, we consider our fate as sealed by our transactions with Sir John Lindsay and with General Coote. We are right, or we are wrong: there is no medium. But in regard to the Company, permit us to recommend some stable form of govern-

ment

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Embarrass-
ments of the
Council.



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Court's views
as to the con-
duct of the
Council.

ment and system, in which you may confide, and which you will support ; for without a confidence, on the part of those whom you employ, that they will be supported, their measures never can have that firmness, spirit, and vigour, which are so essentially necessary to the prosperity of your affairs."

Before the answer of Lord Rochford to the Court's representation regarding Sir John Lindsay's conduct had been received by them, they addressed the Madras Council, approving of their conduct towards the Mahrattas and Hyder Ally. They expressed regret at the Nabob's differing in opinion with the Council, and trusted that they would find means to divert his mind from Mhaderao. They perceived with anxiety, that the affections of the Nabob, and his confidence in the Council, had been of late much weakened ; they wished the Council to deliberate on the steps to be taken, with coolness and impartiality, and once being resolved, to act with vigour and effect ; assuring them that being conscious of the purity of their intentions, they should receive the support of the Court.

In alluding to the war between Hyder Ally and the Mahrattas, the Court remarked, that the views of the Council were expressed in a strain of timidity and despondence, unsuited to the Company's real situation in India. They observed ; " Fear begets weakness in council, and irresolution in action.



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action. It is in a choice of difficulties, that greatness of mind finds an opportunity of distinguishing itself. Conscious of our own superiority and power in India, it seems to be our proper line of conduct to observe a steady and uniform neutrality, till such time as our own dignity and interest call upon us to interfere, and then a favourable moment should be seized." The Court did not perceive that the war carried the appearance of any immediate danger. They considered that the dissensions among the Indian powers could only serve to augment the influence of the Company, who, while they shewed their strength and kept it up, would be courted equally by all parties. The moment the Company adhered to any one party, they would make enemies of all the rest. It was the desire of the Court to fulfil, in the most scrupulous manner, all engagements with the Nabob; but viewing things in a more general light, it would certainly be of no consequence to the Company, who were masters of the Carnatic, provided it were kept out of the hands of their European rivals, the French.

They desired the Council to represent to the Nabob in the strongest, although in the most respectful terms, the injury he did himself, in endeavouring to create a difference between the King's and the Company's servants and in imagining a separation of interests, when, in the end, he would be convinced none could exist. Whatever trifling disputes



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disputes of form and ceremony might have arisen between them at the first, he would soon see that, in essentials, they must and would agree. The Company's connexion with the Nabob stood entirely on ancient friendship and reciprocal kindness: the Court wished to continue it on the same footing; but they observed, the Company could not be compelled to follow his projects when they appeared totally repugnant to our interests. So, on the other hand, the Nabob could not be forced into the Company's views, should they be disagreeable to him: all that was, therefore, left was to expostulate with him. He would determine for himself, and the Company for themselves. The dangers which threatened the Carnatic, from the Mahrattas, were more immediately the object of his concern than of the Company; and the joining Hyder Ally (even were it expedient), without the concurrence of the Nabob, would be a measure of perplexity, as it might lead to a situation where the different engagements of the Company clash, *viz.* that of supporting the Nabob by the Treaty of Paris, and of defending Hyder by the last treaty with him: engagements which it might also become impossible at the same time to fulfil.

With regard to Sir John Lindsay, the Court observed, that it did not become them to pronounce on his conduct, unacquainted as they were with the extent of his powers and the nature



ture of his instructions; but they had a right to judge of that of their own servants, and it was with pleasure they declared their perfect satisfaction in the general line of the Council's behaviour, and their acquiescence in every step they had taken for the support of their own dignity and the rights and privileges of the Company, which, the Court felt, "rested upon as high authority as the King's commission—Royal Charters, confirmed by repeated Acts of Parliament."

The Court, at the same time, expressed their persuasion, that the disagreements and disunion of councils, between the representative of the Crown and the servants of the Company, were altogether repugnant to his Majesty's gracious intentions. It was apparent from Lord Rochford's letter, that Sir John Lindsay had no authority to demand of the Council a succinct account of all their measures, or to be put in possession of the original papers relating to their transactions since the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris.*

Admiral Sir Robert Harland, who had been appointed to succeed Sir John Lindsay, with the same powers, and a more respectable naval force, was charged with instructions from the King, to avoid, on any occasion, the appearance of lessening the consequence of the Company in the eyes of the natives of India, and he received the strongest

* *Vide* page 294.



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strongest injunctions, to remove the then existing causes of disquiet and disunion.

At the time that these points were engaging the attention of the authorities in England, the Nabob of the Carnatic, supported by Sir John Lindsay, was urging the Council at Madras to join him in an alliance with the Mahrattas against Hyder.

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Council refuse
to join the
Nabob in an
alliance with
the Mahrattas.

The Council refused to concur in such a step, and dwelt upon the injury which arose to the Company's affairs, by such an interference as that exercised by Sir John Lindsay. "To give you," observed the Council, in writing to the Court, "a clear representation of the dangerous embarrassments through which we have been struggling to carry on your affairs, since the arrival of his Majesty's powers in this country, is a task far beyond our abilities: they are daily more and more oppressive to us. It has always been our opinion, that, with your authority, we had that of our Sovereign and nation delegated to us through you, for managing the important concerns of our country under this Presidency. It is upon the prevalence of this opinion in India that our influence and your interests are vitally founded. It was in the confidence of this opinion that your servants, exerting all their vigour, acquired such power and wealth for their country."

After offering some remarks, as to what might have been the objects and motives of his Majesty's Government



Government in sending Sir John Lindsay to India, the Council pointed out the striking opposition between that officer's political system when he first reached India, and that by which he was now governed. "At first he was the declared guardian of peace; now, he declares for hostile measures, and accuses us of a criminal inactivity. He would willingly lead us into war, to favour the Mahrattas and increase their power; and, not succeeding in that, he would drive us into immediate hostilities with Tanjore, before we are prepared to act with vigour and effect, even with the certainty of bringing down the Mahrattas in an hostile invasion on the Carnatic, and at the risk of tempting the Nizam to an attack upon the Northern Circars.

"Were we permitted to deliver our sentiments relative to the preservation of the national interests here, we should humbly offer it as an opinion that, if his Majesty will not be pleased to recall his servant and powers, and leave us uncontrolled, but accountable for our measures, there is a necessity that the forces we command be taken into the hands of the Crown, and transferred with plenary powers to the absolute direction of his Majesty's minister."

The erroneous impressions that had been created in the mind of the Nabob, received additional force from a matter which, under the existing circumstances, tended to lower the Presidency, and add to the importance of his Highness. A



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despatch reached the Council, announcing that his Majesty had been pleased to confer the dignity of Knight of the Bath on Sir John Lindsay and Major-General Coote, and that the insignia of the order had been sent to the Nabob, with full instructions for his investing the knights with the order.

Rajah of Tan-
jore.

The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore towards some of the Polygar chiefs, increased the points of difference between the Nabob and the Council. The Rajah had advanced, in the month of April, against the Marawar country, under pretence that some districts had been wrested from the Tanjore government. The claim to those districts was resisted by the Nabob, who contended that the Rajah was a tributary to the Circar of the Carnatic, and that he had no right to call the Polygars to account. The Council were satisfied of the impropriety of the Rajah's conduct; the President addressed a letter to him, pointing out the relation in which he stood towards the Nabob, and the surprise that had been occasioned by his proceeding to attack Moravee, a Polygar dependent upon the Trichinopoly country.

His proceed-
ings against
Polygars.

The Rajah stated in reply:—"If I suffer Moravee to take possession of my country, Nalcooty to take my elephants, and Tondaman to injure my country, it will be a dishonour to me among the people, to see such compulsions used by the Polygars. You are a protector of my government; notwith-



notwithstanding, you have not settled a single affair. I have finished the affairs relating to Moravee, and confirmed him in his business: the affair with Nalcooty remains to be finished, which I shall also finish."

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MADRAS.

It was ultimately settled, that recourse should be had to negotiation; and as the Tanjore vakeel did not possess authority to settle the disputes, the Nabob resolved to depute his eldest son, OMDUT-UL-OMRAH, to Trichinopoly. His mission was supported by the Council's despatching troops and stores for Trichinopoly, to be in readiness to act against Tanjore, should circumstances call for such a measure.

Nabob's son
proceeds
against Tan-
jore.

The Rajah refused submission. A force under General Smith accordingly marched from Trichinopoly, on the 13th September, and arrived before Vellum, eight miles south-west of Tanjore, on the 16th. On the morning of the 20th, a battery was opened against it, and at midnight the fort was evacuated. On the 23d, Tanjore was invested. On the 27th, at the moment the breach was reported practicable, a letter was received by General Smith, from Omdut-ul-Omrah, announcing terms of accommodation; and, on the 27th of October, a peace was concluded between the Nabob and the Rajah, without the intervention of the Company.*

The fort of Vellum was ceded to the Nabob,
who

* *Vide Printed Treaties.*



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who requested that the Council would place a garrison in it, in order to render it an effectual check on the Rajah's conduct. The Marawar and Nalcooty Polygars not having obeyed the requisition of the Nabob, to join with their forces in the operations against the Rajah, the Nabob urged the Council to call them to account.

Sir Robert Harland reaches Madras and delivers King's letter to Nabob.

Sir Robert Harland reached Madras, in command of a squadron of his Majesty's ships, on the 2d of September. He announced his arrival to the Council, whom he met assembled on the 13th, and informed them that he possessed full powers, as the King's plenipotentiary, to inquire into the observance of the eleventh article of the Treaty of Paris; and that he had a letter from his Majesty to the Nabob. The letter was delivered to his Highness by the Admiral, the troops in the garrison attending the ceremonial. On the 1st of October, having intimated to the Council his readiness to be of any use in the progress of their affairs, he quitted the roads, in order to avoid the approaching monsoon, and retired to Trincomalee, despatching a vessel to ascertain the state of the French force at the Mauritius, which was reported to be very considerable.

In the early part of December, there being reason to apprehend that the Mahrattas were advancing towards the Carnatic, the Council resolved to move the troops into a central position, that



that they might more effectually present a check to their incursions.

The Nabob being opposed to this measure, still pressed the Council to assist him, by joining with the Mahrattas against Hyder. The President had an interview with the Nabob, at which he pointed out his Highness's total want of means to defray the charge of such a proceeding, even were it sound in point of policy. Failing in inducing the Council to fall in with his views, the Nabob called in the aid of Sir Robert Harland, and stated to him the advantages which the Mahrattas had promised, in the event of his assisting them, in conjunction with the English, and the distress which would be occasioned to him should he not effect that object: adding, that he had been called upon to pay a considerable sum to the Company; that he had a load of debt; that his treasury was inadequate to meet all these demands; that an invasion of his territories would lead to the destruction of the Carnatic; and that he, therefore, appealed to, and claimed, the royal protection.

This proceeding led Sir Robert Harland to address the Council. He stated that, should a peace be refused to the Mahrattas, on the terms which they proposed, they threatened to destroy the whole of the Carnatic "with fire and sword," and they had a great army on the frontiers to carry their threats into execution. The Admiral was not backward in asserting and acting upon the

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Council decline to join the Nabob with the Mahrattas against Hyder.

Sir Robert Harland supports views of Nabob.



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the powers which he considered he possessed. He observed, that the peace of the Carnatic, the prosperity of the Company, the preservation of the British interests, and the permanency of their influence in India, appeared to him very proper objects for the attention of a "national plenipotentiary." "As it is possible I may think them of consequence enough to require a national alliance for their security, and as the particular interests of the United Company of Merchants will be a very material consideration, I am to demand of you, as their confidential servants, such lights as may direct my judgment, and particularly what are your reasons for refusing to acquiesce in what the Nabob thinks the only measure for the preservation of his country, and what appears to me to offer the only prospect of security, in the present circumstances, to the British interests in this part of India."* He, at the same time, transmitted to the Council a copy of his commission from the King.

Differences
between Coun-
cil and Sir
Robert Har-
land.

The Council felt that they could not communicate their transactions in the affairs of the Company, for the same reasons which had weighed with them in the case of Sir John Lindsay. They, therefore, determined to address two letters to the Admiral; the one in his character of plenipotentiary, declaring why they declined putting him in possession of what he had called for regarding

* Military Consultations, 1771.



garding the Company's transactions, observing at the same time, that it was above all things their most anxious desire to manifest their unfeigned allegiance and inviolable attachment to his Majesty's most sacred person and government; but that they could not render an account of their conduct to any one but a constitutional authority, such as the Parliament of Great Britain and the Courts of Civil Judicature. The other letter was addressed to Sir Robert Harland, as commander of the King's ships, wherein they observed: "We have it now in the most authentic manner from you, as his Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary, that they threaten to destroy the whole Carnatic with fire and sword, if certain conditions which they require are not submitted to; which conditions are, as you express it, and as we believe they express it, friendship with the English and the Nabob, and a certain assistance from both, against Hyder Ally, who is their enemy. Words are only used to convey ideas, and the same words may convey different, and even contrary ideas, according to the circumstances that attend them. Thus, if the Mahrattas were to propose friendship with the English and the Nabob, in the way that states generally propose treaties of friendship for mutual advantage, we should understand by it what the word in its primitive and natural sense implies, and should most gladly embrace it, in any way that might
be

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be advantageous to the Company's commerce, productive of security to their possessions, and consistent with the rights and powers granted to them by charter; but, when they require friendship and assistance, and denounce threats of fire and sword, if their demands are not complied with, the words change their meaning. It is no more friendship they propose; it is an abject submission they demand to their imperious will; such a submission as is conformable to the usage of the country. The subjected powers are always compelled to attend the haughty conquerors with a certain number of troops. This is not all. It is not only a demand of servile submission they require; they mean to render it still more humiliating: it must be accompanied with the most flagrant breach of national faith. A formal treaty of peace and amity was concluded between this Presidency, on the part of the Company and Hyder Ally Cawn, in the year 1769. He hath committed no act that can give the least attain to that engagement, at least that we know of; but, on the contrary, he hath granted to the Company all the privileges and advantages of trade in his country, which they enjoyed before the late war with him. The Mahrattas add to their haughty demand, this specific condition—that the assistance to be given them by the English and the Nabob be expressly employed, in open violation of the faith of that treaty, against Hyder Ally



Ally Cawn. We, therefore, offer it as our opinion, that a submission to such a demand would be in the highest degree derogatory to the honour of the British nation, and contrary to the interests of the Company." They concluded by suggesting, that the most effectual mode of securing the Carnatic, and, consequently, the Nabob, against the Mahrattas, would be by a diversion on the Malabar coast.

Sir Robert Harland declined to separate his character as Commander-in-chief from that of Plenipotentiary. After commenting upon the various points urged by the Council, in support of the policy which they determined to follow, he observed, "Your charge of an unconstitutional act cannot be against me: I do no more than my duty. But it seems to me to be directly pointed at the Royal Authority and the undoubted rights of the Crown; and when you take upon you to censure a measure which is the sacred privilege of Majesty, and the constitutional rights of your Sovereign, let me tell you it is very unbecoming; it is presumptuous, it is arrogant; and I know not whether it may not be looked upon as criminal in the eye of the law, as it is an undoubted maxim in the British Government, that the privileges of the prince are equally sacred with the liberty of the subject."*

On the 28th December, he declared it to be
his

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* Consultations, 26th December, 1771.



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his intention to enter into a negotiation with the Mahrattas, through Mhaderao, or any one he might appoint. After expressing his respect for the East-India Company, he stated, "I must and shall, upon every such important occasion, always make a great distinction between the real interests of the greatest commercial body in the world, and the private views and interested consideration of individuals." The Council indignantly repelled this insinuation. Sir Robert Harland persevered in treating with the Mahrattas, and the Council as firmly abstained from taking part in such a proceeding. At this juncture, they were put in possession of the Court's views* regarding the line of conduct to be observed towards the Nabob, the Mahrattas, Hyder, and his Majesty's plenipotentiary, which fortified them in their determination to preserve neutrality as far as possible.

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The Admiral
intends to treat
with the Mah-
rattas.

The Council were apprised by Sir Robert Harland, that he had proposed to the Mahrattas, in the name of the King of England, a cessation of hostilities between their nation, the English, and the Nabob of the Carnatic, until such time as his Majesty's pleasure should be known: and that he understood the Mahrattas had acceded to the proposal, and withdrawn their troops from the frontiers.

This transaction presented a singular specimen of diplomacy. A minister plenipotentiary from
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* *Vide* page 301.



the Crown of Great Britain, writing in his Majesty's name to a Mahratta general, proposing a cessation of hostilities between their nation, the English, and the Nabob, when neither of the latter powers had committed any act of hostility: the Nabob having opposed the advance of the English army for the protection of his borders, which the Mahrattas were plundering, whilst the Nabob and the English were calmly looking on!

The Council having acknowledged, in courteous terms, the communication from the Admiral as to the negotiations with the Mahrattas; there was reason to anticipate that here all differences would have terminated. Another circumstance, however arose, which occasioned an irreparable breach between the two authorities.

The Admiral had claimed many of the Company's European soldiers, on the ground of their being deserters from his Majesty's service. Some of these men having, in the opinion of the Council, been improperly wrested from them, a protracted correspondence took place, in the course of which the Council strongly remonstrated against Sir Robert Harland countenancing the acts of his officers. He ultimately issued directions for their desisting from further claims; but nevertheless characterised the conduct of the Council as "diabolically mischievous, and flagrantly unjust." Having declined, after a statement by the Council, which they considered fully refuted the charge,

to

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Sir Robert
Harland em-
barks without
usual honours.

to offer any explanation or apology, the Council desisted from all further communication.

The Admiral embarked from Madras on the 7th October, without paying the usual compliment of taking leave of the President as *Governor of the Fort*. The omission appeared, by a letter from Sir Robert Fletcher to the President,* to have been premeditated on the part of Sir Robert Harland. He was, accordingly, neither accompanied by the Governor to the beach, or saluted from the Fort; both which marks of honour had been observed towards Sir John Lindsay, who took formal leave

* Letter from Sir Robert Fletcher to the Honourable Jonas Du Pré, Esq., dated Fort St. George, 7th October 1773 :

"Dear Sir ;—When I took leave of the admiral, the 5th instant, I told him that, by a conversation I had had with you, I understood you was then unacquainted with the time of his intended departure, and that you mentioned to me his having been at your Garden-house to ask Mrs Du Pré's commands for Bombay, without paying you the usual compliment, or giving you any intimation of his departure. The admiral said, he could pay no such compliment to any servant of the Company, and that his visit was to Mrs. Du Pré. I replied, I was sorry for such unhappy misunderstanding ; that I knew the Governor meant to attend him to the surf and pay him every due compliment, if he would but observe the usual forms of communication with him ; but if he did not, I feared it would interfere with the honours intended to be shewn him at parting. He answered, 'Mr. Du Pré is the best judge of that.'

"I am, &c.

(Signed)

"ROB. FLETCHER."

"P.S. The above is, perhaps, not word for word my conversation with the admiral, but I am sure it is strictly the sense and meaning of it."



leave of the President, notwithstanding the differences between them had been greater than those with Sir Robert Harland.

The Council remarked, "that ceremonies are trifles in private life, and merely as they touch the individual ; but opinion and usage have made public honours necessary to public characters, and have proportioned those honours to the character. In that light, they become important ; and supinely to receive an intended slight degrades the office and invites further indignity." Although the honour was withheld from the individual, the Council gave strict orders that the moment the squadron got under weigh, a salute of fifteen guns should be fired from the Fort ; but the squadron remained at anchor during the whole of the day, and sailed in the night.

Thus terminated a mission, which was originally based upon erroneous principles, and in its progress produced embarrassments and differences, little calculated to promote either the public character or interests.

The Council drew the attention of the Court to the position in which they stood towards the Nabob and the Rajah of Tanjore, and pointed out the relation of those two powers to each other.

Relations with
the Nabob and
Tanjore.

The province of Tanjore was so situated, that the Carnatic would always be a natural barrier to it against invaders by land ; and it was, therefore reasonable that it should always bear a part of
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the charge of repelling such invaders. The tribute Tanjore paid to the Carnatic, in peace as well as war, was considered only as an acknowledgement of superiority; what quota of troops or pecuniary aid it should supply appeared to have been arbitrary, or rather what the government of the Carnatic could compel, Tanjore having refused both, when its ruler felt that he had power to support such refusal. The Council observed, "this is by no means peculiar to these two states; the same principle prevails throughout Hindostan."

The principle was that of power; and, though it had long prevailed, it became more generally felt after the invasion of Nadir Shah, and the assumption of power by the various Omrabs, whose influence increased as that of the Mogul was diminished. The Council stated, that want of means,—the uncertainty of the designs of the Nizam, the Mahrattas, and Hyder,—and the provisions of the treaty in which the Rajah of Tanjore was included,—all combined against the exercise of coercive measures, in 1770, for the purpose of supporting the claim against him for the defence of his country, and for the payment to the Nabob of the *peshcush*, which the Company had guaranteed.

The subsequent operations against Tanjore were occasioned by the Rajah's indifference towards the Nabob, and his prosecuting hostilities against
the

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the Polygars, over whose country Mahomed Ally claimed jurisdiction. The Tanjoreans were greatly exasperated against the Nabob, being impressed with a conviction that he intended to possess himself of the whole of their country, on the first favourable opportunity. It was the opinion of the Council, that this impression would lead the Rajah to join any power, should disturbances arise in the Carnatic, which would enable him to throw off the yoke of the Nabob. They considered, that the Company's guarantee of the engagement of Tanjore with the Nabob, had been cancelled by the late proceedings under Omdut-ul-Omrah, and that the Rajah would thus be left at the mercy of Mahomed Ally; they, therefore, gave it as their decided opinion, that Tanjore ought to be taken, openly and avowedly, under the Company's protection; or that the country should be conquered and wholly subdued by them.*

These views of the Council reached the Court in the month of September. The Parliamentary inquiry, then in progress, into the Company's affairs, precluded the Directors from giving any definite instructions on the important advices received from India. They wrote, on the 11th December, 1772 :—" In our former letters of this season, you have been acquainted with the

Parliamentary
inquiry con-
templated.

* Letter, 26th February 1772.



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the critical situation of the Company's affairs, and by our ship *Mercury*, we enclosed for your perusal the King's speech at the opening of the present session. In consequence thereof, Committees have been appointed to inquire into the state and condition of the Company's affairs, both at home and abroad. The measures which may be pursued, in consequence of their reports to the two Houses of Parliament, indispensably occasion such particular and constant attention on our part, as at present to deprive us of the opportunity of entering into a reply at large to your advices now before us, and, therefore, our remarks and directions thereon are necessarily suspended, until the departure of the latter ships of this season."

Succession to
Zemindaries.

Opparrow, who had held the zemindary of Nozeed jointly with his brother Narrain Row, having died without issue, the zemindary naturally devolved on the surviving brother. The Council, however, thought it necessary that all the Zemindars should clearly understand, the Company asserted the right of judging and determining the succession. The Resident was ordered to make inquiry, for form's sake; after which Narrain Row was put into possession.

Council resolve
on operations
against Poly-
gars.

The Council having determined, in communication with the Nabob, to commence operations for the purpose of reducing the Marawar and Nalcooty Polygars, a force of one hundred and twenty artillery, four hundred European infantry,
three



three battalions of sepoys, and six battering cannon, to be augmented by some of the Nabob's cavalry, and two of his battalions of sepoys, marched from Trichinopoly, the 12th of May, accompanied by Omdut-ul-Omrah, who had been deputed by his father to superintend the expedition. He arrived before the capital of the Marawar Polygar, on the 28th May. The batteries opened against it on the morning of the 2d June, and the fort was taken by assault in the evening, the Marawar Polygar, his mother, and the Dewan, being captured in the place.

Trepanavam, one hundred and fifteen miles east of Madura, belonging to the Nalcooty Polygar, was taken by assault, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Bonjour, on the 24th of May. The Polygar was not reduced until the end of June, after which the troops were ordered to their respective stations.

The Rajah of Travancore declined compliance with the requisition of the Nabob of the Carnatic for aid in the operations against the refractory Polygars, on the ground that he was apprehensive Hyder would attack the Travancore country; Hyder being applied to, disavowed having even contemplated such a step. He declared that the Travancore country was in no shape dependent upon him, and that he had no demands whatever upon the Rajah. Since peace had been concluded between Hyder and the Mahrattas, the atten-

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MADRAS.

Conduct of the
Rajah of Travancore.



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MADRAS.

tion of the former had been directed to recruiting his army, and restoring the affairs of his own country. The Council remarked, "these measures were necessary, merely on a defensive plan; but mere defence and inactivity cannot long be expected from his genius."

Sir Robert
Fletcher suc-
ceeds General
Smith in com-
mand of army.

Brigadier General Smith, having returned to the Presidency, resigned the command of the army in the month of August. The post devolved upon Sir Robert Fletcher, who, in accordance with the Court's order of April 1771, was admitted to a seat in the Council and Select Committee, on the 24th of August.

Various differences as to military arrangements arose between Sir Robert Fletcher, the President, and a majority of the Council. They were carried on with so much personal feeling, as not only to impede the progress of public business, but to create apprehensions that serious results might be produced, unless decided measures were taken to put an end to the proceedings.

1773.

Differences be-
tween Council
and Sir Robert
Fletcher.

A question having arisen on the powers of the President, as commander of the garrison, in which the conduct of Sir Robert Fletcher formed matter of discussion, a decided majority of the Council were of opinion that he should withdraw. It was subsequently proposed, for the general welfare of the service, that Sir Robert Fletcher's absence from Council was essential to the good conduct of the public business. A resolution was passed by a majority



majority of seven to two in the Council, on the 12th January, that he should be ordered to repair to Trichinopoly, to take the command of that fortress, where his services could be most usefully employed for the Company's interests. On the following day, Sir Robert Fletcher addressed the President, stating that, as he considered the proceeding contrary to the order and intentions of the Court, and equal to a dismissal of the service, he felt that the duty he owed to the public obliged him to make application for a passage and accommodation in the first ship for England, that he might be enabled to give his attendance in Parliament.*

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On the 14th, Sir Robert Fletcher was desired to proceed to Trichinopoly, and informed that, on the same day, a Council would be summoned, when his letter would be considered. He replied by protesting, as a member of the government and of the legislature, against the conduct of the President, which he deemed contrary to law and to the privilege to which he was entitled. The Council

* However strange it may appear at the present day, that Members of the House of Commons should at any time have retained their seats, while serving in so distant a quarter of the globe as India, yet the instance in question, as well as that of Mr. Vansittart, in 1769 (*vide* note, page 191), are in point. The Act of the 10th Geo. IV., cap. 62, disqualifies persons holding the station of Governor or Deputy Governor in India, from a seat in Parliament.—Query, does it exclude *inferior* functionaries?



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Council informed him, that the proceeding was not intended as a dismissal, but an appointment to a station, where his services might be most usefully employed. They repeated and enforced the same, and informed him that, when he should have complied therewith, and "have given the whole military establishment that example of obedience and attention which we have a right to expect, we shall give all due consideration to whatever you may have to represent." He reached Trichinopoly, and received charge of the fortress on the 26th January.

Sir Robert
Fletcher's plea
of privilege of
Parliament.

The Council met on the 29th, and came to a resolution, declaring that "out of unfeigned respect and veneration for the Honourable House of Commons and their privileges, Sir Robert Fletcher, in consequence of his plea of privilege as a member of parliament, is, for so much as depends on this Board, at full and free liberty to return to his duty in Parliament, whenever and by whatever conveyance he shall think proper; and that this Board do further declare Sir Robert Fletcher henceforth free and exonerated of and from all obligation to serve the Company in any capacity under this Presidency, that so there may not remain any restraint, or colour of restraint upon, or impediment to, his proceeding to his duty in Parliament, agreeable to his claim."

Brigadier General Smith consented, at the earnest request of the Council, although on the

eve

eve of departure for England, to resume the command, and communicated the same to the Council, on the 29th January, in the following terms: "I assure you that no motive whatever could have induced me to enter into a public station again; but, being thus called upon by you, the duty I cheerfully acknowledge to my employers, and a very grateful sense of the advantages I have derived from their service, are obligations which outweigh with me every other consideration, and afford me this opportunity of once more shewing that attachment I have always professed for our honourable masters." General Smith's appointment being announced in orders, he took his seat as a member of the Council, on the 30th. Sir Robert Fletcher, having received a copy of the order on the 2d of February, wrote to the Council from Trichinopoly, that he had given over the command to the senior officer, and should proceed to the Presidency.

Mr. Du Pré resigned the government on the 31st January, and was succeeded by Mr. Wynch.

Sir Robert Fletcher was to proceed to England on board the *Triton*, with Capt. the Hon. Fullarton Elphinstone. Further correspondence ensued, in which Sir Robert Fletcher animadverted upon the state of the army. To which General Smith fully and satisfactorily replied. He then demanded copies of such allegations as might be sent home regarding him, or access to the records;

intimating

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MADRAS.

Sir Robert
Fletcher pro-
ceeds to Eng-
land.