



1773.
MADRAS.

intimating, that the Council would refuse the same at their peril. The Council did not see fit to comply with either of the requests, and he embarked in the *Triton*, which was despatched on the 15th March. The subject was brought under the consideration of the Court of Directors; whose decision, at the same time that it condemned the conduct of Sir Robert Fletcher, regarding the authority of the Governor as commandant of the fort, restored him to the command of the army whenever Brigadier General Smith should resign.

The conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore led to the Council unanimously agreeing to meet the requisition of the Nabob of the Carnatic for troops, to enable him to subdue his tributary. The force assembled at Trichinopoly, under the command of General Smith. They arrived before the capital of Tanjore on the 6th of August. On the 20th, the army broke ground, and on the 17th of September the place was carried by assault, with an inconsiderable loss, the Rajah and his family being prisoners to the Nabob's two sons, who accompanied the expedition. At the commencement of these operations, intelligence was received by the Nabob, that the Dutch were aiding the Rajah with stores from Negapatam. He accordingly despatched a vakeel, with a remonstrance. To give weight to this proceeding, Sir Robert Harland ordered two ships of war to accompany the vakeel. The Dutch disavowed, in the most submissive manner,



manner, having rendered any aid to the Rajah of Tanjore. Suspicions still existed that such was not the fact; they were shortly confirmed by the Dutch possessing themselves of the sea-port of Nagore, and also of some valuable districts in the Tanjore country, on the plea that they had purchased them of the Rajah. As a tributary of the Nabob, he had no right to alienate these possessions; but it was not until the appearance of the Nabob's troops, under the command of his son, followed at some distance by General Smith, that the Dutch guards quitted Nagore and retired to Negapatam. Had the Council hesitated in aiding the Nabob to reduce Tanjore, and permitted the Rajah to introduce foreign troops into the centre of his country, and to make grants of districts and sea-ports to an European power, the results might have seriously affected the English interests on the coast.

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The position of Hyder and the Mahrattas, at the commencement of this year, threatened a descent on the Carnatic, and induced the Council, in conjunction with the Nabob, to take precautions for its defence. The jealousy of the Nabob, his vacillating conduct towards the native powers, the declared poverty of his treasury, his desire of acting independently of the Council, and his secret intrigues, rendered the task of guiding his affairs one of no easy accomplishment; still it was the determination of the Council to preserve, as

1774.
State of the
Carnatic.

far



1774. far as possible, the tranquillity of the Carnatic, and to avoid anything tending to involve them in dissensions either with Hyder or the Mahrattas.

1771. The President of Bombay, Mr. Hodges, died at
BOMBAY. Victoria, on the 23d February, and was succeeded by Mr. Hornby.

Mahrattas de-
feat Hyder.

On the 7th March, the Mahrattas obtained a complete victory over Hyder, near Seringapatam, obliging him to retire within that fortress. He applied to the Council for aid, which they were utterly unable to afford him, either in men or money, but offered to supply him with five hundred muskets and four twenty-pound guns.

The Mahrattas, being in possession of the greater part of Mysore, prevented Hyder from raising troops, or drawing the necessary supplies for them. In the month of October, he addressed the President, representing that the enemy, notwithstanding his readiness to pay them their just *chout*, were determined to make a conquest of his dominions, and then to attack the Nabob of Arcot and the Carnatic; he, therefore, called upon the Council, in the name of the Company, who were equally interested with him in checking the progress of the Mahrattas, to join in measures for that object. The Council were disposed to consent, under all circumstances, provided Hyder assigned over the forts and districts of Mangalore and Pier Gur, and deposited five lacs of pagodas towards



towards the expenses, that he should be informed five hundred Europeans and one thousand two hundred sepoy would be sent to his assistance. An intimation of this intention was notified to the Council at Madras.

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Hyder applied for a specific force of one thousand Europeans, and four thousand sepoy, to be employed in making a diversion by an attack on Bassein and Salsette, and to march inland, in order to draw off the Mahrattas from his country. The Council felt no disposition to concur in this proposition, it being evidently the desire of Hyder to make them principals in the war. The receipt, at this moment, through the Council at Madras, of the Court's views,* determined them to close all further treaty. Hyder's fortune triumphed over his danger: he obtained a tolerable peace, without a friend or ally; but the coolness of the Madras Government alienated his feelings, and indisposed him towards the English power.

During the differences between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, Hyder had made the entire conquest of the dominions of the Zamorin and the King of Cotiote; he also preferred a complaint to the Resident at Tellicherry, that some of the principal people of Cotiote had been harboured in the Company's districts. The Prince of Cherika paid a visit to the Chief at Tellicherry, by whom

Conquests of
Hyder.

* *Vide* page 301.



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whom he was interrogated regarding his late correspondence with Hyder. He admitted, with evident confusion, that he had received several letters from the Nabob, the purport of which he did not before choose to disclose, but said that, on his return, he would send the originals for inspection. Instead of fulfilling his promise, he assembled two hundred natives, and immediately went over to the Cotiote country, and joined Hyder's camp, which was about twelve leagues from Tellicherry.

Sir Robert
Harland ar-
rives at Bom-
bay and asserts
his powers.

Sir Robert Harland having arrived at Bombay, produced his powers to the Council. They remarked, that he appeared to think he was authorized to enter into any treaty, and to make any terms on behalf of the Company, with any princes or powers in India that he might see fit. "Were such a power granted, it would be truly alarming; but, as we cannot believe any such power was intended by the Crown, or that we are empowered or authorized to submit our demand on the Mahrattas, or any other power, we declined to do so, until we should hear from you on the subject."

1772.

The Nabob of Broach had, at his own instance, in the month of July 1771, repaired to Bombay, and entered into a treaty with the Company, on the 30th November, by which they were permitted to erect a factory there. The Nabob was not to assist the enemies of the English, but to aid the Company ;



Company; nor was he to engage in war without their consent; but in hostilities begun in communication with the Council, they were to aid him, on his paying a certain stipulated rate for each man, and four lacs in full for all demands on the part of the Company. A firm friendship was to subsist between the Councils of Surat and Bombay. The Nabob having, under various pretences, evaded from time to time the performance of any of the articles of the treaty, the Council recalled Mr. Morley, their Resident at Broach. At the earnest entreaty of the Nabob, he was sent back; but his reception, added to the continued extraordinary conduct of the Nabob, in refusing to observe the treaty, led the majority of the Council to concur in sending an expedition to enforce the observance of its provisions. The troops and vessels left Bombay on the 2d November, under the command of Brigadier-General Wedderburn, and Mr Watson, the Superintendent of the Marine. The general, reconnoitering too near the works, was killed on the 14th. On the 16th, the batteries opened against it, and on the 18th, it was taken by storm. Five officers and one cadet were killed; two captains and four lieutenants wounded. The revenues were stated to amount to seven lacs; half of which was claimed by Futtý Sing Guicowar, with whom an agreement was entered into on the 12th January, by which it was declared that the town of Broach, lately

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BOMBAY.

Operations
against Broach.



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lately belonging to Mahazuz Cawn Nabob, having been conquered by the East-India Company, every thing should remain on the footing it was at the time of the conquest, the English and Futtu Sing each receiving a share of the revenues.*

Mr. Mostyn had been especially designated by the Court for the station of Resident at Poonah, in order to acquire, upon safe and honourable terms, such privileges and possessions as would not only be beneficial to the Company's commerce, but also contribute to the security of their settlements on the coast of Malabar.

The acquisition of Salsette, Bassein, and Caranja, were the principal objects contemplated by the Court, and strongly pressed upon the attention of the Council,† who, in negociation with Mhaderao, were authorized to offer in exchange what they might deem an equivalent for such a cession. The Council, in the month of February, advised the Court that there was little prospect, at that period, of the object being accomplished.

Transactions at
Poonah.

Mhaderao died in November 1772, and was succeeded by his brother, Narrain Rao. Janojee, the Mahratta chieftain in Berar, died about the same time. Narrain Rao was murdered in his palace at Poonah, on the 20th August, in the following year, by the partizans of his uncle, Ragobah,

* *Vide* Printed Treaties. † *Vide* page 210.

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gobah,* who was immediately proclaimed throughout the city, and succeeded with little opposition. Ragobah proceeded forthwith to Sattarah, for the purpose of receiving the *surpaw*† from the Rajah. Moodajee Bhonslah was the party whose influence he had most to apprehend. Ragobah had written to him to attend with five thousand men : notwithstanding this requisition, he proceeded with his troops towards Poonah, and was joined by some other chiefs, who enabled him to assemble a force of nearly 80,000 men. This movement created great suspicion on the part of Ragobah, whose force amounted only to about 60,000, and the fidelity of these was doubtful. He was, however, ultimately joined by Moodajee. The united force proceeded against the Nizam, who had taken the field with a considerable army. An engagement ensued, in which the Nizam had the advantage ; but a treaty followed, to the benefit of Ragobah, who then meditated an attack on the Carnatic, in order to induce the Nabob to pay him a large amount of *chout*, and likewise to explain his conduct in having made war against the Rajah of Tanjore. Ragobah was deterred from carrying his intentions into execution, by the proceedings of the ministerial party at Poonah, who were dissatisfied with his government, and the means by which

* Properly Ragonant Rao, but commonly called and known as Rogobah, which designation is used.

† *Vide* page 8.



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which he had obtained it. They availed themselves of his distance to declare in favour of the widow of Narrain Rao. These measures obliged him to retrace his steps, from the confines of the Carnatic to the heart of his own government. The two parties met—Ragobah gained a decisive victory over the forces of the ministry ; their general was taken prisoner, and died of his wounds. Notwithstanding Ragobah's success, his position was very precarious ; having little money, entertaining doubts as to the fidelity of his troops, and being constrained to levy contributions, in his marches through the country, in order to support his army, while the remains of the ministerial force was recruited from that of Moodajee, who had likewise joined the Nizam.

At this juncture, the country round Broach was thrown into a state of disorder, by Ragobah having supported Govind Rao, in opposition to Futtu Sing, who had for some time been at the head of the Guicowar government ; but being defeated in an engagement with his brother, he was dispossessed of all the country except Baroda, the capital, the open country remaining under Govind Rao.

The determination of the Government of Bombay to support Ragobah, involved the Company in hostilities with the Mahrattas. The opposition which he met with in his efforts to re-establish his power



power at Poonah, led to his making proposals to the Council at Bombay for the assistance of a body of the Company's troops. His terms fell short of those required by the Council, which included a cession of Salsette and Bassein; Rago-
bah being averse to parting with either of those possessions.



CHAPTER VII.

1772.

Attention of
Parliament
directed to the
Company.

HAD the members of the Special Commission, nominated in 1769* for the purpose of supervising the whole of the Company's affairs, reached India, they would have operated as a check on the extensive powers of control and interference assumed by the naval officers of the crown towards the several governments. The effects caused by their proceeding rendered the necessity still more apparent for introducing a revised system of administration, as regarded both the Home and Foreign affairs. Enactments had been passed to regulate the declaration of a dividend, and the exercise of the ballot by the proprietors: a lengthened and rigid scrutiny had been substituted into the general state of the Company, and doubts had been raised on the question of right in the territorial possessions; but the Company were still unfettered in the exercise of all powers of government, and were at full liberty to follow their own views, whether relating to the dismemberment of a kingdom, the deposition of a sovereign, or the provision

* *Vide* page 272.



sion of an investment. But although possessing this power, they had no means of effectually enforcing obedience to their orders, on the part of their servants, who were represented "to have made enormous fortunes at the expense of their masters, and to have hazarded by their conduct the total loss of their valuable possessions."

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From the period of hostilities commencing with the French, followed by those with the native powers, the greatest embarrassment was occasioned by each of the three presidencies acting independently of the other. There was no defined superior authority to direct affairs, or to ensure unity of object, or co-operation in action.

This state of things led to the following passage in the speech from the throne, at the opening of the session in January 1772. "The concerns of this country are so various and extensive as to require the most vigilant and active attention; and some of them, as well from remoteness of place as from other circumstances, are so peculiarly liable to abuse, and exposed to danger, that the interposition of the Legislature for their protection may become necessary."

The financial means of the Company had been materially affected by the measures of their servants. The subsequent operation against the Mogul and the Vizier—the war in the Carnatic, during which Hyder committed such extensive ravages—the reduction of the refractory Polygars,

Financial embarrassments of the Company.



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and the incursions of the enemy on the coast of Malabar, not only absorbed the revenues, but caused a suspension of the investment upon the out-turn, on which the Directors relied to meet the heavy demand that pressed upon them, in the large amount of bills drawn from India, in addition to the charge occasioned by the necessary supply of troops and stores for service. Their only resource for relief was an application to the minister. Little encouragement was, however, held out of pecuniary aid from that quarter.

Disappointment had been created on the part of the public by the non-payment of the £400,000, under the agreement of 1769.* The affairs of the Company had become the general subject of discussion and animadversion. Pamphlets issued from the press, reflecting in strong terms of severity on the Company, and on the conduct of their servants. Virulent attacks were levelled against the character of Lord Clive, whose administration of the government of Bengal, in 1765, had unjustly caused him many enemies. The circumstances under which his lordship had entered upon that arduous trust were forgotten, whilst the most distorted views were given of his measures. Lord Clive was not a recognized servant of the state: he derived no authority from law: he was placed over a presidency, divided, head-strong, and licentious—the Treasury was without

Attacks on the
Company and
on Lord Clive.

* *Vide* page 271.



without money, and the service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit:* the subordinate functionaries being aware that they were only amenable to punishment within the precincts of the Mahratta ditch. Such a state of things was alone to be met and overcome by the firm and resolute line of conduct which his lordship adopted. The effect on the interests of the individuals who suffered under the well-merited rebuke their conduct had drawn upon them, led to the strong opposition evinced at the time towards his lordship, a feeling fomented by some of the leading members of the Direction, who were personally indisposed towards him.

1772.

The Chairman of the Court, who was likewise a Member of the House of Commons, had obtained leave to bring in a bill for the better administration of justice in India, and for controlling the Company's servants. The Proprietors having rejected a proposition for conferring extraordinary powers on Mr. Hastings, who had been appointed to succeed to the Government in Bengal; the Directors resolved upon sending out another Superintending Commission for the purpose of correcting abuses, and applying such remedies as might place their affairs in a satisfactory condition. The bill submitted by the
Deputy-Chairman

Parliament
restrain Com-
pany from
appointing
another Su-
perintending
Commission.

* The description given by his Lordship's successor. *Vide* page 177.



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Appoint two
Committees of
Inquiry.

Deputy-Chairman was lost on its second reading, the House determining to appoint two Parliamentary Committees to inquire into the affairs of the Company; the one a secret, the other a select committee.

The Secret Committee was to inquire into the state of the Company. They purposely made an early report, which led to an act restraining the Court from sending out the proposed Superintending Commission. Eight other reports were presented by the Committee, in which a full review was taken of the debts, credits, and effects of the Company; their profits from commerce, and their territorial acquisitions; the management of their affairs abroad and at home, the source of their revenues, the extent of bills drawn upon them from India, and the charges of their several settlements.

The Select Committee was to inquire into "the nature, state, and condition of the East-India Company."

The speech of Colonel Burgoyne, in April, 1772, when he moved the appointment of the Committee, of which he was chosen Chairman, sufficiently indicated the spirit in which the proceedings would be followed up. They branched out into an inquiry on points connected with the conduct of Lord Clive, and the services which his Lordship rendered to the Company in Bengal, in the year 1757. Thirty years had passed away
since



since his Lordship first reached India. He had on four several occasions received the thanks of the Court of Directors; he had been strongly urged to continue in the government of Bengal, and five years had elapsed since he finally quitted that country with the highest tokens of regard and esteem from those who succeeded him in the government, as well as from the Company at home. His Lordship's conduct in transactions in which he had been engaged, fifteen years before, was now arraigned at the bar of Parliament with a spirit of vituperation from which it was felt that his merits and services might well have shielded him. The report of the Committee was made on the 26th of May. It was observed by one of the members of the Committee, that it was his wish the inquiry should have been directed "not to persons but to things," but his voice had been over-ruled. Another described the proceedings as founded on envy and illiberal principles—as narrow—pointing at individuals, and neglecting the real and only object, "which should have been the provision of regulations for the future government."

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It was at this juncture that Mr. Warren Hastings succeeded to the government of Bengal, on the retirement of Mr. Cartier, in the month of April, 1772.

Mr. Warren
Hastings
succeeds to the
Government.

The earlier history of Mr. Hastings, with the statement of his services before he was placed in the

the



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Mr. Warren
Hastings.

the prominent station of a Member of Council in the Government abroad, more properly belongs to the biographer. It is to be hoped that some one competent to do justice to the life of this extraordinary man, who for so long a period filled the public eye, will take up the subject. There must be abundant materials, both public and private, to furnish matter for a work which, in variety of incident and depth of interest, cannot be surpassed. A brief reference will be made to his original appointment, and to his services previously to his return to India in 1769.

Mr. Hastings, the son of the Rev. Penniston Hastings, was baptized at Churchill, in the county of Oxford, on the 15th December, 1732, and proceeded to Bengal as a Writer, on the 29th November, 1749, being then in his seventeenth year. He reached Calcutta in the autumn of the following year, and was attached as an assistant in the Secretary's office. In 1755 he appears to have been appointed one of the Council for managing the affairs of the factory at Cossimbuzar, where the ability which he manifested in discharging the duties of his office, gained for him the confidence of the Government. In 1756, the obstacles occasioned by the conduct of the Nabob to the progress of the Company's affairs, led to his being deputed, with one of his colleagues, to demand a private audience for the purpose of declaring, that unless measures were adopted to
check

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check the system of plunder pursued by his ministers, to gratify their avarice, on the Company's tenants, they should withdraw from the province. As there was reason to believe that some immediate change would take place in the native government, Mr. Hastings was authorized to expend 20,000 rupees amongst the servants of the Durbar in securing the interests of the Company. Mr. Hastings was one among a number of the Company's servants who stood forward at that crisis and accepted a military commission, which, it appears, he resigned, together with Messrs. Scrafton, Cartier, and Rider, in April 1757, when the troubles had terminated. In the following year he was at Moraudbaug, and entrusted with arrangements connected with the settlement of the Nabob's revenues and the claims of the Company. His conduct was highly approved by the Council at Calcutta, and a native agent, named Cossinaut, was sent up to aid him in the management of the responsible duties committed to him. Cossinaut was not to settle any thing finally, but through means of Mr. Hastings, and with his entire approbation. Throughout the year 1759 he appears to have encountered considerable difficulty in settling the Company's claims on the Nabob, and in attempting to satisfy a spirit of discontent which Jaffier Cawn manifested. As his pecuniary arrangements with the Durbar were considerable, he rendered full and explicit accounts



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counts of the monies which passed through his hands, to the satisfaction of the government.

At the close of 1759 he was relieved from the duties connected with the factory, and nominated Resident at Moraudbaug, and agent for the Company at the Nabob's Durbar; and so onerous were his duties, that the Government nominated an assistant who was cognisant with the native language, in which Mr. Hastings had acquired great proficiency: the officer was unfortunately drowned in his way up to join the Resident. In 1760, Mr. Hastings ineffectually endeavoured to obtain payment from the Nabob of two lacs and a half, which had been lent to him on account of the Company. In the month of November he was with the President, when arrangements were made with Meer Cossim, who was placed on the musnud, when Jaffier Cawn was again deposed.* In 1761 he was appointed to inquire into the conduct of Nundcomar, who forms so prominent a character in the course of subsequent events. That native had been falsely alleging, that the Company's Government were indisposed towards the Rajah of Burdwan; he had also instigated Roydullub to a similar attempt. The inquiry terminated in Nundcomar being confined a prisoner to his house as a dangerous character.

In December 1761, Mr. Hastings appears to have

* *Vide* page 77.



have taken his seat as a Member of the Select Committee at Calcutta. In March 1762 he was deputed to visit the Nabob, with the view of settling the various points of dispute which had arisen from the unjustifiable conduct of the Company's servants in the prosecution of private trade, and in their behaviour towards the Nabob. It was on that occasion that the majority of the Council, in entire opposition to the President, issued orders to Mr. Hastings to demand a present of twenty lacs from the Nabob, which, they asserted, he had promised them on being placed upon the musnud. The Nabob indignantly rejected the demand, at which the Directors expressed their entire satisfaction. After various other services as a Member of the Select Committee, Mr. Hastings embarked for Europe in the ship *Medway*, in February 1765, his place as a Member of Council being filled by Mr. Gray, who was called from Malda for that purpose.

In consideration of his acknowledged talents and qualifications, the Court of Directors, on the 20th December, 1768, unanimously appointed him a member of Council at Fort St. George. It was announced to that government in the following terms:—"Mr. Warren Hastings, a gentleman who has served us many years upon the Bengal establishment with great ability and unblemished character, offering himself again to be employed in our service, we have, from a consideration of his
just

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just merits and general knowledge of the Company's affairs, been induced to appoint him one of the members of our Council at your Presidency, and to station him next to Mr. Du Pré," who had been nominated to succeed to the government on the 31st January, 1770—Mr. Hastings being selected for his successor.

Appointed to
Bengal Council,
with succession
to Chair.

In April, 1771, the Court, having had under consideration the condition of the Company's commerce, and the general aspect of their affairs, in Bengal, resolved to appoint Mr. Hastings second member of Council at Calcutta, with succession as President and Governor of Bengal, whither he was to proceed from Madras with the least possible delay.* He reached Calcutta on the 17th February, 1772, when he took his seat at the Board, and, on the 13th April following, assumed charge of the government,

Court's orders
as to Mahomed
Reza Khan.

One of the first measures which engaged his attention arose out of the Court's instructions of August, 1771, which he received only ten days after his accession to the chair. They related to Mahomed Reza Khan, whose name was associated with the early revenue administration of Bengal, and became familiar to the English reader in connexion with the seventeenth charge on the celebrated impeachment of Mr. Hastings.

Mahomed Reza Khan held the Chuklat† of
Dacca

* Letter to Madras, 10th April, 1771.

† An assemblage of the smaller divisions of a province.



Dacca in 1762, of the Nabob Meer Jaffier, at a rent of between thirty-eight and thirty-nine lacs per annum. It was represented to the Court of Directors, that he had been considerably in arrear to the Nabob, who, it was alleged, had, by a subsequent agreement, consented to an abatement in the rent, from thirty-eight to twenty-seven lacs per annum. No authority in support of this allegation could be traced beyond the assertion of Mahomed Reza Khan. The Nabob was said to have complained of his carelessness, and to have strongly objected to his continuance in the Chukla; but at the entreaty of Mr. Spencer, then President, Meer Jaffier not only retained him, but removed him to Moorshedabad, where he exercised supreme power, as well over the Nabob himself as over all his ministers. The Nabob died, in February, 1765, and was succeeded by his son, Nijim-ud-Dowla, a minor. The Council, not considering him qualified to take into his own hands the management of his affairs, and being indisposed to leave them to the direction of Nund-comar, in whom he was inclined to place great confidence, they selected Mahomed Reza Khan, and, in concert with Nijim-ud-Dowla, appointed him *Naib Soubah** of the province of Bengal, in which capacity he was to conduct and manage all the Nabob's affairs.

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Mahomed Reza Khan appointed Naib Soubah of Bengal.

On intelligence of this appointment reaching the
Directors,

* Deputy Viceroy.



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Directors, they adverted to Mahomed Reza Khan's conduct when at Dacca, and observed, "We think you passed too slightly over the charge urged against him, of being so very deficient in accounting for the revenues of the province of which he had been governor."*

Testimony in
his favour.

Notwithstanding these supposed grounds for attaching suspicion to his former conduct, the manner in which he discharged the duties of his new station received the repeated expression of the Council's approbation, who gave the strongest testimony to his having pursued the Company's interests with unvarying steadiness and diligence.

Declining state
of the Pro-
vinces.

The provinces had for some time been in a declining state. The Council instituted an inquiry into the supposed causes, and expressed their unanimous opinion,† that they arose from the want of sufficient checks on the instruments of government; the delegation of trust and authority to one or a few, which required the abilities and integrity of many to execute; their ignorance of the real produce and capacity of the country, in which they were necessarily kept by a set of men, who first deceived them from interest, and afterwards continued the deception through fear of punishment and a necessary regard to their own safety; the

* Letter to Bengal, February, 1766.

† Letter from Bengal, 30th September, 1769.



the numerous train of dependents and underlings whom the Collectors entertained, were all to be satisfied from the spoils of the industrious ryot; the venality which formed part of the genius of the Collectors, which was known to be openly exercised or tacitly allowed by Government, without drawing any shame or discredit on the guilty, or being thought any peculiar hardship on the injured: the collusion of the Collector with the Zemindar, whom the Collector employed as a tool to screen his mal-practices, or admitted as an associate in his fraudulent gains; the oppression to which the ryot was subject from the multitude of *goumashtahs** and their dependents; and, lastly, whilst the Company were in reality the principals in the revenues of the country, and the most interested in the good conduct of its government, they were precluded from a knowledge of its real state.

“Power without control, knowledge without participation, and influence without any effectual counteraction, was a state of things too important and replete with consequences to be vested in any three ministers, or rather one single man, who, allowing him the clearest preference for integrity, ability, and attachment amongst his countrymen, could not be supposed superior to temptation, and at least ought not to be trusted so extensively and independently,

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* Native Agents.



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Views of Court
as to revenue
management.

independently, as has been necessarily the consequence of the present system."

At the period that the Council were thus addressing the Court, the latter communicated to the Council their views as to the future management of the revenues,* and pointed out Mahomed Reza Khan as a fit person to be appointed Naib Dewan, or the Company's deputy, for the Bengal province; and, in like manner, Shatab Roy, or some other principal person, for the Bahar province.

The unexampled drought with which India had been visited, caused the greatest distress throughout the provinces. The future prospect was contemplated with so much dismay by the Council, that they suggested the expediency of authorizing a remission in the demands of the Government on account of the revenues, which remission they were constrained to grant to the farmers in the January following, without awaiting orders from Europe.

Revenue Councils
appointed.

To give effect to the Court's instructions of 1769,† for a revision of the revenue management, Councils were appointed, in September, 1770, at Moorshedabad and Patna: the former for the Bengal provinces, the latter for those of Bahar.

The Councils were to inform themselves of the real state of the collections in every part; what
rents

* *Vide* page 278.

† *Vide* page 275.



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rents were actually paid by the tenants, and what formerly; the nature of the cultivation; the chief produce of each district, and whether in that respect there was a prospect of improvement. Enquiry was to be made as to the charge of collections for some years preceding, in order that a judgment might be formed of the requisite number of Aumils* and other officers, "amongst whom immense sums had been divided," which it was supposed might be spared.

This reformation was to be carried forward in a moderate, steady, and persevering spirit, with a view rather to the prevention of frauds for the future than the punishment of offences which had been already committed. At the same time, they were not entirely to pass over offences, nor to abstain from enquiring into the character and conduct of the officers of government, from the highest to the lowest.

The Councils were to have the control of the Dewanny revenues; but all the business was to be carried on through the Naib, and under his seal and signature. He was likewise to give his advice and opinion upon all proposed measures. No appointments of officers or collectors were to be made by the Naib, nor was his seal to be affixed to any order but with the approbation of the Council. Regular consultations were to be kept of their proceedings. Mahomed

* Collectors of the Revenue.



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Duties of the
Naib Dewan
and Naib Na-
zim.

Mahomed Reza Khan had acted in the two capacities of Naib Dewan and Naib Nazim. In the former office were determined—all disputes as to revenue, boundaries of land, charity lands, lands held for private emolument, limits of cultivated or uncultivated lands, so as to fix the revenue arising therefrom on an equitable footing; jurisdictions on landholders, duties on merchandize, encroachments by inundation or otherwise, inheritances and patrimonies, religious lands, honorary lands, oppression of tenants or improper demands of Zemindars and Phousdars, or merchants: settling bundabust or rent-roll for the provinces, promoting cultivation and population. All sunnuds for lands required the approbation of the Nizamut. Under the Nizamut were regulated—all the affairs of the household, protection of the country, sentence on criminals and capital punishments, regulation of courts of judicature, appointment of Naibs and Phousdars.*

Upon the due execution of these extensive and important trusts, the welfare of the country and the happiness of the people mainly depended. Hitherto, no Europeans had formally interfered. It was too much to expect that one man should discharge them satisfactorily; and it could scarcely have been matter of surprise, that the results of the inquiry instituted in 1769, justified in some measure,

* Magistrates under the immediate orders of the Nazim.

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measure, the suspicions entertained by the Council, that oppression had existed, and that the revenues had been overstrained. Instances were cited in proof of the lamentably defective system which had prevailed of administering what was termed justice; but these proofs tended rather to shew the absence of any well-defined system, than to bring home acts of personal delinquency to Mahomed Reza Cawn. Nevertheless, such was the difficulty of devising any adequate remedy, that, under the newly-constituted system of Revenue Councils, it was determined that the administration of justice should continue as usual. The Council, however, were not only to interpose when necessary, but every transaction of the country government was to come before them. All criminal cases were to be tried in the Adawlut established for that purpose, and their proceedings were to be submitted to the Revenue Council, before the sentence awarded was carried into effect. All causes relating to property in land, and to the revenues, were to be referred to the Khalsa Cutcherry,* and causes for debt to the judicial Adawlut.†

When the various statements of the falling-off of the revenues, the sufferings of the people, through alleged oppression, inflicted either directly
or

* The Revenue Court.

† Consultations, 11th October, 1770. Court of Justice.



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Court's orders
for Company
standing for-
ward as Dewan
and for removal
of Mahomed
Reza Cawn.

or intermediately, at a time of severe famine, together with the mal-administration of justice, reached the Court of Directors, they were naturally led to connect these circumstances with the grounds for suspicion which they had previously entertained of the character and integrity of Mahomed Reza Cawn. In addition to the public despatches, various *private* representations had been sent home, all calculated to strengthen the doubts entertained of his conduct. The Court accordingly addressed the President and Council at Calcutta* in the following terms :—"At a time when famine was depopulating a country with which we are so immediately connected, and in the prosperity whereof we are so deeply interested, we cannot but highly approve every well-meant and generous effort to relieve the miseries of the poor inhabitants, by whom, in an especial manner, the calamity must have been experienced in all its dreadful consequences; and as we enjoy a very singular pleasure in commending those of our servants whose attention has been turned towards alleviating the general distress, so are we filled with the greatest indignation on finding a charge exhibited against any persons whatever (but especially natives of England), for monopolizing grain, and thereby aggravating the woes, and no doubt increasing the number of wretched mortals, labouring under the most awful circumstances which

* Letter to Bengal, 28th August, 1771.



which could possibly happen to any people whatsoever. We are led to these reflections by perusing the letters which accuse the Gomastahs of English gentlemen, not barely for monopolizing grain, but for compelling the poor ryots to sell *even the seed requisite for the next harvest.*

“As we have further reasons to suspect that large sums have, by violent and oppressive means, been actually collected by Mahomed Reza Cawn, on account of the Dewanny revenues, great part of which he has appropriated to his own use, or distributed amongst the creatures of his power and the instruments of his oppressions, we should not think ourselves justified to the Company or the public, were we to leave to him in future the management of the Dewanny collections; and as the transferring the like trust to any other minister could yield us little prospect of reaping any benefit from the change, we are necessitated to seek, by other means, the full advantage we have to expect from the grant of the Dewanny. It is, therefore, our determination to stand forth as Dewan, and, by the agency of the Company's servants, to take upon ourselves the entire care and management of the revenues. In confidence therefore, of your abilities to plan and execute this important work, we hereby authorize and require you to divest Mahomed Reza Cawn, and every person employed by or in conjunction with him, or acting under his influence, of any further

2 A 2

charge

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BENGAL.

charge or direction in the business of the collections ; and we trust that, in the office of Dewan, you will adopt such regulations, and pursue such measures, as shall at once ensure to us every possible advantage, and free the ryots from the oppressions of Zemindars and petty tyrants, under which they may have been suffered to remain, from the interested views of those whose influence and authority should have been exerted for their relief and protection.

“ From the grounds we have to suspect that Mahomed Reza Cawn has abused the trust reposed in him, and been guilty of many acts of violence and injustice towards his countrymen, we deem insufficient the depriving him of a station which may be made subservient to the most corrupt purposes. It is, therefore, our pleasure and command, that you enter into a minute investigation, not only of the causes to which the decrease of revenue may be ascribed, but also into Mahomed Reza Cawn’s general conduct during the time the Dewanny revenues have been under his charge ; and as the several complaints and accusations already noticed to you are of a nature too serious to be suffered to pass over without the most rigid enquiry, we have directed our President to order him to repair to Calcutta, there to answer to the facts which shall be alleged against him, both in respect to his public administration and private conduct.”

Mr.



Mr. Hastings had resided at Calcutta only two months, and had, as already observed, succeeded to the chair but ten days, when the orders of the Court of August reached him in the night of the 24th April. On the following morning, he despatched instructions to Mr. Middleton, at Mootejeyl, desiring, in conformity with the orders of the Secret Committee, that he would arrest the person of Mahomed Reza Cawn, together with his Dewan, Rajah Aumest Sing, and send them down to Calcutta under a sufficient guard. Every mark of tenderness and respect was to be shewn to Mahomed Reza Cawn, consistent with the literal performance of the service. Secrecy was to be observed, in order to avoid all cause for alarm or disturbance.

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Arrest of Mahomed Reza Cawn.

Precautions were taken by Mr. Middleton to allay any tumult, but none were required. Mahomed Reza Cawn, on learning the purport of the commission, evinced no inclination to impede the execution of the orders, "but with calm submission met his unhappy fate," manifesting a readiness to comply with them to the fullest extent. He proceeded from Mootejeyl on the 27th, and was to embark at Mirzapore for Calcutta. On the 28th, two days only having elapsed after their receipt, Mr. Hastings laid before Council the instructions from the Secret Committee, under which he had acted. The Board resolved that, consistently with those orders, they could not receive Mahomed Reza



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Reza Cawn with the usual honours. It was proposed, that, in consideration of the rank of "his Excellency," the station he had filled, and the character and consequence he held in the empire, a member of the Board should be deputed to wait upon him, to explain verbally and in general terms the articles laid to his charge. A majority of the Board concurred in this measure. The President and three other members dissented from it, on the ground that it was inconsistent with the proceedings against him. Mr. Hastings had already written to assure Mahomed Reza Cawn of the exceeding grief and mortification which the commands of the Company had caused him; but stated, that he was their servant, and that whatever they ordered it was his duty to obey, "nor could he deviate one tittle from it;" but if, in his private character, he could afford him any testimony of his good will or attachment, he might rest assured he would.

Mr. Middleton was ordered to take charge of the office of Dewan, until a proper plan should be digested by the Council.

Rajah Shatab
Roy seized and
sent down to
Calcutta.

The Board considering that the charge of neglect or embezzlement of the revenues was applied equally to Shatab Roy, the Naib Dewan of the Bahar province, they resolved to lay an immediate restraint upon his person. He was sent down to Calcutta on the 7th May.

Mr. Graham, the member of Council deputed
to



to wait upon Mahomed Reza Cawn, met him at Chitpore. Having explained the cause of his mission, the latter expressed much anxiety that no delay should take place in bringing forward the charges to be preferred against him.

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A plan for the future arrangement of the Nabob's affairs was taken up by the Committee at Cossimbuzar, where Mr. Hastings had arrived from the Presidency. The Company having resolved to stand forth as Dewan, a question arose as to the maintenance of the office of Naib Soubah. The Council, after fully considering the various duties which appertained to that station, and referring to the probable state of affairs at the period when the Nabob Maborek-ud-Dowla, who succeeded his brother Syoof-ud-Dowla, in 1770, would reach his majority, were of opinion, that whatever faith might be due to treaties, doubtful in themselves, a divided government could only be productive of the most serious results and continual contests, terminating in anarchy and bloodshed. They, therefore, contemplated the possibility of a total change of rule taking place by degrees, by which the real power that protected the country should be substituted, in lieu of that which claimed the power by right, but was at the same time unable to maintain or support that right. In order to prepare the way for this change, they determined to take such measures as would retain openly in their hands the whole conduct of government, at least

Arrangement
as to the Na-
bob.

British Sove-
reignty con-
templated.

for



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for the present, and so to accustom the people to the sovereignty of the British nation.

The office of Naib Soubah was accordingly abolished, and a guardian appointed to the Nabob. The party fixed upon was Munnee Begum, the widow of the late Nabob Jaffier Ally Khan. Her rank was considered to give her a claim to the pre-eminence, without being open to the objection of its interfering with the course of policy to be observed in promoting and extending the British interests. The plan was adopted by the Council at Calcutta.

The next proposition submitted by Mr. Hastings was the selection of Rajah Goordass, the son of Maha-Rajah Nundcomar, for the office of Dewan of the Nabob's household. The grounds urged for this appointment appear to have been the "inveterate and rooted enmity" which had long subsisted between Nundcomar and Mahomed Reza Cawn, and the necessity of employing the vigilance and activity of so penetrating a rival, to counteract the designs of the latter, and to eradicate the influence which he might retain in the government. This measure was considered to be in strict accordance with the instructions from the Court of Directors; who, if they had not so expressed it, had necessarily implied it in their commands, since it was not to be expected that a new plan of government could effectually take place, while the influence of the former subsisted.

The



The youth and inexperience of Rajah Goordass were stated to render him inadequate to the real purposes of his appointment; but his father was considered to possess all the abilities, perseverance, and temper, requisite for such ends, in a degree, perhaps, exceeding any man in Bengal.

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Mr. Barwell entirely concurred in the proposal of Mr. Hastings; but Messrs. Dawes, Lawrell, and Graham objected to the measure. They considered it, in effect, the appointment of Nundcomar, whose previous political conduct, and the orders of the Court of Directors thereon, rendered him, in their judgment, unfit for the part which was suggested by the President. They adverted to his having assisted in carrying on a correspondence between the Shazada and the French governor of Pondicherry, in 1762, and to the fact that he was subsequently proved to have forged letters, with the view of inculcating and ruining a native, named Ram Churn, who had acted as banian to Lord Clive, General Caillaud, and Mr. Vansittart, which led the Court of Directors to remark, that Nundcomar had been guilty of carrying on correspondence with the country powers, "hurtful to the Company's interests; that he appeared to be of a wicked and turbulent disposition, and should not be trusted with his liberty in the Company's settlement." In October, 1764, he was found to have been in treaty

Opposition to
arrangements
as regarded
Nundcomar.



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Mr. Hastings' reasons for support of Nundcomar.

treaty to furnish Meer Cossim full accounts of all the transactions of the English army, on condition of being appointed to the Dewanny of Bengal; and in March, 1765, Mr. Vansittart had reported his treasonable correspondence with the enemy.

In reply to the objections urged against the appointment of Rajah Goordass, Mr. Hastings remarked, that Nundcomar's situation differed materially from that in which he stood under Meer Jaffier. He drew a distinction between the violation of a trust, and an offence committed against a government, to which, at the time, he owed no allegiance; and although he had himself detected the circumstances alleged against Nundcomar,* still he was persuaded that the Court of Directors would attribute his countenancing him to motives of zeal and fidelity to the service, in repugnance, perhaps, to his own inclinations. The father would have no trust or authority, and the son not possessing abilities equal to so great an undertaking, the slightest suspicion would be sufficient to remove the former, and frustrate all hope of his following up any design of moment against the government. The Board at Calcutta unanimously concurred with the Committee of Circuit in the appointment of Munnee Begum, as guardian to the Nabob; but there was a difference of opinion on that of Rajah Goordass, who

was

* Vide page 344.



was, however, nominated by a vote of the majority.

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These arrangements were notified to the Court in September 1772, when Mr. Hastings himself addressed the Directors from Cossimbuzar, explaining the circumstances under which Mahomed Reza Cawn and Rajah Shatab Roy had been so long detained in confinement, without any proofs having been obtained of their guilt.

Causes of delay
in proceedings
against Maho-
med Reza
Cawn and Ra-
jah Shatab Roy.

“I beg leave to call to your recollection, that by a strange concurrence of unforeseen causes, your administration had at this time every object that could engage the care of government (war only excepted), all demanding their instant attention. The settlement of the revenue of Bengal; the dismissal of the Naib Dewan and Naib Subah of the provinces; the inquiry into his conduct for a course of years preceding; the dismissal of the Naib Dewan of Behar, and inquiry into his conduct; the establishment of the Dewanny on the plan directed by the Honourable Company; the arrangement of the Nabob's household; the reduction of his allowance and expenses; the establishment of a regular administration of justice throughout the provinces; the inspection and reformation of the public offices; and, independent of all these, the ordinary duties of the Presidency, which, from the amazing growth of your affairs, were of themselves sufficient to occupy the whole time and application
which



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which we could bestow upon them, and even more than we could bestow, from the want of a regular system, the natural consequence of the rapidity with which these affairs have accumulated. So circumstanced, we were under an absolute necessity to leave many affairs suspended, that we might give due despatch to the rest. The first in consequence claimed our immediate regard: this was the settlement of the revenues. It was late in the season. The lands had suffered unheard-of depopulation by the famine and mortality of 1769. The collections, violently kept up to their former standard, had added to the distress of the country, and threatened a general decay of the revenue, unless immediate remedies were applied to prevent it.

“The farming system, for a course of years subjected to proper checks and regulations, seemed the most likely to afford relief to the country, and both to ascertain and produce the real value of the lands without violence to the ryots. It was, therefore, resolved, that this business should first take place; and it was deemed necessary, for this purpose, that a Committee, composed of the members of the Council, should be appointed to carry it into execution. The arrangement of the Dewanny, and the regulation of the Nabob's household, were added to the charge of the Committee; and as these comprehended the most valuable parts of your concerns, it was thought proper that I, as President,

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President, should be joined with it. This rendered it necessary to suspend the trials of Mahomed Reza Cawn and Rajah Shatab Roy, and this reason is assigned for it in our minutes. Neither Mahomed Reza Cawn nor Rajah Shatab Roy complained of the delay as a hardship. Perhaps all parties, as is usual in most cases of a public concern, had their secret views, which, on this occasion, though opposite in their direction, fortunately concurred in the same points. These had conceived hopes of a relaxation of the Company's orders. Mahomed Reza Cawn had even buoyed himself up with the hopes of a restoration to his former authority, by the interests of his friends, and a change in the Direction; and his letters, and the letters of his Dewan to the city, declared these expectations."

This communication to the Court was succeeded by a secret despatch of the 10th December following, in which they were apprized that the alleged balance against Mahomed Reza Cawn, of forty lacs, on account of the Chukla of Dacca, had risen from a mistake, his name having been inserted in the accounts of the year 1762, instead of the name of his predecessor, Mahomed Ally Cawn, and that the former had, as he stated, agreed only for 27,62,765 rupees, in the room of 38,86,242 rupees. The Government nevertheless remarked, "We have great reason to believe that, on a strict scrutiny, there will appear a balance against him of seventeen lacs."

Before



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Court of Directors entirely approve of the conduct of Mr. Hastings.

Before this latter statement had reached the Court of Directors, they had written to Mr. Hastings,* expressing their entire approbation of the measures detailed in his letter from Cossimbuzar, of the 1st September.

“The whole of your conduct seems to have fully justified the choice of the Secret Committee,† who entrusted to your management the execution of a plan of the utmost importance.

“Although you will observe that sundry changes have lately taken place in the direction of the Company’s affairs at home, those changes will not in the least affect the measures in which you are engaged: on the contrary, we take this early opportunity, not only of testifying our entire approbation of your conduct, but of assuring you of our firmest support in accomplishing the work you have so successfully commenced; and we doubt not, but it will issue in the deliverance of Bengal from oppression, in the establishment of our credit, influence, and interest, in India, and consequently, in every advantage which the Company or the nation may justly expect from so important a transaction.

“We

* Letter to Mr. Hastings, 16th April 1773.

† The terms in which the tenth article of the seventeenth charge in the impeachment was couched, questions the truth of the assertion made by Mr. Hastings, that he received orders, directed to *himself*, from the Secret Committee. This answer of the Court of Directors puts the fact beyond all doubt.

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“ We assure ourselves that you will prosecute your inquiries with steadiness, impartiality, and to full effect, notwithstanding the many difficulties and temptations which, we are sensible, may be thrown in the way of persons engaged in inquiries of this nature, in order to weaken their zeal for the public good, and to render their endeavours ineffectual for the great purposes of reformation.

“ Your attention to the settlement of the revenues, as a primary object, has our entire approbation ; and it is with the utmost satisfaction we observe that the farming system will be generally adopted ; more especially as the researches and discoveries made in the two preceding years must have nearly ascertained the value and produce of the lands ; so that imposition on the part of the farmers, respecting the value of the lands and oppression of the tenants, may, we hope, be easily avoided.

“ The extirpation of Mahomed Reza Cawn’s influence was absolutely necessary, and the apprehending of Shatab Roy equally so. As to any hopes which Mahomed Reza Cawn may entertain of profiting by changes in the Court of Directors, those hopes must speedily vanish ; for, however different their sentiments may be in some particulars, they heartily concur in the propriety and necessity of setting him aside, and of putting the administration of the Company’s affairs in the hands



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hands of persons who may be rendered responsible in England for their conduct in India.

“Your choice of the Begum for guardian to the Nabob, we entirely approve. The use you intend making of Nundcomar is very proper; and it affords us great satisfaction to find, that you could at once determine to suppress all personal resentment, when the public welfare seemed to clash with your private sentiments relative to him.

“As the shortness of our time will not permit us to be more particular, we can only repeat to you our assurances of protection and support, in carrying into full execution the arrangements you have so happily begun; and as we desire particularly that you will distinguish and encourage merit wherever you find it, so do we most strictly conjure you, not to suffer rank, station, or any connexion or consideration whatever, to deter you from bringing every oppression to light, and every offender, native or European, to condign punishment.

“If the abolition of the office of Naib Dewan, and stepping forth as principals, should in any degree alarm your European neighbours, we rely on your prudence for removing every improper jealousy that may be entertained on this account.

“Notwithstanding this letter is signed by us, the Court of Directors, we mean it as secret, and transmit it confidentially to you only; and we leave it to your discretion to lay the contents, or
any



any part thereof, before the Council, if circumstances should, in your opinion, render it necessary, or if you should judge it for our interest so to do, and not otherwise."

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Considerable progress had been made, by March, in the inquiries instituted respecting Rajah Shatab Roy and Mahomed Reza Cawn; but the Council foresaw in the latter "a tedious and troublesome business." They observed, "You may depend upon it, that neither pains nor attention shall be wanting to bring it to a conclusion: at present, nothing definitive has been done."*

In the month of August following, the Court were informed of the entire acquittal of the Rajah Shatab Roy, of embezzlement or mismanagement, during the period of his administration; and as the Council were fully satisfied of his great abilities and experience in revenue affairs, they appointed him to act as Roy-royan† of the Bahar province; and the Nabob, at their recommendation, consented to retain him his Naib for the criminal branch of the administration of justice, and to interpose in disputes with foreign nations.

Acquittal of
Shatab Roy.

He quitted Calcutta in a very bad state of health, and, after languishing some time, died in September. Rajah Kulliam Sing, his son, was appointed to

His death.

* Letter to the Directors, March, 1773.

† The principal officer under the Dewan of the Provinces, who has the immediate charge of the crown lands; and Superintendent of the Exchequer.



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to the vacant office of Roy-royan, in testimony of the sense entertained of the merits and services, as well as in consideration of the sufferings, of his father, by whom he had been entrusted with a considerable share in public affairs. The Nabob granted him sunnuds, appointing him Naib of the Nazim for the Bahar province, and confirming to him the title of Maha Rajah.*

Charges not
proved against
Mahomed Reza
Cawn.

With regard to Mahomed Reza Cawn, the first charge only, of monopolizing grain during the famine, had been gone through, and the Council acknowledged that none of the proofs in its support had established his guilt. On the contrary, the belief which prevailed in the country, of his being concerned in that trade, appeared to have arisen from the notions of the people, who, ignorant of the facts, blended and mistook the duties of Mahomed Reza Cawn's public station, in the measures which he pursued for the relief of the city, during the height of famine, for the exertion of sordid views to gratify and promote his private interests.

The second article of charge was the balance against him during the two years that he collected the Dacca revenues. This balance he alleged to be grounded on a document extorted from him, when under bodily fear, by Nundcomar. The latter denied the charge, and still declared that the balance was due, and might be recovered.

The

* Letter from Bengal, 10th November, 1773.



The Council determined to call upon Nundcomar for proof of the truth of his allegation.

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At the termination of the examination into the first charge, Mahomed Reza Cawn had undergone fourteen months' confinement. Upon maturely weighing every circumstance, the Council were unanimously of opinion, that full opportunity had been afforded to all persons desirous of accusing him, or of obtaining redress for grievances suffered at his hands, to have appeared to give their testimony, or to make their application, unawed by apprehensions of his power or resentment. The guard which had been placed over him was accordingly removed, on condition that he engaged not to depart from Calcutta till the inquiry was completed. It terminated in March, 1774. The Council stated, that although their opinions amounted to a general acquittal, they had forbore to pronounce them decidedly, but referred them to the Court for final judgment. He was declared free from arrest, but required not to leave the Bengal province until his entire enlargement was authorized by the Court.*

Declared free
from arrest.

In addition to the address from the Government of the 17th March, Mr. Hastings felt it necessary, in consequence of his having received the especial commands of the Court for conducting the inquiry, to enter into a personal explanation regarding some

* Letter from Bengal, 15th March, 1774.



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Mr. Hastings' explanation of his conduct as to the proceedings against Mahomed Reza Cawn.

some points in the proceedings. He accordingly wrote to the Directors on the 24th of that month, and alluded to the difficulties which he had to encounter "in the progress of that intricate business."—"I had neither witnesses, nor vouchers, nor materials of any sort to begin with. For these I relied chiefly on the abilities, observation, and active malignity of Maharajah Nundcomar. In concurrence with the Councils at Cossimbuzar and Calcutta, advertisements were published, inviting all persons to give information against such as had contributed to distress the country in the time of famine. I patiently bestowed hours and days in listening to the multiplied but indefinite suggestions of Nundcomar: in a word, I omitted no means, which were consistent with my character, to bring the truth of this accusation to light. In the course of the inquiry, I proceeded with the most rigid impartiality, not suffering (I can safely say) the smallest bias to incline me. You will see with what materials I was furnished. I am sorry to say, that some were collected with so little decency and regard to truth, as to make me apprehensive of the effects which they might have produced, from the countenance afforded to the Political Agent in the prosecution, had I not, in my own immediate conduct, invariably adhered to the strictest rule of justice."

The natives from whom statements had been transmitted home, and to which the Court referred in



in support of the course they directed to be observed towards Mahomed Reza Cawn, when called to the proof, failed in establishing one iota of the charges against him. The accounts furnished by Nundcomar appeared more calculated to acquit than to afford any proof against him; and although Nundcomar had offered to supply very minute accounts as to the Dacca collections and the Nizamut accounts, and likewise to prove embezzlement in the rate of exchange, none of the papers which he produced afforded any thing like proofs, but merely reiterated charges, without one voucher, or the least aid that could lead to one, in support of them.

“I am at a loss,” said Mr. Hastings, “to discover the secret spring which governs the mysterious conduct of this man;” and then, as if in anticipation of what was to befall himself at a future period, he wrote: “Notwithstanding the consciousness which I possess of my own integrity, and the certainty that my conduct throughout this ungrateful business will, on the most rigid scrutiny, do me credit, yet I am not without my fears; I am aware of the violent prejudices which were taken up at once against Mahomed Reza Cawn by all ranks of people, both here and at home. I am also aware that, in England, where the very name of inquiry into the past management of affairs in India, flatters the passion of the times, and raises expectations of great and important detections,

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detections, the result may baulk those expectations, and turn the torrent of clamour another way. In many of the private letters which I received from my friends in England, I was warned to act with great caution in this inquiry, as the confirmation of my credit with the public, and (forgive me for adding) with your Honourable Court, depended upon it. The magnitude of the charges which were alleged against Mahomed Reza Cawn, his reputed wealth, the means which that afforded him, both of suppressing evidence, and even of influencing his judges in his favour, and the natural conclusion deducible from so many exaggerated accusations, that some part of them, at least, was true, gave additional force to these cautionary intimations, and made me fear for the consequences, not only as they might affect my reputation, which it has been the study of my life to maintain unblemished, but as they might blast all my hopes from the continuation of your favour, which I hold solely on the credit of my integrity. I must candidly own, that I never gave up a portion of my time to this business, without feeling a painful regret that so much of it was lost to the care of your real interests."

Duplicity of
Nundcomar.

He then adverted to the dark and deceitful character of Nundcomar, whose gratitude no kindness could bind, nor even his own interest disengage from the crooked politics which had been



been the study of his whole life. "Before my departure from Fort St. George, when my appointment to this Presidency was known, a messenger, expressly deputed from Munnee Begum, came to me there, with letters from her, entreating my protection in the most earnest terms, both for her house and for the people of Bengal, against the tyranny of Mahomed Reza Cawn, and referring for further information to Maharajah Nundcomar, from whom I received similar addresses on the same subject and by the same hand. The Munnee Begum has since solemnly disavowed ever having written such letters, or authorized such a communication.

"A short time after the elevation of his son as Dewan to the Nabob, Nundcomar sent drafts of letters to the Begum, which he recommended her to write to me, enumerating the many encroachments which had been made by the English Government on the rights of the Nizamut, and reclaiming them on behalf of the Nabob. I trust to his own genius to furnish you with nearer proofs, in the representations which he has already made, or which he may at this time convey to your knowledge." In closing the letter, Mr. Hastings observed: "Whatever your resolution may be concerning the future fate of Mahomed Reza Cawn, it is my duty (although I believe it unnecessary) to represent that, whatever reparation you may think due for his past sufferings, the restoration

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restoration of any part of the power which he before possessed, will inevitably tend to the injury of the Company's affairs, and the diminution of your influence and authority. There can be but one government and one power in the province. Even the pretensions of the Nabob may prove a source of embarrassment, when he is of age to claim his release from the present state of pupilage which prevents his asserting them."

British Government must
be supreme.

In connexion with this last passage, which is in accordance with the views entertained by Mr. Hastings, on framing the arrangement by which Munnee Begum and Rajah Goordass received their respective appointments of guardian and dewan to the Nabob, it is necessary to bear in mind what passed when the Nabob Nazim-ood-Dowla was supported in his succession to the musnud, on the death of his father, Meer Jaffier, in 1765.*

The acquisition of the Dewanny, which shortly followed, led to the further extension of the British authority: but the assumption of the office of Dewan by the Company was productive of far greater changes in the native system of administration than any measure by which it had been preceded.

Conduct of Mr.
Hastings and
the Council
fully approved.

The conduct of Mr. Hastings and of his Council, throughout the whole course of the proceedings regarding Mahomed Reza Cawn and Shatab Roy,

* *Vide* page 98.



Roy, was fully approved by the Court of Directors, who observed, that the general and alarming accounts of the oppressions rendered a scrutiny into their conduct indispensable. The Governor and Council had expressed a belief that the inquiry would issue in proving a large balance to be due; the Court, therefore, felt authorized to conclude, that there must have been such public and general appearances of mal-administration, as warranted the course they had adopted; but as they wished Mahomed Reza Cawn to remain under no other obligations than those of "*gratitude*," they did not object to his total enlargement.*

The original instructions to Mr. Hastings, of August 1771, were peremptory and decided; he obeyed them promptly and literally; but the whole of the proceedings exhibit the baneful effects of acting in any degree upon private and unofficial representations, and awaken feelings of deep sympathy for the sufferings of a distinguished native, who had been subjected to so protracted and severe an ordeal, terminating in the entire failure of his enemies to establish any one of the charges so unjustly brought against him.

Amidst other important matters which engaged the attention of Mr. Hastings and his Council, were the negotiations with the Vizier, followed by the Rohilla war.

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Sympathy awakened in behalf of Mahomed Reza Cawn.

1772.

The

* Letter to Bengal, 3d March 1775.



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Incursions of
the Mahrattas.

The Court of Directors had received with much concern the statement of the incursions made by the Mahrattas, not only into the territories of the King, but those of Shuja Dowla, to part of which they had also laid claim.* They regarded the conduct of the Rohillas and Jauts as a matter of regret rather than surprise, the King and Vizier having neglected the opportunity to unite with those powers for the purpose of repelling the Mahrattas, who were the common disturbers of the empire. To whatever causes this general timidity or supineness was owing, the Company's interests were equally affected, and the tranquillity of the provinces endangered. Still, the projects of the King and the Vizier were of too mysterious a character to enable the Court to decide as to the motives of their inactivity; and as they could not know what alliances might be formed to justify the carrying the Company's arms beyond the bounds of their dominions, they felt precluded from proposing any precise plan for the guidance of the Council, but trusted that their sole object would be the security of the Company's possessions, and those of the powers with whom they were connected, both by treaty and interest; and as this appeared to have guided their conduct, upon the Mahrattas invading the province of Corah, the measures which they had adopted for defending the dominions of the King and Vizier from

* *Vide* page 280, *et seq.*



from their inroads and depredations, were fully approved.*

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The Vizier at length found his position towards the Mahrattas so critical, that he was induced to seek an interview with General Sir Robert Barker, to discuss the measures most prudent to be pursued for the preservation of his interests. He was also desirous of adjusting some points connected with the cession to the Company of the fortress of Chunagur. They accordingly met at Fyzabad. The Vizier persisted in his determination not to obey the summons of the King for his attendance at Delhi. He felt that, if he joined his Majesty, he should be merely an idle spectator of the enterprize preparing by the Mahrattas against the Rohillas; and in the event of the latter being compelled to surrender a large portion of their country, his own possessions would be placed in jeopardy by the proximity of the enemy, while an alliance might, at the same time, take place between them and the Rohillas against himself. In order to avert these consequences, he resolved to open a negociation with the Rohillas. To give weight to this proposition, he entreated Sir Robert Barker to accompany him on the expedition. The Council, anxious to bring matters to a pacific termination, acceded to this request. The Rohillas appeared ready to make a cession of part of their territory to him, on condition of his supporting

Vizier consults
Sir Robert
Barker.

Declines to
join the King.

Views in sup-
port of the Ro-
hillas, who are
defeated by the
Mahrattas.

Zabita

* Letter to Bengal, August 1771.



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Zabita Cawn, then at Succurtaul, guarding the fords of the Ganges against the Mahrattas, who had prevailed on the King to oppose him. A body of the former, under Madajee Scindia, amounting to 40,000 men, advanced within sixteen coss of the fords. Having taken every precaution to ensure their passage, they crossed under cover of their cannon, and entirely defeated the Rohillas. Finding Succurtaul abandoned by Zabita Cawn, who sought safety in flight, they followed up their success by penetrating to the very heart of Rohilcund.

Apprehensions
of the Vizier.

Had the Vizier not been encouraged by the presence of Sir R. Barker at this juncture, he was prepared to have submitted to the most humiliating terms to purchase his security. Conduct so opposite to his general ardour, and with a well appointed army, was attributed to the disaffection which his troops had of late so frequently manifested towards him. The general enabled the Vizier to place his affairs on the frontiers on a respectable footing; but being apprehensive that the Mahrattas might attempt to penetrate into the dominions of Oude, he ordered the first brigade, then at Patna, to pass the Caramnassa.* The Council disapproved of this step, as no requisition had

* This river separates the province of Bahar from that of Benares. On crossing this river, the Company's officers were considered to have quitted the Company's territories, and received an additional allowance, in consideration of their distance from the Presidency.



had been made by the Vizier either to the Council or to the Commander-in-chief, for aid, nor had any stipulation been entered into for the Vizier's paying the extra expenses to be incurred by the movement.

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The fort of Chunagur being at length ceded to the Company for as long a term as they might desire to hold it, one of their battalions took possession; their troops were also to remain at Allahabad, the Vizier requiring that his colours should be exhibited on the walls merely as an acknowledgement of his authority. These measures necessarily led to our passing the boundary which had been so long laid down as the line within which the Company's operations were to be confined.

Cession of
Chunagur to
the Company.

The Mahrattas limited their incursion to laying waste the Rohilla country, retiring at the commencement of the rains. The Rohilla chiefs, Hafiz Rhamet and Zabita Cawn, fled precipitately towards the northern hills, and others had surrendered to Scindia. The Vizier subsequently entered into a treaty with the Rohillas through Hafiz Rhamet, by which, on paying him forty lacs of rupees, he was to take an active part in their defence. The Mahrattas did not object, provided they received their *chout*. They even offered the Vizier part of the conquered territories from the Rohillas, contiguous to his own, retaining for themselves the tract of land to the westward of the

Dispersion of
the Rohilla
chiefs.

Vizier agrees
to support
Rohillas.



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Council refuse
to co-operate.Mahrattas'
treatment of
the King.Duplicity of
the King.

the Ganges and Zabita Cawn's country, which had already been made over to the King. He then made a formal requisition to the Council for aid, which they declined, not feeling bound by treaty to engage with him in distant schemes wholly opposed to the course of policy they had determined to pursue. They resolved to keep the treaty with him inviolate, but disapproved of offensive measures, intending to avoid, without absolute necessity to the contrary, all military operations foreign to the immediate defence of the Company's provinces; but they were apprehensive that the ambition of the Mahrattas would bring the period of interference nearer than they could wish. They had already overrun the Rohilla country, and they regarded the King, who was virtually in their possession, solely as the instrument of their own aggrandizement. So far from re-establishing him in his government, they positively refused to keep their engagement of sharing with him half the spoils; and having extorted from him sunnuds for Meerut, they left him almost destitute, in the midst of a rich and plentiful camp, even of the common necessities required to support at least an appearance of dignity.

His Majesty at this time evinced a desire to reunite himself to his former allies; but, at the moment of making this profession, he was suggesting to the Mahrattas the necessity of their
sowing

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sowing dissensions between the Vizier and the Council, in order the more effectually to promote the success of their own movements.

The negotiations between the Rohillas and the Vizier were scarcely terminated, when the Mahrattas, finding themselves excluded, and that a treaty of defence had been entered into against them, determined to revenge themselves on Shuja Dowla, and demanded, as the terms for preserving tranquillity, the cession of Corah, Allahabad, and Benares, the abandonment of his settlement with the Rohillas, the discharge of all sums which the King stood indebted to them, and, lastly, that the Vizier should unite with them against every opponent.

Mahrattas' opposition to the treaty between Vizier and Rohillas.

The Vizier first announced this intelligence to the Council in July, and requested a body of troops for his support. The President stated that a defensive course could alone be adopted; but, in order to allay his fears, the first brigade was directed to join him: he also wrote to Mhadarao and Bysajee, the Mahratta chiefs, acquainting them with the extreme dissatisfaction of the Council at the hostile demonstration towards the Vizier, and that, by treaty, the Company were bound to defend his territories against every invader.

Council expostulate with Mahrattas.

The Council, in communicating these proceedings to the Court, stated it to be their unanimous determination, that no object or consideration should



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Difference between Mah-ratta chiefs.

The King opposes them, and is defeated.

Defeat of the Jauts by the Mahrattas.

should tempt or compel them to pass the political line which they had laid down for their operations with the Vizier, which were to be defensive only, and the army was not to be carried beyond the borders of the Vizier's territories; adding, "to this resolution we shall steadily adhere."

The Mahratta chiefs having espoused different interests in the distribution of Zabita Cawn's country, Bysajee and Tokajee broke up their camp at Coel, and proceeded towards Delhi, for the purpose of intimidating the King into a compliance with their respective demands on the Rohillas. His Majesty, influenced by Scindia, opposed all their measures, he would not consent to their interfering in the settlement of the Rohilla affairs, without the previous concurrence of Mhadarao; and intimated that the Vizier ought to be considered the ostensible person in the negotiations. He was also extremely irritated at the march of the chiefs, and collected a body of troops, in order to oppose them, should they attempt other means than that of negotiation. Neither party giving way, a battle took place, in which the King was completely defeated, and again placed at the entire mercy of the Mahrattas.

Scindia pursued his success against the Jauts, who suffered from the defection of a Mr. Maddox, an active officer in their service, formerly a deserter from the English army, having gone over from the Jauts with a considerable force to the King.

At



At the earnest solicitation of the Vizier, Colonel Champion was ordered to join him with the first brigade. A bridge of boats was thrown over the river at Benares to facilitate the progress of the troops. His instructions were accompanied by an injunction, that "not a single sepoy was to pass the frontiers of the Vizier's territories." Colonel Champion replaced the first with the second of the brigades at Dinagepore.

The King's affairs in connexion with the Mahrattas, who had extorted from his Majesty a formal surrender of the provinces of Corah and Currah, secured to him for the support of his dignity and expenses, under the treaty of 1765, were at this time fully entered into by the President. The subject having been freely canvassed, and the Court's views, of August 1771,* specially referred to, the Council determined to include those provinces within the line of defensive operations. Colonel Champion was accordingly authorized to cross the river at Allahabad, either with the whole brigade, or such part of it as he might judge proper for the service. Precise instructions were given to Sir Robert Barker on no account to commence hostilities with the Mahrattas, but to confine his operations to the Corah province, and not to cross the line, nor to engage in an offensive war. If the Mahrattas should have begun a war by actual

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Council determine to include Corah within line of defensive operations.

* *Vide* pages 284-287.



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actual invasion, then he was to be at full liberty to adopt such measures for repelling them as he might judge most proper, even to passing the borders of Corah, to attack with advantage. On the service being completed, he was to return within the previous limits. The Vizier was to assign the revenues of Ghazeepore, or some other adequate security, for the payment of the additional charge occasioned by these movements for his defence.

Appoint a superintendent of Corah, &c.

On the 26th April, instructions were approved by the Council to Mr. Lawrell, a member of the Board, desiring him to proceed, in the character of superintendent, and receive charge from General Sir Robert Barker, of the province of Corah, and such part of the Allahabad province as was confirmed to the King by the treaty of 1765.

Munerah-ud-Dowlah was to be maintained as the King's Naib in the actual government, but under the control of the superintendent. The appointment of Mr. Lawrell was to take place in the most public manner, in order that no doubt should exist as to the intention of the Council to maintain the Company's influence and participation in the affairs and revenues of the province, and to establish a right to the future disposal of it in the most equitable manner, when it might become matter of negotiation.

Sir Robert Barker was informed, that the great and important duties of his station, and the distance to which the operations had drawn him, precluded



precluded the Council from availing themselves of the continuance of his services in the Corah province. Previously to the receipt of the above communication from the Council, Sir Robert Barker had addressed them on the ill-consequences which he considered to have arisen from civil servants interfering with the employment of the military stationed in the provinces.

In all instructions issued by the Council, the greatest caution had been inculcated as to the bearing to be observed by civil servants towards the military. The ardour of Mr. Penling, a civilian, in an affair at Chittacottah, had carried him a little beyond the mere line of his civil duty, but rather to his praise than censure: the civilian's duty being to point out the service to be performed; but the military, to judge of the mode of performing it. The matter was taken up very warmly by the General. The Committee of Circuit bore the strongest testimony to the delicacy observed by Mr. Penling towards the military: according to the rule, he had done nothing more than become the channel of conveying the orders to the military officers. The General stated that the officers had become dejected, and that, when it was generally known that they were under the civilians, "none but men of infamous character would accept the Company's service."*

The

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Sir Robert Barker complains of the interference of civil servants with military officers.

Explanations of Council.

* Consultations, 3d March, 1773.



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Further differences.

Sir Robert Barker's reasons for desiring to resign.

The General was apprised by the Council that the orders of the Company were clear and explicit: that obedience to the civil power was a condition of the acceptance of the service; and that the circumstance of the retreat alluded to by the General from Buxydar, was executed by the military officer, and not by the civil servant.

Another circumstance unfortunately occurred in the following month, which tended to increase the misunderstanding between Sir Robert Barker and the Council. It related to Captain Harper's recall from the Court of the Vizier, where he had been for some time stationed, his services being no longer deemed expedient at that post. Notwithstanding this determination had been made known to Sir Robert Barker, he thought proper to send Captain Harper again to the Vizier, for the purpose of transacting business with his Excellency, giving him the command of the Vizier's grenadier sepoys. He had also received instructions, through the general's secretary, to remain at Mongheer or Patna till he joined him, notwithstanding the public order of the Board, that Captain Harper was not to be engaged in any way in the Vizier's service.

The General entered into various explanations on points connected with differences that had arisen upon military etiquette, and desired to repair to the Presidency, in order to resign the service; stating, "it is now, from many concomitant circumstances, become impracticable for the commanding



manding officers of the forces to execute what I imagine our honourable employers expect from such an office,—*viz.* to regulate the conduct, manners, and discipline of the officers and soldiers of their army in Bengal, and for other reasons which I shall communicate to the Board.”*

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The Council replied to this communication in the following terms: “We solemnly declare, that we know no instance in which we have either attempted to weaken your authority or deprive you of the means to execute this essential part of your trust, or where we have refused our support to any measure, by which you might advance the credit or improvement of the military corps. The instance to which alone the charge seems applicable (we mean, the power granted to the civil servants of the Company, of commanding the military forces) cannot be a motive for you to give up so important and honourable a station, and to deprive the Company of your services, since you express your entire satisfaction in the line which we have laid down for the conduct of all military operations which shall be undertaken under the control of the civil servants. If we have contributed in any other instances to impel you to so abrupt and extraordinary a resolution, we request that you will acquaint us very fully with the particulars, that we may be enabled to vindicate our conduct

Council's reply.

* Letter to Council from Sir R. Barker, 12th January 1773.



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conduct to our superiors. The temper of the times obliges us to this caution and requisition. We see the characters of the Company's servants indiscriminately branded with the most atrocious crimes, founded on vague and indefinite hints, with which they have too liberally furnished the public against each other, and often on circumstances either wholly unknown or unnoticed in the Company's records. It becomes, therefore, our duty to guard against the possibility of every such attack, by fixing every imputation upon our conduct, however remote, to the facts and circumstances on which it may allude."

The General urged, that his powers as Commander-in-chief had been lowered; and, although appointments might be made to particular offices by the Council at the Presidency, yet that the recommendation should always have come through him, as the Commander-in-chief; that he should have been invested with the power of bestowing rewards as well as inflicting punishments; and if the President and Council, and the *President by himself*, take upon them the sole arrangements of corps, the nomination of every post in the army, the forming of every detachment, and the appointment of every officer to command, there was no occasion for any Commander-in-chief.

Mr. Hastings' Minute in reply to Sir Robert Barker.

Mr. Hastings being absent when this letter from the General was received by the Council, the subject was taken up on his return to the Presidency.

He

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He recorded a minute, in which he observed, that the objections taken by the General to the extension of the civil authority, was rather to the abuse of that power than to the power itself.

“ I have neither employed it to gratify personal resentment nor personal favour, having made it a rule, from which I have never varied but at the instance of the General himself, to promote every officer according to his rank in the service. Whatever cause I may have to conceive myself unfairly treated in the reflections cast upon me by the General, I mean only to vindicate myself in this reply. Had he, on any occasion in which he judged me to have encroached on the line of his duty, acquainted me with it, he would have found me disposed to hear him with candour and to repair my own inadvertency. I am not ashamed to acknowledge my errors ; because, from the variety and rapid succession of affairs which occupy my attention, I have less time and power of recollection, and, of course, am more liable to error, than any person in the service.”

He then laid down what he considered to be the general principles which should govern their proceedings :—

“ The collective body of the Council are, or ought to be, possessed of an absolute and uncontrollable authority over every office and every department of the government ; but in all the detail of business, and in the execution of their orders
which



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which they have entrusted to others, they should impose upon themselves the rule of avoiding to interfere but on every necessary occasion, of which they can only be the judges.

“The powers of the Council devolve on the Governor during the intervals of the meeting of the Board, with the same cautionary reserve in respect to the detail and executive business, and with the exception of such matters as, either by express rule, by usage, or by their evident importance, are only cognizable by the Board.”

The Council collectively felt called upon to record the most ample testimony to the candour with which the President had replied to the General's statements, and to his conduct having been strictly regulated by the principles of equity and moderation, in no instance exceeding the usage of his predecessors.

Mr. Lawrell
assumes charge
of Comh.

Mr. Lawrell took formal possession, on the 26th June, of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad, and their dependencies, in the name of the Company, acting as allies to the King, Shah Alum. Had the encroachment of the Mahrattas been tacitly acquiesced in, their power would have been firmly established in the Dooab and in Rohilcund. The only barrier between them and the Company was the Vizier; and it was apparent, from his conduct on the occasion of the former defeat of the Rohillas by Madajee Scindia, in

1772,



1772, that his continued adherence could not have been expected unless supported by the Company's forces.

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He had repeatedly expressed a desire for an interview with the President, to concert measures for opposing the Mahrattas. The Council, feeling that such a meeting might prove advantageous to the Company's affairs, resolved that Mr. Hastings should proceed to Benares. He accordingly left Calcutta on the 25th June. The circumstances attending the connexions with the King and the Vizier being liable to so many variations, the Council felt it to be impossible to mark out any precise line for the guidance of Mr. Hastings, in whose experience and abilities they reposed the most entire confidence. A revision of the existing treaties between the Company and the Vizier, which were felt to be based on an unequal footing, was one of the leading objects, as the latter might call upon the Company for assistance, and yet was under no defined obligation to defray the additional charge thrown upon them by affording him such assistance.

Mr. Hastings' visit to the Vizier.

The King having originally proceeded to Delhi against the earnest remonstrance of the Council, they considered that, so long as he continued there, all engagements between his Majesty and the Company were dissolved. The permanent retention of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad by the Company, would have been both inconvenient



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convenient and expensive, whilst their proximity to the possessions of the Vizier rendered them an eligible exchange with him for Chunar and Gha-zeepore.

In the event of the King renewing his alliance with the Company, they were prepared to restore to him those provinces, upon his renouncing the tribute of twenty-six lacs from Bengal and Bahar and re-uniting himself with the Vizier, to whom the management of the provinces was to be confided.

Mr. Hastings, during his journey towards Benares, repeatedly urged the King to send some one to meet him, with full powers to treat on his affairs. His Majesty, instead of complying with the request, wrote to the Vizier and Munerah-ud-Dowlah, demanding the balance of the tribute and its regular payment for the future ; also requiring that the provinces should be restored to Munerah-ud-Dowlah on his behalf.

Treaty with
the Vizier.

Mr. Hastings reached Benares on the 19th August, and, on the 7th September, concluded a final treaty with the Vizier, by which the districts of Corah and Allahabad were ceded to him, on condition of his paying fifty lacs of rupees to the Company ; twenty in ready money, and the remaining thirty lacs in two years, in two equal payments ; and defraying the charges on account of any of the Company's forces which he might require, the same being fixed at two lacs ten thousand per month for a brigade. The Vizier, at
the



the instance of Mr. Hastings, renewed with Cheyt Sing the engagements made with his father Bulwunt Sing, in 1764, excepting the additional tribute of two and a-half lacs of rupees, to which Cheyt Sing had agreed, on his accession to the Raj, in 1770. Application was again made to the Vizier for the dismissal of M. Gentil, although Mr. Hastings was of opinion that "the man" had acquired importance from the notice taken of him, rather than from his real power to affect our interests. It was arranged that a Resident should be appointed to the Court of the Vizier from the Presidency.

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The Vizier left Benares the 10th September, on which day Mr. Hastings departed for Chunar, where he fixed the boundary of the lands appertaining to the fort. He then proceeded to Patna, for the purpose of acquiring information respecting the saltpetre-manufactories; and resumed his seat at the Board on the 4th October, when he submitted a detailed report of his proceedings, and adverted to what had passed between the Vizier and himself, as to the appointment of a Resident at the Court of Oude, from the Governor in Council.

Mr. Hastings
rejoins the
Council and
reports result.

"In the course of our conversation, the Vizier frequently expressed the satisfaction which he had received from our meeting, and from the friendly and confidential intercourse which had taken place between us. Though such professions are not
always



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always to be received in their literal sense, I took occasion from them to ask him whether it would be agreeable to him that a person in whom I confided should be appointed by me to reside near his person, for the sake of perpetuating and strengthening the good understanding so happily begun, as well as for the transaction of such ordinary affairs as might not suit the formality of a correspondence by letter, but which, in their amount, are always found to be productive of important effects: that I desired it myself; but unless it was equally his wish, I would neither propose nor consent to it, as it would not, in such a case, be productive of the good effects which I meant to derive from it. He declared to me that it would be entirely pleasing to him. I told him that I would again address him, after my return to Calcutta, on the same subject, when I should have made choice of a person duly qualified for so important a trust. It now rests with you, gentlemen, to determine on the propriety of this appointment. I will offer it frankly as my opinion, that if you shall think it proper to entrust with me the sole nomination of such a Resident, and the power of recalling him whenever I shall judge his presence to be no longer necessary, it may be attended with good effects; in any other mode, I fear the appointment would exclude me from being the channel of connexion between this government and the Vizier, and prevent my availing myself of
that



that influence with him which I have taken much pains to establish, and I hope not altogether unsuccessfully."

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The Council congratulated the President on the successful termination of his mission, which they considered to be most beneficial for the Company's interests, and declared that the treaty had been framed in strict accordance with the system recognized by the Court for maintaining and strengthening an alliance with the Vizier, whose dominions formed the natural barrier for the security of the Company's provinces. They also agreed to delegate to Mr. Hastings the power of nominating an agent to reside at his court, whenever, in his judgment, circumstances might require it: the party to be approved by the Board, the power of recal being left to Mr. Hastings, who was to notify its exercise to the Board.

Council approve of Mr. Hastings' conduct.

Authorize him to appoint a resident with Vizier.

Sir Robert Barker arrived at Calcutta on the 7th October, and took his seat in Council, when he recorded his dissent from the arrangement which had been made at Benares, contrary, in his judgment, to the treaty of Allahabad of 1765. Mr. Hastings replied to the General's objections, and contended that the districts of Corah and Allahabad had been bestowed on Shah Alum for the support of his dignity and expenses. That the King first abandoned, and afterwards, by a solemn grant, gave them away to the Mahrattas, who were more dangerous neighbours. In resuming

Sir Robert Barker dissents from the treaty with the Vizier.

Mr. Hastings justifies that measure.



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suming these provinces, the Government did so, not from the King, whose property and rights were annulled by his own alienation of them, but from the Mahrattas. If it was repugnant to the treaty to possess these provinces from the King, it was equally so to oppose the Mahrattas, who by force obtained them from the King, a mere pageant in their hands. The sunnuds for the Dewanny could in no way be considered dependent upon the possession of Corah and Allahabad by the King. The General observed, "that it was more than probable that we should soon see these sunnuds in the hands of other nations." Mr. Hastings asked, "What will they avail them? It was not the want of the sunnuds of Shah Alum which defeated the long-concerted projects of the Duc de Choiseul, nor will the possession of them quicken the designs of the Mahrattas against us. *The sword, which gave us the dominion of Bengal,* must be the instrument of its preservation; and if (which God forbid) it shall ever cease to be ours, the next proprietor will derive his right and possession from the same natural charter.

"Opinions of what might have been done, always have an advantage in the comparison with what has been done. Any conjectures may be hazarded of the probable consequences of the former; no events can refute them: the latter are fixed to certain and unavoidable proofs. I feel the force of this inequality in the present argument