achievement of the troops of Zalim Singh, the Rajah of Kottah, in an attack upon the village and fortress of Narrulla. They had very light artillery *, and the breach was very imperfect, but their brave and veteran commander, Mehrab Khan, fearing the garrison might escape during the night, ordered a storm. The resistance was desperate, the breach proving almost impracticable; but the attack was continued for two hours, and all obstacles at length overcome by the persevering courage of the assailants, more than two hundred of whom, with several officers of rank, were killed and wounded. Nearly the whole of the garrison were put to the sword.

Kauder Buksh, the principal of the Holkar Pindaries, with several of the other chiefs of that tribe, had given themselves up to Brigadier-general Malcolm, and had been sent with Kurreem Khan to Hindustan, to be settled in Guruckpoor, far from their former haunts and adherents. Accounts had been received that Cheetoo and Rajün, the two only remaining leaders of any consequence, had gone to Bhopaul, to deliver themselves up; but this was soon followed up by intelligence that, not liking the terms, they had fled, and returned to the woods and fastnesses on the banks of the Nerbudda. Brigadier-general Malcolm considering that their re-assembling any followers would be attended with the worst consequences, moved south, on the 1st of April, with three battalions of sepoys, a regiment of cavalry, and two thousand irregular horse. He advanced himself on Banglee, directing Colonel R. Scott, with a strong detachment, on Indore, from whence, as well as Banglee, detachments were pushed into the forests in all directions. Rajün gave himself up, while Cheetoo succeeded

* The largest calibre was a four-and-half pounder.

with great difficulty in escaping across the Nerbudda, with ten or twelve adherents.

The chiefs who rule the tribes, or rather the robbers that inhabit the banks of the Nerbudda, from Hindea to Mohyser, had long aided the Pindaries, and the army of Sir Thomas Hislop had been attacked as it passed their hills. On its march to the southward every pains were taken at this period by Brigadier-general Malcolm, and the officers under him, to conciliate their chiefs and these followers; at the same time they were threatened with exemplary punishment if they continued to protect the Pindaries, or committed the slightest outrage, either upon the camp followers or the inhabitants of the country. The success of these measures was complete. Many of the Pindaries, whom they had concealed, were delivered up with their families and horses; and though our troops and convoys traversed this country in every direction, and in the smallest parties, not one instance occurred of attack or even robbery, and every chief came into Brigadier-general Malcolm's camp, to endeavour to cultivate his friendship, and to establish the claim of early submission to the British government.

The extinction of the Pindaries, the great success of our arms, the change made in the predatory government of Holkar, the expulsion or conversion into peaceable subjects of the Sondees, and the complete intimidation of the plunderers on the Nerbudda, had raised the reputation of the British government in this quarter as high as it was possible; and the return of the inhabitants to villages which had been deserted for many years, and the commencement of cultivation in every quarter, proclaimed the character of that confidence which had been established.

The dispersed plunderers, and the discontented part of

the military population were at this period (the beginning of May) gratified by a report, apparently on a good foundation, that the Paishwah, aided by Ram Deen, a rebel chief of the Holkar government, and many others, meant to enter Malwa. Brigadier-general Malcolm immediately reinforced the convoy that was marching to the Deckan from Hindia with the guns captured at Mahidpore, and the remaining sick and wounded of the Commander-in-chief's army; and, at the same time, sent a battalion of sepoys, under Lieutenant-colonel Smith, to Mundlesir, a small fort (belonging to the Paishwah) on the Nerbudda, within three miles of Chouly Mohyser, directing him to take possession of it, and place posts at the fords in its vicinity. This service was effected without opposition, and gave strength at an essential point. Though certain accounts had been received that Badjerow's army was retreating in a north-westerly direction, Brigadier-general Malcolm directed the escort with the guns, which he had strengthened to twelve companies of native infantry, four field pieces, and sixteen hundred irregular horse, to proceed by Burrhampore to Jaulnah. He considered that in the state the Paishwah's army must be in after their defeat and flight, they could not venture to attack such a corps. The event proved that the conclusion was correct. Badjerow was within a short distance of this force on the 6th of May, but evidently too solicitous for his own safety to think of endangering that of others; and the distance which in his rapid flight he had gained upon Brigadier-general Doveton's force, placed him for the moment at ease, and he encamped

* Badjerow had been routed by Colonel Adams, and obliged to fly from the territories of Nagpore. He was closely pursued by Brigadier-general Doveton.

near Dholkote *, where he began to refresh and to recruit his broken and dispirited troops. Brigadier-general Malcolm received this intelligence on his arrival at Mhow, a place twelve miles south-west of Indore, which he had fixed upon for his principal cantonments during the remaining part of the hot season and the approaching rains. He immediately ordered Lieutenant-colonel Russell, with a regiment of cavalry, to proceed to Hindia, meaning him, after being joined by eight companies of the battalion in garrison at that fort, and three hundred Mysore horse, to form a detachment ready to act as circumstances might direct. Six companies of sepoys were at the same time moved to Onchode, a commanding spot on the top of the Ghaut: two sent to reinforce Hindia; one to guard the pass of Peepulda, about thirty miles to the west of Onchode; while a detachment of three companies was ordered to guard the Ghauts in the Dhar country, and a ford at Chikulda, on the Nerbudda, about fifty-five miles west of Mohyser.

These arrangements, and the state of alertness in which Brigadier-general Malcolm kept the remainder of his force, made it almost impossible that Badjerow could enter Malwa in force at any point on this line, without being attacked; and to secure against his making an attempt to cross the Nerbudda to the eastward, Brigadier-general Watson was requested to send what he could spare of his light troops. The general complied with the requisition, and an efficient light corps, under Major Cuming, advanced to Kotra, a place about forty miles west of Hussingabad, completed the defensive arrangements to cover the southern frontier of

* Dholkote, a place six or seven miles west of Asseerghur, and twelve or thirteen north of Bhurrampore.

Malwa, from the eastern parts of Bhopaul to the west of the territories of Dhar.

The revived hopes of the freebooters who, though subdued, were still scattered over Malwa—the discontent which the late changes had created in numbers—and, above all, the uncertainty of the line of policy that Sindia might pursue, and the knowledge that the greater part of his provincial governors, and almost every Mahratta officer either in his or Holkar's government, cherished sentiments hostile to our interests,—rendered it of the utmost importance that every effort should be made to prevent the Paishwah entering a country in which his presence was certain to spread again the flame of discord and war.

Brigadier-general Malcolm received accounts that vakeels or envoys from the Paishwah, with overtures for peace, were within two marches of his camp. He immediately directed that he should be permitted to advance, and Anund Row Jeswunt, and two other vakeels, charged with a letter from Badjerow, reached the Brigadier-general's camp at Mhow, late at night on the 16th of May. This letter was expressive of the Paishwah's wish for peace, and requesting particularly that General Malcolm (whom he styled one of his oldest and best friends) would undertake the office of re-establishing a good understanding between him and the British government.

Brigadier-general Malcolm had a long private conference with the vakeels, in which they chiefly endeavoured to persuade him that the Paishwah personally had always been averse to the war*, and next to urge as much as possible that the Brigadier-general would comply with Badjerow's

* They carried this argument to the extreme of adducing his cowardice, as a proof of Badjerow's aversion to fight the English.

request, by going to see him in his camp. With this the Brigadier-general refused to comply, because, in the first place, he thought that his doing so might give an impression of a solicitude on our part for peace, which would have an injurious tendency; and, in the second, it would prevent his being able to direct those dispositions of his troops that were necessary, either to intimidate Badjerow into submission, or to pursue his army with success, in the event of the negotiation being broken off. With the view, however, of shewing due consideration for this prince's feelings, and of giving him confidence to act upon the overture, as well as to gain the best information that could be obtained of the actual state of his army, he determined on sending Lieutenant Low, his first, and Lieutenant Macdonald, his second political assistant, to the Paishwah's camp. He had distinctly informed the vakeels that their master must prepare himself to abandon his throne, and to quit the Deckan, as what had occurred, and particularly the proclamation which had recently been issued (and under which we had occupied his country,) put it out of the power of the English government to recede from a measure quite essential to the peace of India. Brigadier-general Malcolm wrote to the Paishwah that he had communicated fully with his vakeels, and requested him, if he was sincere in his professed wish for peace, to come forward immediately with Lieutenant Low towards the Nerbudda, accompanied only by his principal chiefs, and promising that, on his doing so, the brigadier-general would meet him unattended, if he required it, and discuss all matters respecting the terms which the British government were willing to grant to him.

The chief object of Lieutenant Low's mission was to ascertain the actual condition of the Paishwah, and the sincerity of his professions, and to endeavour to hasten his advance to meet Brigadier-general Malcolm; but that

officer was directed to state in the fullest manner to Badjerow the principles upon which alone the brigadier-general could agree to negotiate. These were, first, that Badjerow should abandon his condition as a sovereign prince: secondly, that he could not be allowed to reside in the Deckan.

It was also to be stated that he would be expected, as a proof of his sincerity, to give up (if he had the power to do so) Trimbuckjee Dinglia, and the murderers of Captain Vaughan and his brother, two officers who had been inhumanly massacred at Telligaum *.

Lieutenant Low proceeded on the 18th of May, accompanied by the vakeels. He took the route of Mundlesir, in order to have an opportunity of taking a small escort from the battalion of that place, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Smith.

On the night of the 18th intelligence reached Brigadier-general Malcolm of Appah Sahib (the Ex-Rajah of Nagpore) having escaped from confinement; and conceiving it very likely that this event might make some alteration in the Paishwah's intentions, further instructions were sent on the 20th instant to Lieutenant Low, directing him to send Badjerow's vakeels, accompanied by one or two native agents, in advance, and only to go on to his camp in the event of the vakeels returning within a short period and inviting him, on the part of their master, to do so. Lieutenant-colonel Smith was also directed to cross the Nerbudda with his battalion and some native horse; and Lieutenant Low was ordered to accompany that detachment by easy stages, instead of taking only a few men, as was at first intended. The object of this change was to enable Lieutenant-colonel Smith to co-operate with Brigadier-general Doveton and Lieutenant-colonel Russell, in pursuing and destroying

* Telligaum is a village within fifteen miles of Poonah.

Badjerow, in the event of his resolving again to try his fortune in the field. Brigadier-general Malcolm, in the mean time, having completed some military arrangements for preventing Badjerow's entering Malwa, moved with a small detachment to Mundlesir, where he arrived on the 22nd of May.

Sir John Malcolm, in the event of Badjerow's advancing, proposed to remain near Mundlesir, and keep his other corps (except Lieutenant-colonel Smith's) in the positions they then occupied; but he was soon convinced, by the delays of the vakeels and the evasions of the Paishwah, that this course must be abandoned. He had heard of Brigadier-general Doveton's arrival with a considerable force at Bhurrampore, within fourteen miles of Badjerow, and of the consequent alarm of that prince; who, however, instead of moving at once, as was expected, in the direction of Mundlesir, had only marched a few miles, to induce Subadar Syed Hussein * (Sir John's native aide-de-camp) to forward a letter to Brigadier-general Doveton, requesting that officer, in the event of the Paishwah's moving towards Brigadier-general Malcolm, to refrain from attacking him. These circumstances made the latter officer determine to advance; and he at the same time directed Lieutenant-colonel Russell to move from Charwah (the position he first occupied) to Borgham, meaning his corps to guard against any attempt of Badjerow at escape to the north-east.

Early on the morning of the 27th of May Sir John Malcolm reached Bekungong, by a forced march, the day after the arrival of Badjerow's vakeels, who had been sent in advance, and had returned with assurances of

* This gallant and sensible native officer is now Subadar-major of the body-guard at Madras.

their master's sincerity, and of his anxiety that Lieutenant Low should proceed to his camp. This the Brigadier-general directed that officer to do immediately, and after repeating what he had before stated to the vakeels, he told them they might see from his proceeding that there was no time for delay, and that, as a sincere friend, he warned Badjerow to come to a resolution at once, either to continue the war, or to throw himself upon the clemency and generosity of the British government, as, under the circumstances in which he was placed, any middle course was destruction.

Lieutenant Low, in an interview he had with Badjerow on the 29th of May, the day of his arrival in that prince's camp, found he continued to expect much better terms than it was possible to grant to him. He was still, to all appearance, confident of being permitted to retain the name at least of Paishwah, and of being allowed (though with very circumscribed power) to reside at Poonah. He appeared in a state of great alarm about his own personal safety in the proposed meeting with Brigadier-general Malcolm, and entreated most earnestly that the troops of the latter might all be withdrawn to a considerable distance; but finding the Brigadier-general's resolution to refuse compliance with these demands was not to be shaken, he at last consented to come to Khairee (about half a mile on the plain to the north of the mountain-pass of that name) on the 1st of June *, on the following conditions:—

That he was to bring two thousand men; that Brigadier-general Malcolm was only to bring a small escort, leaving his force at Metawul, about ten miles off; and that he (Badjerow) should be permitted to retire again in safety to his own camp after the meeting, if he should wish to do so.

* This meeting was first fixed for the 31st of May, but afterwards put off by mutual consent.

These conditions were acceded to, and Badjerow reached his tents at the place appointed about five o'clock in the evening. Brigadier-general Malcolm arrived soon afterwards, accompanied by the officers of his family, and an escort of two companies of Sepoys.

The party were received in open Durbar, where little passed beyond the complimentary inquiries usual on such occasions. After a few minutes Badjerow requested Brigadier-general Malcolm would retire with him to another tent. This conference lasted between two and three hours, during which the Paishwah dwelt upon his misfortunes, and the situation to which he was reduced, and used all his eloquence (which is considerable) to excite pity in the mind of Sir John Malcolm, by appealing to their former friendship. "He alone (he observed) remained of his three oldest and best friends: Colonel Close was dead, and General Wellesley in a distant land. In this hour of difficulty and distress, flatterers (he said) fled, and old adherents even were quitting him: a real friend was, therefore, his only stay. He believed (he added) he possessed that treasure in General Malcolm, and that he had sought a meeting with him on the present occasion with an anxiety proportioned to the importance that it had in his mind!" General Malcolm's reply to his address went, in the first place, to explain to him personally (as he had done before through others) the only terms which could be granted, using every argument to satisfy his judgment that his acceptance of these terms was the wisest course he could pursue. He at the same time stated that the decision of the British government, as to his abandoning all claims to sovereignty, was irrevocable; and that it would be completely inconsistent with the character of a true friend, if he was to flatter Badjerow's hopes with prospects which could never be realized. Brigadier-general Malcolm, after remarking "that this was

a crisis in his life when Badjerow must shew to what degree he possessed the courage and virtues of a man, by resigning himself to the situation to which he had reduced himself," concluded by distinctly informing him that no further delay whatever could be admitted.

The limits of this narrative do not admit of a full detail of this conference; suffice it to say that every point was discussed, and it ended in Badjerow's entreating that they might meet again next day. This was resisted by Brigadier-general Malcolm, who perceived from it and other expressions that the Paishwah's mind was not yet made up to submission; and this circumstance, added to the fact of his having the day before sent the whole of his property into Asseerghur *, satisfied the Brigadier-general that not a moment was to be lost in bringing matters to a close.

Brigadier-general Malcolm returned to his tent about ten o'clock p.m., and the Paishwah immediately re-ascended the ghaut, where he had some guns placed to protect his retreat. So strong were his fears of an attack, notwithstanding all the endeavours that had been made to set his mind at rest on that point.

Brigadier-general Malcolm immediately sent to Badjerow the following schedule of an agreement for his signature:—

"1st. That Badjerow shall resign, for himself and successors, all right, title, and claim over the government of Poonah, or to any sovereign power whatever.

"2nd. That Badjerow shall immediately come with his family, and a small number of his adherents and attendants, to the camp of Brigadier-general Malcolm, where he shall be received with honour and respect, and escorted safe to the

* Jeswunt Row Bhow, the governor of Asseerghur, had aided the Paishwah throughout, and evinced at this period a very forward zeal in his cause.

city of Benares, or any other sacred place in Hindustan that the Governor-general may, at his request, fix for his residence.

"3rd. On account of the peace of the Deckan, and the advanced state of the season, Badjerow must proceed to Hindustan without one day's delay; but General Malcolm engages that any part of his family that may be left behind shall be sent to him as early as possible, and every facility given to render their journey speedy and convenient.

"4th. That Badjerow shall, on his voluntarily agreeing to this arrangement, receive a liberal pension from the Company's government, for the support of himself and family. The amount of this pension will be fixed by the Governor-general; but Brigadier-general Malcolm takes upon himself to engage that it shall not be less than eight lacs of rupees per annum.

"5th. If Badjerow, by a ready and complete fulfilment of this agreement, shews that he reposes entire confidence in the British government, his requests in favour of principal jageerdars and old adherents, who have been ruined by their attachment to him, will meet with liberal attention. His representations, also, in favour of Brahmins of remarkable character, and of religious establishments founded or supported by his family, shall be treated with regard.

"6th. The above propositions must not only be accepted by Badjerow, but he must personally come into Brigadier-general Malcolm's camp within twenty-four hours of this period, or else hostilities will be recommenced, and no further negotiation will be entered into with him."

These propositions were forwarded to Badjerow early on the morning of the first of June, with a message that no alteration could take place, and not the slightest delay could be permitted.

As twenty-four hours only were granted to Badjerow to come to a final resolution, every arrangement was made to

attack him at the expiration of that period, in the event of his breaking off the negotiation.

This day (the 2d of June) passed in constant messengers from the Paishwah, and from his principal officer. The latter, as the crisis approached, became anxious about their individual interests, attention to which, Sir John Malcolm informed them, could alone be given on their promoting the great object, the submission of the Paishwah, and the termination of the war.

The state of affairs at this period is described in Brigadier-general Malcolm's despatch to Mr. Secretary Adam, of the 4th of June, in which he also gives an account of Badjerow's submission. "It would fill a volume," he observes, "to detail the particulars of all the intrigues which occurred. I have never, in the course of my experience, witnessed a scene in which every shade of the Indian character was more strongly displayed. It is honourable to the Vinchoor Jageerdar, to the Purrender chief, and the manager of the interests of the Gokla family, that, though they professed themselves hopeless of every success, and were convinced by my arguments that Badjerow had no choice but submission, they took care to make me distinctly understand (when I informed them that their only claim rested on the success of their influence in promoting this measure,) that though they would use every means of persuasion and remonstrance to effect the end, harshness or coercion they would never resort to*. I told them such conduct was not required of them; I respected, I added, their spirit of allegiance, but the moment was come when

* The vakeel of the Vinchoor chief said, that his master's family had served that of the Paishwah for five generations, and had always spoken boldly to him and his ancestors, but now, he added, that fate (bukht) is upon him, "we must be silent, unmerited reproaches even have remained and must remain unanswered."

their interests and those of their prince alike required that an end should be put to a ruinous and ineffectual struggle, and that if their passiveness allowed the counsels of those worthless and wicked men, who had brought Badjerow to his present state, to complete his destruction, their delicacy would be termed imbecility, and that they could henceforward neither expect gratitude from their prince, nor consideration from us; and, to conclude, I told them plainly, that unless he came to my camp next day, I desired never to know more of them or their claims. As individuals they were nothing, as attached adherents to a fallen prince, who might by their firmness save him and themselves from total ruin, they had importance for a moment, but that, if lost, would never return. As the vakeels of the Vinchoor chief and Abba Purrender were leaving me at eleven o'clock, on the night of the 2nd, I told them I knew Badjerow had sent some of his most valuable property into Asseerghur the day after I arrived at Metawul, which was no proof of confidence. Report said he meant to take refuge there. If he did it was his last stake, and if they permitted him to adopt such a course, they and their families would merit all the ruin that would fall upon their heads. When these vakeels left camp, I permitted one of my writers to give them, secretly and as from himself, a copy of my letter of the day before to Badjerow, and of the propositions I had offered for his acceptance. They perused them, he told me, with eagerness, and the knowledge of the consideration meant to be given to them, in the event of a settlement, appeared to quicken their zeal in no slight degree. When I dismissed these vakeels, I sent for an agent of Badjerow, whom I had on my first arrival at Metawul invited to my camp, and permitted to lay dawks * and send hirkarrahs † in every direction, in order to allay the fears and

* Posts. † Messengers.

suspicions of Badjerow, with regard to my intended movements and attacks, for there was no ground on which I had from the first more fear of failure than his excessive timidity. I now told this man that he must return to his master, he could no longer remain in my camp, but that he might write or say that I did not mean to move till six o'clock next morning. I should them march to near Khairee, and Badjerow, if he intended to accept the terms, must leave the hills, and encamp near my force by twelve o'clock. I at the same time told him to inform Badjerow, that Colonel Russell had moved to Borgham, to attack any of Trimbuckjee's followers in that quarter, and that Brigadier-general Doveton, whom I had informed of Badjerow's wish for that freebooter being destroyed, would no doubt march against him to-morrow.

"I had just heard from my assistant, Lieutenant Low, whom I had, to facilitate my communication, kept a few miles in advance, that the messengers he had sent with the letter and propositions had returned and represented Badjerow as full of professions, but in a very vacillating state of mind, and anxious beyond all description for another day's delay, as the 3rd of June was, he said, an unlucky day, and he had religious ceremonies to perform of the most indispensible nature, before he could come to my camp. I affected to be very indignant at this conduct; I desired Lieutenant Low not only to send away, but turn back any person desiring to communicate with him from Badjerow's camp. I at the same ordered parties of horse to occupy the roads to my camp, to prevent the approach of any messenger whatever. Having adopted these steps, about two o'clock of the morning of the 3rd, in a manner so public that I knew they would reach Badjerow through many channels, I marched at six o'clock, and reached this ground * about nine.

* Near Kairee.

"Soon after Anund Row Jeswunt came near me, in a state of much trepidation; I asked him where were his promises of sincerity, and bade him return. He said 'This is an unlucky day.' I replied, it would prove a most unlucky one for his master, if he did not come in. 'I mean everything kind,' I added, 'to Badjerow, but he forces me to these extremities, and from his character, nothing short of them will bring him to a resolution that is so obviously for the interest of him, and all that are personally dependant upon him.' He begged me to send some person to assure his mind, 'for he is at this moment,' he added, 'in the greatest alarm.' 'At what is he alarmed,' I asked, 'at the propositions?' He replied he would consent to them. 'Does he suspect me of treachery?' I demanded, with some degree of anger. 'No!' he said, 'but the orders of the Governor-general might compel you to put guards and sentries over him, and then he would be disgraced for ever.' 'You may return,' I replied, 'to Badjerow, and tell him from me, that I have no such orders; that the settlement I had ventured to make, in anticipation of the Governor-general's approbation, was too liberal to make me think it possible any human being, in Badjerow's situation, would ever attempt to escape from it, and if he did, he would forfeit all future claims whatever, and the English government would be freed from a large disbursement which it has agreed to increase, more from a feeling of what was due to its own dignity, than to any claims which he had to its consideration.' Anund Row seemed pleased with this answer, and galloped off. I sent a respectable Brahmin to hasten Badjerow; and, at the same time, to desire that the Mahratta sirdars alone should accompany him to the ground near my camp. This was complied with, and Ram Dun and a body of infantry were directed to encamp in the rear. The firing of some guns in the quarter of Asseer (probably

from Brigadier-general Doveton's attack of Trimbuckjee *) served not a little to quicken the march; and at eleven o'clock Badjerow came near my camp. Lieutenant Low went to meet him, and reported him in better spirits than he had yet seen him. I meant to pay my respects in the evening, but was prevented by a very violent storm."

The force that accompanied Badjerow to Brigadier-general Malcolm's camp was between four and five thousand horse, and about three thousand infantry; of these twelve hundred were Arabs, whose numbers were increased two days afterwards to nearly two thousand, by the junction of parties that had been left to guard the passes in the hills. Sir John Malcolm was determined, as he wrote to the Governor-general †, "not to disturb by harsh interference the last moments of intercourse between a fallen prince and his remaining adherents." His experience led him to expect that this force would gradually dissolve, and he knew in its actual state it possessed no means of combined action.

Badjerow proceeded towards the Nerbudda with General Malcolm's force for several marches, without anything very particular having occurred, beyond that of some of his followers leaving him, to return to their homes in the Deckan. A large body, however, still remained, in spite of the friendly remonstrances of Sir John Malcolm, who pointed out the imprudence of keeping together such a number of armed men; the great proportion of whom must, from their situation, be discontented. He particularly adverted to the Arabs, from whose violence and desperation the worst consequences were to be dreaded. The Paishwah and those about him, to whom this advice was addressed at different times, always admitted its truth, but little

* The detachment sent to intervene between Badjerow and Asser was fired upon by the fort, but no one hurt.

† Letter to the Governor-general, June 19, 1811.

attention was paid to it; Badjerow seemed to cling to the shadow of that power he once possessed. He appeared as if afraid to own to himself, or to others, his actual condition; and this conduct was still further influenced by that suspicion and timidity which marks his character, and which Sir John Malcolm knew he could alone overcome by an absence of solicitude, and a conduct that shewed that no apprehensions were entertained of his acting contrary to his engagements. If Badjerow had real fears of treachery, such a course was the only way to remove them. If he cherished plans of deceit, his pursuit of them was not likely to be encouraged by an indifference which he could alone refer to a consciousness of strength. Acting upon these considerations Brigadier-general Malcolm indulged Badjerow in his hours of marching, and in his desire to encamp at some distance from the English force, always giving his opinion, as a friend, of the dangers to which he exposed himself, by continuing to repose in the mercenaries by whom he was accompanied. An occasion soon occurred that made the Paishwah sensible to all the value of the councils he had neglected, and threw him completely upon the protection of the Brigadier-general.

The Arabs, amounting to about two thousand, who had been hired some months before by Trimbuckjee Dinglia, demanded their arrears from Badjerow. That prince was willing to pay them for the period during which they had been actually with his camp, but the Arabs insisted upon pay from the date they were hired by Trimbuckjee; and on his refusing compliance with this demand, they surrounded his tent, and would not allow him to move. This occurred on the 9th of June, on which day a march had been ordered, and a considerable part of Sir John Malcolm's force, with the whole of the baggage, had gone on to the next stage. The

Brigadier-general himself had, as usual, remained behind to see Badjerow off the ground; and he had this day, in the apprehension that something might occur, kept with him a regiment of cavalry, two gallopers, and six companies of infantry. From the first accounts of this mutiny he was led to expect Badjerow would be able to settle the matter himself. The whole day, however, passed without any prospect of affairs being brought to a conclusion. The Arabs seemed determined to insist upon their original demands, nor was it certain they would be satisfied with them; and to make affairs worse, their example had excited mutiny among some Rohillas, and, indeed, all the infantry in camp. Badjerow's alarm for his life was excessive, but while he continued to call on Brigadier-general Malcolm for relief, he sent message after message to entreat that not a man should be moved, as he thought that the least stir in the English camp would be the signal for his murder.

Under these circumstances, Sir John Malcolm directed that part of his force which had marched, to return to Sconee. He had some communications, in the course of the evening, with the chiefs of the mutineers. These appeared reasonable, but said they could not control their men. He sent to Badjerow to entreat he would compose himself during the night, assuring him that he should be relieved early in the morning. Brigadier-general Malcolm also sent messages to the Arabs and Rohillas, warning them, as they dreaded extirpation, from proceeding to violence; and at the same time stating that he would guarantee that those promises which had been voluntarily made to them by the Paishwah should be faithfully performed. These measures kept all quiet for the night.

At daylight Brigadier-general Malcolm had intelligence of the troops which had proceeded in advance being on the

return, and within a very short distance. He had already personally reconnoitred Badjerow's camp, which was irregularly pitched along a nullah (or ravine), the banks of which were very uneven, and covered with trees and bushes that were favourable for the irregular infantry that he had to coerce. The country to the west, however, rose gradually from the ravine, and he found on that side a commanding ground, upon which he drew up his force, within three hundred yards of the front of Badjerow's camp. He had only, when all were assembled, four hundred native cavalry, seven hundred sepoys, three brigades of six-pounders, and six hundred irregular horse; but his confidence in the tried courage and discipline of this small body of men was too complete to leave a doubt upon his mind as to the result, should matters have come to an extremity. He was, however, very desirous to avoid such a result. The troops were ordered to take the most open distance, and the cavalry to form in single rank, that the extended appearance of the line might intimidate into submission those to whom they were opposed.

The moment was one of great anxiety: the object was to reduce the mutineers to order, without coming to action; for if that took place, it seemed next to certain that Badjerow, whose tent their position encircled, must have lost his life, either by accident or from their violence. The latter, from the character of the Arabs, was the most probable: it was, besides, obvious that almost all his family, and a great number of defenceless persons (including women and children), would have been killed. The mutineers calculated on the strength they derived from this circumstance, and would not allow a single person to move from their camp.

Though the guns were loaded with grape, and matches lighted, the strictest commands were given not to fire till

ordered. The Arabs, who advanced near to the right of the line, opened a fire and wounded* some sepoys. The troops, though eager to attack, remained steady and obedient to their orders, which were repeated by the Brigadier-general in person when the casualties were reported. At this moment Syed Zeyn, the principal Arab chief, who was evidently alarmed at the formidable appearance of the line, came in advance to request a parley. Sir John Malcolm, before he would listen to him, commanded him to stop the fire, at the hazard of an instant assault. He despatched one of his attendants to do so, and came forward himself with an earnest entreaty that matters should be settled. Badjerow had, he said, paid the greater part of their demands: there were remaining but a few trifling points, which if Brigadier-general Malcolm would only inquire into, all parties would agree to abide by the award of his justice. The required promise was given, and Syed Zeyn galloped back to his men to remove them from Badjerow's tent. He returned, without effecting this purpose, accompanied by all the leaders of the Arabs. "These men," he said to the General, "must have each your hand given to them that you will not attack them after they have released the Paishwah." Sir John Malcolm gave his hand to every Jemidar, and the assurance they asked. They returned, and the Arab flags were immediately seen moving towards their own tents. A few minutes afterwards, Badjerow, attended by some horse, came in front of the English line; Brigadier-

* Two or three of the grenadiers of the 14th native infantry were wounded. A native officer of the company asked General Malcolm, as he was riding past, whether he would allow his sepoys to be shot, without returning the fire? "If I permit you to fire," said the General, "the Company's good name may suffer injury." "Let twenty grenadiers die," said the fine fellow, in an animated tone; "it is for you, General, to take care of the Company's good name."

general Malcolm complimented him with a general salute. This was done to increase the effect which it was hoped what had passed would have upon his mind, and to strike deeper the contrast between the disgrace and danger of the situation from which he had escaped, and that safety and honourable treatment which he secured by relying solely on the protection of the British government.

Never was a result more happy than that which attended the events of the day. Badjerow was profuse in his expressions to Brigadier-general Malcolm, who was, he said, the friend decreed to save his honour and his life. He had erred, he added, for the last time, and would now do anything the General wished. He was desired to move on immediately ten miles on the route to the Nerbudda, with those adherents that were to accompany him, while Brigadier-general Malcolm stayed behind to grant passports to the remainder, and to see that the Arabs, Rohillas, and others, fulfilled their engagements of departing towards their respective homes. All this was effected with the most perfect good temper in a few hours, and the chiefs of the mutineers were hardly less grateful than Badjerow for the manner in which they had been treated. Their astonishment was greatly excited by the forbearance of the English troops, who, indeed, behaved admirably.

Sir John Malcolm, in the Division Order which he afterwards issued, thus expressed the sense he entertained of the conduct of the force under his command, on this trying occasion: "Brigadier-general Malcolm congratulates the force under his command upon their recrossing the Nerbudda, and the termination of a campaign rendered glorious by great political events and splendid military achievements. The corps which compose this force obtained in the beginning of this war the highest applause for their distinguished gallantry, and during the last six months

that they have been incessantly employed in restoring order and tranquillity to countries long subject to anarchy and oppression, they have shewn all the qualities of good soldiers. Fortune has given them a part in the last operations of the campaign, and they have had the gratification of witnessing the submission of the Paishwah Badjerow, the only enemy that remained to the British government. The course of this service has afforded no opportunity for signalizing their courage, but in all the measures which Brigadier-general Malcolm thought it his duty to adopt, and particularly in those of the 10th instant, when he had to quell a dangerous mutiny in Badjerow's camp, he proceeded with a confidence that nothing but complete reliance upon those under his command could have inspired. The awe with which their order and appearance struck a lawless soldiery, was increased by that coolness which ever accompanies determined intrepidity. The moment was critical—a body of insubordinate men whom they could easily have destroyed, opened a fire, which, had it been returned, might have involved consequences injurious to the British fame, and distressing to humanity. The troops saw their comrades wounded and remained unmoved—they attended only to orders. The result was all that could be wished, and on this occasion discipline obtained a triumph far beyond the reach of valour!"

Badjerow, subsequent to this event, complied with every wish expressed by Brigadier-general Malcolm, with respect to his marching, place of encampment, and indeed on all other points. His attendants were reduced to between six and seven hundred horse, and two hundred infantry, and he himself became daily more reconciled to his condition. There was indeed every reason why he should be so. The provision made for him was most princely, and far beyond

what he had, from his treacherous conduct, any right to expect, but the considerations which led to this arrangement had little reference to his personal character or merits; it was grounded, first, on the policy of terminating the war, which included the necessity of paying an adequate price for the submission of a sovereign, who, while he continued in opposition, kept all India agitated and unsettled. The second consideration referred to what was due to the dignity of the British government, whose conduct on all similar occasions had been marked by the utmost liberality; and, lastly, it appeared an important object to make an impression, that while it reconciled all ranks to the great change that had occurred, left a sentiment of grateful feeling, in the minds of the Paishwah's former adherents, towards a government which, in the hour of victory, forgot its own wrongs, and respected their prejudices in its treatment of their fallen prince.

With respect to the effect this liberality is likely to have upon Badjerow himself, though gratitude cannot be looked for from a prince towards the power which has dethroned him; yet he must be expected to act even in his reduced state from motives that are influenced by the treatment he receives, and the better his condition, the less he will be inclined to hazard a change. The annual sum granted to Badjerow, though princely for the support of an individual, is nothing for the purposes of ambition; but supposing his habits of intrigue so inveterate, and his ambition so unconquerable, that he should make another attempt at sovereignty —what hopes can he entertain of success? He has, by becoming a voluntary exile, emancipated his subjects from their allegiance. His former and oldest adherents, released from their duty to him, have been left to form new ties, and to pursue the path of their individual interests. Were he

even of a different character, success in such an effort would be impossible; as it is, there can be no hesitation in concluding with Brigadier-general Malcolm, "That Badjerow has unstrung a bow which he never can re-bend *."

* Letter to Mr. Adam, 19th June, 1818.

No. VI.

Speech of Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B., &c. &c.

Delivered at a General Court of Proprietors of East-India Stock, on Friday, July 9th, 1824.

Sir J. Malcolm rose and said—" It certainly was not my intention to have spoken, unless personally alluded to in the course of the debate. What the honourable proprietor (Mr. Kinnaird) has said regarding my sentiments on publication in England, would not have made me depart from the resolution I had taken; but I cannot sit patiently and hear the abuse (I must call it so) that has been lavished upon Mr. Adam. The honourable proprietor has given high eulogiums to Mr. Buckingham, and he has closed them with a profession, that all he thought of that gentleman's character from his writings and actions, had been confirmed by his personal acquaintance since his arrival in England. I can speak of Mr. Adam on an intimate knowledge of thirty years: he is as remarkable for mildness and humanity as for firmness and judgment; he is from birth and education a lover of the free constitution of his country, and all he has done in the case now before us has, I am assured, proceeded solely from an imperious sense of public duty. It is, however, trifling with the great subject before us, to waste our time in discussing the respective merits of Mr. Adam and Mr. Buckingham; but even to understand this small part of the question, we must first consider the scene in which they acted. Let us commence by looking at

the character of our Indian government, and then determine how far such a free press, as that which is the boast of England, can be transplanted to that distant possession. This is the real question, and it should be met openly and decidedly. The facts appear to me only to require to be fairly and boldly brought forward, to convince every reasonable man of the nature of the measure proposed. To enable us to judge of the probable operation of this measure, we must take a near view of the component parts of that body called the Public, in England, whose character makes the good outweigh the evil of a free press. Will the honourable proprietor (Mr. Kinnaird) who has made the motion, or him by whom it was seconded, (Mr. Hume,) admit that officers of his Majesty's army and navy, that secretaries, under secretaries, and clerks in public offices, or men immediately dependent on the favour of government, or upon that of the paid servants of the state, are essential parts of that body? Certainly not: but I will go further; I assert that those noblemen who form the House of Peers, and the gentry of England who sit in the House of Commons, though they are a part, are not the most essential one, of the public of whom I speak. They must, in some degree, be swayed by their connexions, their interests, and their political parties. Far less can we number, as men who ought to have superior weight in this body, the lowest orders of this community, who are too uninstructed to judge political questions, or the demagogues who lead them, or those daily periodical writers who gain popularity and profit by flattering the self-love and the passions of the lower orders, as well as that of the party feelings and pride of the higher. All these mix with, and are parts of, what I understand by a British public: but the essential component part of that body, that which gives gravity and steadiness to the whole, lies, as the ballast of the vessel ought, in the

centre. It is that numerous class who occupy the middle ranks of life, whose education and knowledge places them above being misled like the lower order, and who are, from their occupation, free from many of those motives which influence the servants of the state, and all who can be benefited by its favour, or injured by its displeasure; and who are also in a great degree removed from the passions and feelings which gives so strong a bias to the lowest and highest orders of society. It is the minds, and the character of this middle class, which give them that decided weight they have in a British public. Though less forward and much less heard than the other classes, they govern them: it is their moderation and good sense, combined with their habits of thinking and of forming a judgment, on all points connected with the constitution and the prosperity of their country, that enables it to have a press free, in a degree unknown to other nations! Without this class, it would be a curse instead of a blessing. Now, I will ask, have we one of the class I have described in India? (I speak now of the English in that country:) there is not an individual. The English community, I will not call them a public (in the sense that term has been used,) are almost all in the employ of government, and the few that are not, are persons who reside there for a period by license, under the covenants and legal restrictions which we have just heard read, and the value of which was well explained by an able proprietor, (Mr. Impey.) If it is wrong, from considerations of state policy, to deprive these persons of any of the privileges which they would have enjoyed had they remained in their native land, why, it is assuredly the law that it is wrong, not those who act under its authority. Let, therefore, this subject be taken up on its true grounds; let an effort be made to alter the law; but this is not the place. There are present those who have the power to bring it be-

fore the parliament of the country, where it will be fully discussed; and, in my opinion, the more discussion it receives the better. The good sense of the people of England will not be slow to decide, whether a free press, such as they enjoy, can be established and exist in a country governed, as British India, by absolute power. But there are parts of this subject on which I must not be mistaken; I have stated that the English community in India neither are, nor ever can be, a body resembling the public in England: but it is a happy effect of our constitution, that a portion of that spirit of liberty and independence, which gives life and vigour to the mother-country, is spread to her most distant colonies; and all, even to her armies, partake so much of the blessing as is consistent with their condition, and with the safety of the state. Though such communities may be so situated as to render a free press dangerous both to themselves and government, they have a right to expect from the latter as much of information and of free communication as is consistent with the public safety: the tone and temper of an English society can be preserved in no other mode. I am, and ever have been, the advocate of publicity in all affairs of government; I hate concealment and mystification: good and wise measures will ever gain strength from daylight. For such reasons, though a decided opponent to a free press in India, by which I mean one, that, being restrained only by the laws made for the press in England, could publish a series of such articles as we have heard read from the Calcutta Journal; which, though not punishable by law, must, if permitted, prove deeply injurious to the reputation and strength of the local government. Though I am, I say, an enemy to such a press, I am friendly to any publication that refrains from those subjects that have been properly prohibited. We have had these prohibitions read, and the honourable mover

of the question has depicted them as calculated to degrade all to whom they apply; but this is not their operation. There have been no complaints but those found in the pages of Mr. Buckingham's paper, which it has suited the case of the honourable proprietor to represent as the exclusive organ of the public. This gentleman, from the moment he landed in India, became, according to him, the solitary upholder of English liberty in that enslaved country, and this arduous task he is represented to have undertaken and performed from the most pure and disinterested motives! He found the office of censor removed, and the restrictions which were imposed when it was done away he considered as waste paper. These restrictions, however, which were orders of government, were, in my mind, more severe on the press than the censorship. I decidedly prefer the latter; for where it is established, its responsibility rests where it ought, with those who have the actual power to restrain and to punish; while, in the other case, it is left to those who may have less knowledge and discretion, and who are more likely, through indiscretion, inadvertence, or from motives of feeling, or of interest, to offend against the government. There is something, no doubt, odious in the name of censor; but it signifies not, if it is necessary; and if the law authorizes such a check upon publication, it cannot, for the good of all parties, be too openly and too decidedly exercised. As for myself, I have, from all the knowledge I have of the scene and of the society, no fear of any harsh or unwise exertion of this power: but to be satisfied that we are safe upon this and all other matters affecting the rights and privileges of our countrymen abroad, let us pause to look at the actual condition of those tyrants and despots (as they have been termed) under whose authority they live. The Governor-general of India, and governors of the different settlements are either noblemen or

gentlemen sent from England, or persons who have raised themselves by their services in India, and the latter fill all the high offices under government. The race of nabobs who are said to have once existed (I never knew any of them) are extinct. Those who fill the highest situations in India are seldom, if ever, elevated to any forgetfulness of their character as English gentlemen. They proceed to the execution of their important duties, as men go in this country to those of an office; their minds are neither corrupted by intrigues, nor disturbed by dreams of irrational ambition. They enjoy, it is true, great, and in some cases, as I have said, absolute power: the situation of the country they govern requires it, and the law of England sanctions it: but there never were men who exercised power under such checks. Leaving out of the question that natural desire to stand well with the community of their countrymen, over whom they are temporarily placed, and not adverting to their views of returning as early as they can to their native land, and of enjoying that fair esteem and consideration in England to which any cruel or unnecessary exercise of arbitrary powers would be fatal; leaving, I say, these motives (powerful as they must be in the breast of every Englishman) out of the question, let us examine what are the other checks under which they exercise power: first, their measures in detail are submitted to the Court of Directors; we all know the composition of that court; assuredly it is not probable it will support despotic acts; but suppose it was to do so, its proceedings, whenever called for, must be laid before the Court of Proprietors, and, judging from the two last meetings of that body, those who exercise power in India must expect rough handling in it. Their next ordeal is the Board of Control, which, though associated with the Court of Directors in the administration of our eastern empire, is, by one of those happy anomalies

which characterize every part of our constitution, composed of persons whose situations and views must lead them to judge questions on very different grounds from the Directors; but their confirmation even of the measures adopted by the Indian governments is not final; the vigilance of Parliament, the unbending severity of the law (should they have offended against its letter), and the freedom of the English press, all hang over them, and form a combination of checks that could exist in no other country. I do not enumerate these checks to complain of them; on the contrary, I recognise their utility, even when carried to an extreme,—they may pain, and sometimes inflict temporary injury on an individual, but their tendency is to benefit the public. Power is always intoxicating, and though I will not allow that those who exercise it in India are like sultans of the east, who require the flappers (which an honourable proprietor mentioned) to remind them they are men, I will readily admit that the oftener they are reminded they are Englishmen the better. But while I admit this, it is with a full conviction, that if those appointed to your governments abroad should ever permit these checks to have an undue influence on the performance of their public duties, if they act under dread of responsibility, or seek popularity, your danger from their measures will be greater than any that could result even from tyranny; the latter can be checked and punished, but that weakness which, in considering its own safety or gratification, forgets the interests of the state, evades all remedy, and the mischievous effect is produced before the cause can be removed. It is useful, nay, most essential, that the checks I have noticed should remain in full vigour; but they must dwell in England—they cannot be co-existent with absolute power in India. We have heard much of the press in that country being first restricted by Lord Wellesley establishing the office of

censor. To understand whether this is the fact or not, it is only necessary to take a short retrospect of the history of its newspapers. These have been known in India little more than half a century. About forty-five years ago, when his Majesty's courts of law had an extended jurisdiction in Bengal (which it was soon found indispensable to limit), some of the judges came in violent collision with the local government, and the free press, as it is termed, which in such a society is exactly suited to create and support such divisions of authority, became very licentious. A paper edited by a Mr. Hickey was put down, as that of Mr. Buckingham has now been; and its editor, like him, declined to go to law. Many years afterwards, when Secretary to the Marquess Wellesley, it became my duty to peruse and abstract a petition from this individual, who represented himself as a martyr in the cause of liberty, and he complained, as Mr. Buckingham has done, of Englishmen being ruined by oppression and tyranny. Amongst others he charged with having denied him justice, was that wise, moderate, and great man, the late Lord Cornwallis. "I applied to the Noble Marquess for redress," said Mr. Hickey in his petition, "but he only advised me, if I thought myself aggrieved, to go to law. The Noble Marquess," he added, "might, in his condescension, have as well advised me to fight one of the Company's elephants, as to go to law with their government." The fact probably was in that case as in the present,—Mr. Hickey published what compelled the local government to suppress his paper, and as he could prove no malice or illegal exercise of authority, he could obtain no redress at law. After this period I never heard of their existing anything like a free press. Articles were occasionally published, more, I imagine, through inadvertence than design, which called for censure on the publishers; and it was an imprudence or inadvertence of

this character which led to Lord Wellesley's orders, that the proofs of the newspapers should be submitted to the secretary of government. But though opinions might differ, as to whether that was the best mode of attaining the desired end or not, it is only of very late years that it has been supposed a free press could exist, to any good or useful purpose, in the European community of India. I do not say that, so far as that society alone is concerned, its existence would immediately endanger the safety of our empire. I am satisfied it would excite dissensions, cherish insubordination, and weaken authority, and produce evils a hundred times greater than any good it could effect. But its effects on the European part of the community is a very small part of this question. Amongst that increasing part of the population called half-caste, the sons of European fathers and native mothers, it would do infinite harm. This class must be viewed and treated as an infant society, and all the hopes we entertain of their advancement, through the adoption of gradual measures for their instruction, will be disappointed, if we adopt the free press as the means of effecting that object. I have for many years given all the consideration I could to the unfavourable and depressed condition of this class. I entertain opinions (which this is not the moment to state) regarding the policy of their introduction to particular branches of the service, but I entertain no doubt as to that of every effort being made for their improvement,—of every avenue that can be opened being opened, for the encouragement of that industry and talent which many of them possess in a very eminent degree. There are men in this class of society, whom I hold as dear as any friends I possess—amongst those, many in this court share the regard I have for Colonel Skinner, who has so long commanded a large body of native horse, with honour to himself and advantage to government. But with every

desire to see this part of the population encouraged and advanced, I deem it essential for their good that their progress should be gradual, in order that they may be fitted for the place they are destined to occupy in our empire in the east. Much has been of late done for them, and particularly by those regulations which entitle them to possess land in every part of our territories. There are many of this class, however, who are prone to impatience and discontent at their condition; and these, who naturally seek to make converts to their opinion, will be found amongst the loudest of the advocates for a free press. But both these classes of the European inhabitants of India sink into comparative insignificance, when we contemplate the effect of such a press upon a native population of eighty millions, to whom the blessings or the evils that it may carry in its train are to be imparted. Passing over the impossibility of establishing, or at least maintaining for a short period, a press really free, in an empire governed by foreigners who have conquered, and who have not, and cannot, from the difference of language, habits, and religion, amalgamate with the natives,—let us examine the character and condition of the latter, that we may discover what would be the effect of the boon it is proposed to grant them. They are divided into two great classes, Mahomedans and Hindus; the higher ranks of the former, who possessed almost all India before our rule was introduced, are naturally discontented with our power. They bear, however, a small proportion to the Hindus, whose condition and character it is of more consequence to examine. From the most remote period till the present day, we find the history of this unchanged people the same; and there is one striking feature in it—all the religious and civil classes are educated, and as prompt and skilful in intrigue as they are in business. From their intellectual superiority they have ever influenced and directed the

more numerous, ignorant, and superstitious classes of their countrymen. These instructed classes (particularly the Brahmins), who have already lost consideration, wealth, and power, by the introduction of our power, fear, and justly, that its progress will still more degrade them. They must, from such causes, have a hostile feeling towards us, and this is not likely to decrease from the necessity they are under of concealing it. They will seize every opportunity of injuring our power, and many must be afforded them. They are, to my knowledge, adepts in spreading discontent, and exciting sedition and rebellion. They know well how to awaken the fears, to alarm the superstition, or to rouse the pride of those they address. My attention has been, during the last twenty-five years, particularly directed to this dangerous species of secret war against our authority, which is always carrying on, by numerous, though unseen hands. The spirit is kept up by letters, by exaggerated reports, and by pretended prophecies. When the time appears favourable, from the occurrence of misfortune to our arms, from rebellion in our provinces, or from mutiny in our troops, circular letters and proclamations are dispersed over the country with a celerity that is incredible. Such documents are read with avidity. The contents are in most cases the same. The English are depicted as usurpers of low caste, and as tyrants, who have sought India with no view but that of degrading the inhabitants, and of robbing them of their wealth, while they seek to subvert their usages and their religion. The native soldiery are always appealed to, and the advice to them is, in all instances I have met with, the same—"Your European tyrants are few in number, murder them!"

The efforts made by the part of the Indian population I have mentioned, and their success in keeping up a spirit which places us always in danger, are facts that will not be denied by any man acquainted with the subject. Now I

will ask, if we can rationally indulge a hope, that a dislike and hostility to our rule would not be cherished and inflamed by men, whose consideration, wealth, and power, must be ruined by our success? Is it likely to abate? and if not, is it politic, is it wise, to put such means as a free press (such as has been described) into their hands? It could only be used towards one object, that of our destruction; but that, when effected, would be but a prelude to a greater evil—the destruction of themselves. Every fair hope that can be formed of rendering this vast population worthy of the blessings that may be gradually imparted, would perish, and they would be replunged into a worse state of anarchy than that from which we have relieved them. That this will be the result, if we give them, in their present stage of society, the baneful present that has been proposed, I conscientiously believe. But it is here necessary to ask, for what are we to increase such hazards, both to the European and native community of India? The object, we are told, is to promote knowledge. Do we mistrust our local governments? do we mistrust those under whose orders they act, and those by whom they are controlled, that we are to take from their hands the accomplishment of that great object, that we should place it in the hands of editors of papers and of periodical publications? Are we to confide almost exclusively to the latter, and to their anonymous correspondents, the reform of abuses and the improvement of our eastern subjects? The eloquence of the honourable mover has been powerfully exerted to make us do so. The general tendency of his arguments has gone to express a belief, that those who are educated for public duties in India, and who have superadded, to the early instruction they received, long and approved service, are not the fittest instruments for this great and good purpose. To bring their knowledge and local experience to a level with the comparative ignorance or

others, who have not the same advantages, the make-weight of prejudice has been thrown into the scale, and they have been represented as having forgotten all the lessons of their youth, and having become dead to the feelings of British liberty, in order to furnish arguments to prove their incompetence to the higher stations of government. This is a convenient doctrine; it exalts ignorance to a par with knowledge: it has been urged, in the present instance, to suit the case. That high and respectable body of men, the civil servants of India (with whom, I am proud to say, the principal duties of my life have associated me), have been held light and depreciated, that a most distinguished member of their service might be proved unfit for the station of Governor-general. The prejudices Mr. Adam had imbibed by his long residence in India, were alluded to as the cause of his maltreatment of Mr. Buckingham. But what comes next? Lord Amherst, a nobleman who is admitted to be as amiable as he is sensible and just, and whom all acknowledge to be deeply imbued with the feelings and sentiments of an Englishman, hardly arrives in India before he finds himself compelled to adopt the same principle upon which his predecessor had acted, and to send to England Mr. Arnott, who had succeeded Mr. Buckingham as editor of the Calcutta Journal. For this act of authority Lord Amherst is, we are told, worse than a tyrant; he has allowed himself to become the tool of tyrants, who have taken the advantage of his want of experience. What does all this mean? one Governor-general is declared unfitted for his office because he has local knowledge, and the other because he wants it.

It appears to me that it is the abstract name of Governor-general, or rather the person who exercises, to the best of his judgment and conscience, an absolute power which the law has vested in him, that is the object of the attack which we have heard this day. If so, let this system be arraigned,

not the individuals. I have shewn the checks under which they act; their probable motives, and their means of knowledge: but these are not, we are told, to be relied upon, to prevent evil or to promote good purposes. No; for such we must look to men like Mr. Buckingham. They are, on their first touch of the soil of India, to start, as if by inspiration, into a virtue and knowledge, which is to control, to reform, and to improve the society, white and black, of India!

Let us inquire the means of the individual who has been brought forward as an example of what has and may be done by such characters. When he came first to India, and published the prospectus of his Travels in Palestine, and at the same time commenced a newspaper on an improved plan to any then existing, I deemed him, as many others did, a man of enterprise and talent: but in a very short period, several paragraphs appeared in his paper which satisfied me of the course he meant to pursue; and I early gave an opinion on the probable termination of his career, which has been verified by the result. I shall not go into the detail of the offences he committed, his apologies, and his promises of amendment; nor shall I inquire into the exact character of that offence which compelled Mr. Adam to withdraw his license. It was the aggregate of his offences, and the principle upon which he continued to act, that caused the severe but necessary measure of which he complains. He knew Mr. Adam's sentiments, he knew his resolution; but instead of benefiting by such knowledge, to avoid that ruin in which we are told he is involved, he persevered in the same bold and contumacious course he had so long followed. He chose, no doubt, for the first trial of strength with the new Governor-general, a popular subject. He judged that Mr. Adam, though pledged to arrest his career on the first departure from the restrictions, would

hesitate before he acted, in a case where he was or might be thought to be personally interested; but he shewed little discernment in his appreciation of the character with whom he had to deal, or he would have known that no personal consideration would induce him to evade a public duty. Mr. Adam, vested with the highest authority in India, was forced, by this course of conduct, to appear in contest with Mr. Buckingham, the self-created champion of British liberty, while not only the English community, but the natives, were lookers on at this trial of strength. Was the issue of such a contest to be left doubtful for a moment?

It has often been said, and it has been repeated to-day, that your empire in India is one of opinion. It is so, but it is not an opinion of your right, but of your power. The inhabitants of India see that limited by law and regulations, and the spectacle increases their confidence; but shew them the person, who exercises an authority they deem supreme, braved and defeated by those under him, and the impression which creates the charm will be broken. This, at least, is my view of the subject; I am, however, I confess, rendered timid by experience. It has made me humble, and I look with awe and trembling at questions which the defenders of a free press in India treat as mere bugbears, calculated to alarm none but the weak and the prejudiced. The honourable mover of the resolution now before Court has asked, if the press is restricted in the manner it is at present, how we are to obtain information of the merits and character of our servants. I had before thought that might be found on the records of the governments—in the opinion of those under whom officers acted; but these are, it would seem, imperfect sources, as are all papers of documents published under the restrictions now placed upon the Indian press. It is from the pages of the Calcutta Journal, and the comments of an editor who has been three or four years in India,

and never beyond the precincts of a presidency—it is from his able and disinterested view of men and measures, and from that of his anonymous correspondents, that we can alone derive full and impartial information on this important point. But enough on this part of the subject.

We have heard a petition, said to be written, and I have no doubt it is, by that respectable native, Ram Mohun Roy, whom I know and regard. I was one of those who earnestly wished his mind could have been withdrawn from useless schemes of speculative policy, and devoted to giving us his useful aid in illustrating the past and present history of his countrymen; for that knowledge (of which we are yet imperfectly possessed) must form the basis of every rational plan of improvement. We have had comments from the honourable mover of the question, on those parts of the regulations by Mr. Adam that relate to native newspapers, which might lead to a belief that he had robbed the natives of a freedom they had long enjoyed, of a free press; but there never was, until very lately, any native newspaper printed in India, and they are now only subject to the same license and regulations as those in the English language.

I could say much more upon this subject, but feel I have already intruded too long upon your indulgence. Allow me, however, to repeat my sentiments of Mr. Adam, who is an individual not more distinguished by his temper and virtue in private life, than by his zeal, integrity, and talent as a public servant. He is incapable of malignity to any human being. On the present occasion he has come forward to expose himself to obloquy, to save the public. The best testimonies to the wisdom and necessity of his conduct will be found in the corresponding sentiments of those he is associated with; in the measure of the same character which Lord Amherst has found himself compelled to adopt; in the approbation of the Court of Directors; in that of the Board

of Control. It only remains that he should receive, as I am assured he will, the support of this Court, who, I can have no doubt, will shew, by their vote on the present occasion, that they will never give up to clamour, or abandon, in any shape, a public officer, who has performed his duty in an able, faithful, and conscientious manner.

No. VII.

Proclamation previous to the Commencement of Hostilities with the Rajah of Nepaul.

The British government having been compelled to take up arms against the Nepaulese, his Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor-general has judged it proper to make known to the powers in alliance and friendship with the Honourable Company, the origin and progress of the transactions which have terminated in this crisis, in the full conviction that the exposition will establish beyond dispute the extraordinary moderation and forbearance of the British government, and the injustice, violence, and aggression of the state of Nepaul.

The course of the Gorkah conquests having approximated their frontier to that of the Honourable Company, and of its ally the Nawaub Vizier, and the protected Seikh chieftains, throughout an extent of country stretching from the eastern border of Morung to the banks of the Sutlege, it was scarcely to be expected that differences should not occasionally arise between the inhabitants of the contiguous districts belonging to the two states, and even among the local public officers of each government; but a just and firm line of conduct on the part of the two governments, combined with a sincere disposition to maintain uninterrupted the relations of amity, and to respect the rights of each other, could not have failed to arrest the progress of those unhappy disputes, which have terminated in war.

While the conduct of the British government has been

uniformly regulated in its relations with the Nepaulese by the most scrupulous adherence to the principles of justice and moderation, there is scarcely a single district within the British frontier, throughout the whole of the extensive line above described, in which the Gorkhas have not usurped and appropriated lands forming the ascertained dominions of the Honourable Company.

Questions originating in the usurpations of the Nepaulese have arisen in Purnea, Tirhoot, Sarun, Goruckpore, and Bareilly, as well as in the protected territory between the Sutlege and the Jumna; and each case might be appealed to in proof of the moderation and forbearance of the British government, and the aggressive and insolent spirit of the Nepaulese. It will be enough, however, to advert in detail to two instances only, namely, those which have occurred in Sarun and in Goruckpore, which more particularly demonstrate the systematic design of the Nepaulese to encroach on the acknowledged possessions of the Honourable Company, and have, in fact, been the proximate causes of the war.

In the former district, they have at different times established their authority over portions of the territory of Betteah; but the British government, abiding by those principles of moderation and forbearance so conspicuous in all its transactions with the Nepaulese, contented itself for a considerable period with remonstrances and representations, trusting that the justice of its cause would become apparent to the Nepaulese government, and produce its proper effect on the mind of the Rajah and his ministers. The repeated complaints of its subjects, and the occurrence of a new instance of encroachment in the Tuppah of Nunnoar, forming a portion of Betteah, which led to an affray, in which Subah Luchingir, an officer of the Nepaulese government, was slain, at last induced the British government to depute one of its civil officers to the spot, where he

was met by deputies from the state of Nepaul, in concert with whom proceedings were held and evidence taken, for the purpose of ascertaining the claims of the parties. The result left no doubt of the right of the British government, and of the unjust and violent procedure of the Nepaulese.

A more striking proof of the spirit of rapacity and unjust aggression by which the Nepaulese were actuated cannot be adduced, than the fact that, after having agreed to the investigation referred to above, and after the actual deputation of officers by each government, the Nepaulese suddenly seized an additional tract of country belonging to the Company, at a very short distance from the scene of their former aggressions.

This violent and unjust procedure would have warranted an immediate demand for restitution, or even the actual re-occupation of the lands by force; and it may now be a subject of regret to the British government, that this course was not pursued. Far, however, from resenting or punishing this daring outrage as it deserved, the British government resolved to persevere in the amicable course which it had pursued in other cases, and permitted Mr. Young, the gentleman deputed to meet the Nepaulese commissioners, to extend his inquiries to the lands newly seized, as above stated, as well as to those which formed the original object of his deputation.

The pretext by which the Nepaulese attempted to justify their occupation of the lands in Nunnore, which consisted of no less than twenty-two villages, was, that they were included in the Tuppah of Rotehut, forming a division of Purgunnah Sunnown, which Tuppah was restored to the Nepaulese in the year 1783, with the rest of the Terraiee of Muckwanpore, which had been conquered by the British arms under Major Kinloch. The utter groundlessness of this pretext was proved by the evidence taken by Mr. Young, which

clearly established that the disputed lands were situated in the Tuppah of Nunnore, a portion of Purgunnah Simruwun, which had been reserved by the Company at the time of the restitution of Rotehut, and the remainder of Muckwanpore. But had it been otherwise, the tacit acquiescence by the Nepaulese in our possession of those lands for a period of thirty years, would have amounted to a dereliction of their claim, however well founded it might originally have been. The abrupt and violent manner in which the Nepaulese have invariably possessed themselves of those portions of the Honourable Company's territory to which they have at any time pretended a right, will not allow the supposition that they would have refrained, during so long a period, from doing themselves justice in the present case, if they had felt conscious of the validity of the claim. It is evident, from the whole tenour of their proceedings, that they acted on that premeditated system of gradual encroachment, which, owing to the unexampled forbearance and moderation of the British government, they had already found to be successful; and that the assertion of the twenty-two villages having been included in the Tuppah of Rotehut, was merely brought forward to give colour to the unwarrantable act which they had committed, when it became necessary to assign a reason for their conduct.

The Nepaulese have attempted to fix on the subjects of the Honourable Company the guilt of the murder of Subah Luchingir, and have stated as matter of complaint against the British government, that the Rajah of Betteah and his followers have not been punished for that act; and they have endeavoured to found on this charge a justification of their own subsequent proceedings. It has been ascertained, however, by incontestable evidence, that Luchingir had, previously to the occurrence of the affray in which he died, possessed himself of some villages in Betteah, and was pre-

paring to extend his encroachments. Whatever degree of culpability therefore may attach to the subjects of the Honourable Company, for forcibly opposing his proceedings, their offence was towards their own government alone; and the Nepaulese could not, with any colour of justice, demand the punishment of those persons, for an act produced solely by the misconduct of their own officers, or charge the British government with a culpable omission of what would have been, under different circumstances, due to a state professedly on friendly terms with it; still less can they found on this transaction any justification of their own conduct in other instances.

As the final resolution of the British government, with respect to the usurped lands in Betteah, was in part influenced by the conduct of the Nepaulese, relative to the disputed territory of Bootwul and Sheoraj in Goruckpore, it will be proper to advert to the circumstances of that transaction in this place.

It is notorious, and has also been proved by reference to authentic records, and by the unimpeached testimony of living witnesses, that the whole of Bootwul, to the very foot of the hills, with the exception of the town of Bootwul alone, was held by the Rajahs of Palpah, from the Nawaub Vizier, for a considerable period antecedent to the Treaty of Cession in 1801; and that it was transferred to the Company by the terms of that treaty, being specifically included in the schedule thereunto annexed. It is no less matter of notoriety, that the district of Bootwul actually came into the possession of the British government by virtue of the cession, and that a settlement was made by the collector of Goruckpore with the agent of the late Rajah of Palpah, at that time a prisoner at Catmandhoo, for an annual rent of thirty-two thousand rupees, without the semblance of an objection on the part of the Rajah of Nepaul. So it re-

mained until the year 1804, when the Nepaulese commenced that system of gradual encroachment below the hills, which terminated in their occupation of nearly the whole district of Bootwul. The Tuppah of Sheoraj was occupied by the Nepaulese antecedently to the cession; but it is no less certain that it was a part of the territory of the Vizier, and, together with the rest of the lowlands skirting the hills in the district of Goruckpore, included in the cession.

The Nepaulese pretended to found their claim to Bootwul and Sheoraj, and to the other portions of the lands below the hills, on the circumstance of their having formed the terraiee, or lowlands, of the hill countries of Palpah, Goolmee, Pentaneh, Kamchee, &c., which the Nepaulese have conquered. Admitting that the lowlands were possessed by the chiefs of the neighbouring hill-principalities, the admission does not affect the question, since it is perfectly ascertained that, for a considerable period before the Goorkah conquest, they formed a part of the dominions of Oude; and the conquest therefore of the independent hill-principalities cannot give to the conquering power any just claim to other lands, which, though in the occupation of the same chiefs, were held on dependent tenures from another state.

To show the little confidence that the Nepaulese had in their claim of sovereignty over these lands, it is sufficient to observe, that soon after their usurpation of them, they actually made an offer to hold Bootwul in farm from the British government, on the same terms as the Rajah of Palpah, a proposition to which this government did not think proper to accede.

The system of gradual, and at times almost imperceptible encroachment pursued by the Nepaulese, was calculated to deceive the British government with respect to their ultimate views, and, combined with the just and moderate course

of proceedings which the British government has pursued in all its intercourse with the Nepaulese, prevented it from resorting to those means which would at once have repressed the outrage of the Nepaulese, and re-established its own authority in the usurped lands. The remonstrances and discussions which followed the first usurpation of the Nepaulese in this quarter, continued, with frequent interruption, for a period of some years, during which the Nepaulese continued to avail themselves of every favourable occasion of extending their encroachments. At length a proposition was made by the Rajah of Nepaul, that commissioners should be appointed to meet on the spot, and investigate and decide the respective claims of the parties, under the express condition that, whatever might be the issue of the inquiry, both governments would abide by it. Notwithstanding its perfect conviction of the justice of its own claims, the British government did not hesitate to submit to the delay and expense necessarily attending the proposed investigation, confiding in the ultimate, though tardy, admission of its rights by the Nepaulese, and anxious to afford an unequivocal proof of the moderation of its conduct and the justice of its cause. The proposition of the Rajah of Nepaul was accordingly acceded to, and Major Bradshaw was directed to proceed to Bootwul, and enter on the investigation, in concert with commissioners to be appointed by the Nepaulese government.

The commissioners of the two governments met, and, after much delay and procrastination on the part of the Nepaulese agents, the proceedings were brought to a close, and the right of the British government to the whole of the lowlands confirmed by the most irrefragable proofs, both oral and documentary.

The Nepaulese commissioners, unable to resist the force of this evidence, and clearly restrained by the orders of their

court from admitting the right of the British government, pretended that they were not authorized to come to a decision, and referred the case to the Rajah's government for orders.

The advanced period of the season when the commissioners closed their proceedings, rendered it impracticable to take any steps founded on them, until the ensuing year. The immediate procedure of the British government was therefore confined to a communication to the Rajah, stating in general terms the conclusions necessarily resulting from the proceedings of the commissioners, and requiring the Rajah to give up the lands, according to the condition on which the investigation was acceded to, on the grounds of the conclusive proof of its right, established by those proceedings. To this just and fair demand the Rajah of Nepaul replied, by repeating all those arguments in favour of his own claim, which had been entirely overthrown by the evidence adduced to the commissioners, and refused to restore the lands. In this state the affair necessarily remained until the ensuing season, 1813-14.

In the meanwhile Major Bradshaw proceeded, as soon as the state of the country admitted of his marching, to the frontier of Betteah, where he was to be met by commissioners from Nepaul, empowered to adjust in concert with him the depending claims in that quarter; no practical measures having yet resulted from the inquiry conducted by Mr. Young.

Major Bradshaw, soon after his arrival, renewed a demand which had been made by the British government, but not enforced at the time, for the restoration of the twenty-two villages of Nunnore, previously to any examination of the question of right. This demand was acceded to by the Nepaulese, and the villages were re-occupied by the officers of the Honourable Company, subject to the ulti-

mate disposal of them according to the issue of the intended inquiry.

The refusal of the Nepaulese government to abide by the result of an inquiry sought by itself in the case of the encroachments in Gorruckpore, notwithstanding the full and complete establishment of the rights of the British government to the disputed lands in that quarter, now led the Governor-general in council to pause before he consented to incur the loss, inconvenience, and anxiety, attendant on a new investigation of the claims of the respective governments to the usurped lands in Sarun. On duly reflecting on all that had passed; on the actual proof of the claim of the British government established by Mr. Young's inquiry, conducted in concert with Nepaulese commissioners, an inquiry, which embraced the testimony on oath of all those persons who could be supposed to possess the best local knowledge, and which had, moreover, this advantage over every subsequent investigation, that it was held at a period so much nearer to the time of the transaction, and on the presumptive proof of our right, arising out of the fact acknowledged by the Nepaulese themselves, of our uninterrupted possession during thirty years; the mind of the Governor-general in council was perfectly satisfied that a further investigation *de novo* would be an unprofitable waste of time, and that the utmost that the Nepaulese government could in fairness expect, was, that the commissioners of both governments should meet for the purpose of discussing the question on the basis of the investigation actually closed, and of supplying any defects which might be discovered in that investigation by further inquiry on the spot.

When this result of the deliberations of the Governor-general in council was notified to the Nepaulese commissioners by Major Bradshaw, with an offer to meet them for

the purpose stated, and to produce documents which he had obtained, confirming the correctness of the conclusions drawn from the evidence formerly taken, the Commissioners declared, that they would not meet him, nor hold any communication with him; and, revoking the conditional transfer of the usurped lands, demanded that Major Bradshaw should instantly leave the frontier. They immediately afterwards returned to Nepaul.

This insulting and unprovoked declaration could be referred to no other cause than a previous determination not to fulfil the obligations of justice towards the British government, and left to it no course, but to do itself that right which was refused by the government of Nepaul. Acting on this principle, the Governor-general addressed a letter to the Rajah of Nepaul, reviewing the conduct of his commissioners, and claiming the full renunciation of the disputed lands; adding, that if it were not made within a given time, the portions of these lands still in the hands of the Nepaulese would be reoccupied, and the twenty-two villages, which had been conditionally transferred to the British government, declared to be finally reannexed to the dominions of the honourable Company. This demand not having been complied with, the resumption of the lands was carried into effect, and the authority of the British government re-established throughout the tract in dispute.

While these occurrences were passing in Sarun, the British government, perceiving from the tenour of the whole conduct of the state of Nepaul, and from the answer to its demand for the restitution of Bootwul and Sheoraj, that no intention existed on the part of the Rajah to restore those lands, was compelled to prepare to take possession of them by force, if that necessity should arise. Previously, however, to ordering the troops to advance into the disputed territory, the Governor-general in council made one more

effort to induce the Rajah to restore them, by renewing the demand, founded on the result of the investigation, and declared at the same time, that if the orders of surrender were not received within a limited time (which was specified) the British troops would proceed to occupy the lands. The specified period having expired without the adoption of any measure on the part of the Nepaulese government towards a compliance with the just requisition of the British government, the troops were ordered to march; and the Nepaulese forces, and the public officers of that government, retiring on the advance of the British troops, the civil officers of the honourable Company were enabled to establish their authority in the disputed lands.

The commencement of the rainy season shortly rendered it necessary to withdraw the regular troops, in order that they might not be exposed to the periodical fevers which reign throughout the tract in that part of the year. The defence of the recovered lands was, of course, unavoidably intrusted to the police establishments. The apparent acquiescence, however, of the Nepaulese, in what had taken place, left no room for apprehension; especially as no real violence had been used in obliging the Nepaulese to retire from the district. On the morning of the 29th of May last, the principal police station in Bootwul was attacked by a large body of the Nepaulese troops, headed by an officer of that government, named Munraj Foujdar *, and driven out of Bootwul, with the loss of eighteen men killed and six wounded. Among the former was the Darogah, or principal police-officer, who was murdered in cold blood, with circumstances of peculiar barbarity, in the presence of Munraj Foujdar, after surrendering himself a prisoner. Another police tannah † was subsequently attacked by the

* Commander of the army. † Post.

Nepaulese troops, and driven out, with the loss of several persons killed and wounded. In consequence of the impracticability of supporting the police tannahs by sending troops into the country at that unhealthy season, it became necessary to withdraw them; and the Nepaulese were thus enabled to reoccupy the whole of the disputed territory, which they have since retained. The British government had not ceased to hope that an amicable adjustment of its differences with the state of Nepaul might still be accomplished, when the perpetration of this sanguinary and atrocious outrage, by which the state of Nepaul at once placed itself in the condition of a public enemy of the British government, put an end to the possibility of any accommodation, except on the basis of unqualified submission and atonement.

Still the Governor-general would not proceed to actual hostilities, without giving to the Rajah of Nepaul one other opening for avoiding so serious an issue. Therefore his excellency wrote to the Rajah of Nepaul, to apprize him of what must be the consequence of the insolent outrage which had taken place, unless the government of Nepaul should exonerate itself from the act, by disavowal and punishment of the perpetrators. This letter received an answer wholly evasive, and even implying menace.

The requisite submission and atonement having thus been withheld, the British government had no choice left but an appeal to arms, in order to avenge its innocent subjects, and vindicate its insulted dignity and honour. The unfavourable season of the year alone prevented it from having instant recourse to the measures necessary for chastising the insolence, violence, and barbarity of the Nepaulese, whose whole conduct, not only in the particular cases above detailed, but in every part of their proceedings towards the British government, for a series of years, has

been marked by an entire disregard of the principles of honour, justice, and good faith, aggravated by the most flagrant insolence, presumption, and audacity, and has manifested the existence of a long-determined resolution on the part of the court of Catmandhoo to reject all the just demands of the British government, and to refer the decision of the questions depending between the two states to the issue of a war.

Ever since the murder of the police-officers in Bootwul, and during the unavoidable interval of inaction which followed, the Nepaulese, with a baseness and barbarity peculiar to themselves, have endeavoured to destroy the troops and the subjects of the Company on the frontier of Sarun, by poisoning the water of the wells and tanks in a tract of considerable extent. The fortunate discovery of this attempt baffled the infamous design, and placed incontrovertible proof of it in the hands of the British government.

The impediment to military operations, arising from the season of the year, is now removed, and the British government is prepared, by the active and vigorous employment of its resources, to compel the state of Nepaul to make that atonement which it is so justly entitled to demand. The British government has long borne the conduct of the Nepaulese with unexampled patience, opposing to their violence, insolence, and rapacity, a course of procedure uniformly just and moderate. But forbearance and moderation must have their limits; and the British government having been compelled to take up arms in defence of its rights, its interests, and its honour, will never lay them down, until its enemy shall be forced to make ample submission and atonement for his outrageous conduct, to indemnify it for the expense of the war, and to afford full security for the future maintenance of those relations which he has so shamefully violated.

If the misguided councils of the state of Nepaul shall lead it obstinately to persist in rejecting these just demands, it will itself be responsible for the consequences. The British government has studiously endeavoured, by every effort of conciliation, to avert the extremity of war, but it can have no apprehension of the result; and it relies with confidence on the justness of its cause, and on the skill, discipline, and valour of its armies, for a speedy, honourable, and decisive termination of the contest in which it is engaged.

By command of his Excellency the Governor-General,

(Signed) J. ADAM,
Secretary to Government.

Lucknow,
November 1st, 1814.

No. VIII.

Instructions * by Major-general Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B., K.L.S., to Officers acting under his Orders in Central India, in 1821.

These instructions are grounded upon principles which it has been my constant effort to inculcate upon all officers acting under my orders; and, at a period when I am leaving Central † India (perhaps not to return), I feel it a duty I owe to them, to myself, and to the public service, to enter into a more full explanation of my sentiments upon the subject of our general and local rule, than could have been necessary under any other circumstances.

Almost all who, from knowledge and experience, have been capable of forming any judgment upon the question, are agreed that our power in India rests on the general opinion of the natives of our comparative superiority in good faith, wisdom, and strength, to their own rulers. This important impression will be improved by the consideration we show to their habits, institutions, and religion,

* These Instructions were published in the Appendix of "Central India." They are republished from a belief of their utility, in which the author is confirmed by the extract of a minute in the Revenue Department, under date the 29th of March, 1825, of the Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, directing their circulation, and expressing a hope that every public officer, for whose use they are intended, will be guided by the spirit which pervades them.

† Central India, so denominated from its comprising those provinces which, lying in the centre of India, may be said to extend from seventy-one to seventy-five degrees north latitude, and seventy-three to eighty east longitude. It comprehends all that extent of country which was known in the time of the emperors of Delhi, under the denomination of the Subah or government of Malwa.—Vide "Memoir of Central India," vol. I., page 1.

—by the moderation, temper, and kindness, with which we conduct ourselves towards them; and injured by every act that offends their belief or superstition, that shows disregard or neglect of individuals or communities, or that evinces our having, with the arrogance of conquerors, forgotten those maxims by which this great empire has been established, and by which alone it can be preserved.

The want of union of the natives appears one of the strongest foundations of our power; it has certainly contributed, beyond all others, to its establishment. But, when we trace this cause, we find it to have originated in the condition in which we found India, and the line we adopted towards its inhabitants: that it will continue to operate when the condition of that country is changed, and under any alteration in our course of proceedings, is more than can be assumed. The similarity of the situation of the great proportion of the people of this continent now subject to our rule, will assuredly make them more accessible to common motives of action, which is the foundation of all union; and the absence of that necessity for conciliation, which changes have effected, will make us more likely to forget its importance. Our power has hitherto owed much to a contrast with misrule and oppression; but this strength we are daily loosing: we have also been indebted to an indefinite impression of our resources, originating in ignorance of their real extent; knowledge will bring this feeling to a reduced standard. We are supported by the good opinion of the lower and middling classes, to whom our government is indulgent; but it has received the rudest shocks from an impression that our system of rule is at variance with the permanent continuance of rank, authority, and distinction in any native of India. This belief, which is not without foundation, is general to every class, and its action leaves but an anxious and feverish existence to all who enjoy station and high name;—the feeling which their

condition excites, exposes those, who have any portion of power and independence, to the arts of the discontented, the turbulent, and the ambitious: this is a danger to our power, which must increase in the ratio of its extent, unless we can counteract its operation by a commensurate improvement of our administration.

Our greatest strength, perhaps, and that which gives the fairest hopes of the duration of our rule over India, arises out of the singular construction of the frame of both the controlling and the executive government. Patronage in all the branches of the local government of India is exercised under much limitation and check: favour effects less in this country, and competency more, than in any other scene of equal magnitude. There is an interminable field for individual exertion; and, though men high in station are almost absolute, (and the character of our rule requires they should be so,) there is, in that jealousy of such power which belongs to our native country, a very efficient shield against its abuse. This keeps men from being intoxicated with their short-lived authority; and the fundamental principles which discourage colonisation, prevent public servants taking root in the soil, and make them proceed to the duties of government, as they would in other countries to the routine of an office, which employs their talents, without agitating their personal feelings and interests, in any degree that can disturb or bias their judgment. This absence of baneful passions, and of all the arts of intrigue and ambition which destroy empires, produces a calmness of mind that can belong alone to the rulers of a country situated as the English employed in India now are, and gives them an advantage which almost balances the bad effects of their want of those national ties that usually constitute the strength of governments.

Our successes and moderation, contrasted with the misrule and violence to which a great part of the population of India

have for more than a century been exposed, have at this moment raised the reputation of the British nation so high, that men have forgotten, in the contemplation of the security and prosperity they enjoy under strangers, their feelings of patriotism; but these are feelings which that very knowledge that it is our duty to impart must gradually revive and bring into action. The people of India must, by a recurring sense of benefits, have amends made them for the degradation of continuing subject to foreign masters; and this can alone be done by the combined efforts of every individual employed in a station of trust and responsibility, to render popular a government which, though not national, has its foundations laid deep in the principles of toleration, justice, and wisdom. Every agent of government should study and understand the above facts. He should not content himself with having acquired a knowledge of the languages, and of the customs, of those with whom he has intercourse. All his particular acts (even to the manner of them) should be regulated by recurrence to the foundation of our rule, and a careful observation of those principles by which it has been established, and can alone be maintained. Of the importance of this I cannot better state my opinion, than by expressing my full conviction, that, independent of the prescribed duties which every qualified officer performs, there is no person in a situation of any consequence who does not, both in the substance and manner of his conduct, do something every day in his life, which, as it operates on the general interests of the empire through the feelings of the circle he controls or rules, has an unseen effect in strengthening or weakening the government by which he is employed. My belief that what I have assumed is correct, will be my excuse for going into some minuteness in my general instructions to those under my orders.

The first, and one of the most important points, is the manner of European superiors towards the natives. It

would be quite out of place, in this paper, to speak of the necessity of kindness, and of an absence of all violence; this must be a matter of course with those to whom it is addressed: there is much more required from them than that conciliation which is a duty, but which, when it appears as such, loses half its effect. It must, to make an impression, be a habit of the mind, grounded on a favourable consideration of the qualities and merits of those to whom it extends; and this impression, I am satisfied, every person will have, who, after attaining a thorough knowledge of the real character of those with whom he has intercourse, shall judge them, without prejudice or self-conceit, by a standard which is suited to their belief, their usages, their habits, their occupations, their rank in life, the ideas they have imbibed from infancy, and the stage of civilization to which the community as a whole are advanced. If he does so with that knowledge and that temper of mind which are essential to render him competent to form an opinion, he will find enough of virtue, enough of docility and disposition to improvement, enough of regard and observance of all the best and most sacred ties of society, to create an esteem for individuals, and an interest in the community, which, when grounded on a sincere conviction of its being deserved, will render his kindness natural and conciliating. All human beings, down to the lowest links of the chain, inclusive of children, are quick in tracing the source of the manners of others, and, above all, of their superiors;—when that is regulated by the head, not the heart—when it proceeds from reason, not from feeling, it cannot please; for it has in it, if at all artificial, a show of design which repels, as it generates suspicion. When this manner takes another shape, when kindness and consideration appear as acts of condescension, it must be felt as offensive. Men may dread, but can never love or regard, those who are

continually humiliating them by the parade of superiority.

I have recommended those foundations of manner, towards the natives of India, upon which I feel my own to be grounded. I can recollect (and I do it with shame) the period when I thought I was very superior to those with whom my duty made me associate; but as my knowledge of them and of myself improved, the distance between us gradually lessened. I have seen and heard much of our boasted advantages over them, but cannot think that, if all the ranks of the different communities of Europe and India are comparatively viewed, there is just ground for any very arrogant feeling on the part of the inhabitants of the former: nor can I join in that common-place opinion, which condemns, in a sweeping way, the natives of this country as men, taking the best of them, not only unworthy of trust and devoid of principle, but of too limited intelligence and reach of thought, to allow of Europeans, with large and liberal minds and education, having rational or satisfactory intercourse with them. Such impressions, if admitted, must prove vital as to the manner of treating the natives of India: I shall therefore say a few words upon the justice of the grounds upon which they rest. The man who considers them in this light can grant little or no credit to the high characters, and the eulogies which are given to individuals and great bodies of men, in their own histories, traditions, and records. He must then judge them by his own observations and knowledge, and his opinion will, in all probability, be formed, not comparatively with Europeans of their own class of life, but with the public servants of government—a class of men who are carefully educated, whose ambition is stimulated by the highest prospects of preferment, and whose integrity is preserved by adequate salaries through every grade of their service. Before this last prin-

ciple was introduced (which is little more than thirty years), the European servants of government were in the habit of making money in modes not dissimilar to those we now reproach the natives in our employ with doing; and it may here be asked, "If the same endeavours have been made to alter the habits of the latter as the former?" I believe the exact contrary to be the fact, and that the system since introduced has not operated more to elevate the European, than to sink and depress the native character: but this is not the place for the discussion of this large question.

Many of the moral defects of the natives of India are to be referred to that misrule and oppression from which they are now, in a great degree, emancipated. I do not know the example of any great population, in similar circumstances, preserving, through such a period of change and tyrannical rule, so much of virtue and so many good qualities as are to be found in a great proportion of the inhabitants of this country. This is to be accounted for, in some degree, by the Hindu institutions, particularly that of Caste, which appear to have raised them to their present rank in human society, at a very remote period; but these have certainly tended to keep them stationary at that point of civil order to which they were thus early advanced. With a just admiration of the effects of many of their institutions, particularly those parts of them which cause in vast classes, not merely an absence of the common vices of theft, drunkenness, and violence, but preserve the virtuous ties of family and kindred relations, we must all deplore some of their usages and weak superstitions; but what individuals, or what races of men, are without great and manifold errors and imperfections? and what mind, that is not fortified with ignorance or pride, can, on such grounds, come to a severe judgment against a people like that of India?

I must here, however, remark, that I have invariably

found, unless in a few cases where knowledge had not overcome self-sufficiency and arrogance, that in proportion as European officers, civil and military, advanced in their acquaintance with the language and customs of the natives of India, they became more sincerely kind to them; and, on the contrary, ignorance always accompanied that selfish pride and want of consideration which held them light, or treated them with harshness.

I am quite satisfied in my own mind, that, if there is one cause more than another that will impede our progress to the general improvement of India, it is a belief formed by its population, from the manner of their English superiors, that they are viewed by them as an inferior and degraded race: but, on the contrary, if the persons employed in every branch of the administration of this great country, while their conduct marks those rigid principles of virtue and justice, under the check of which they act, comport themselves towards the people whom it is their duty to make happy, with that sincere humility of heart which always belongs to real knowledge, and which attaches while it elevates, they will contribute by such manner, more than any measures of boasted wisdom ever can, to the strength and duration of their government.

It is of importance, before I conclude this part of the subject, to state my opinion, that in our manner to the natives, though it is our duty to understand and to pay every proper deference to their customs and usages, and to conform with these as far as we can with propriety, particularly on points where the religious prejudices or the rank of those with whom we have intercourse require it, yet we should always preserve the European; for, to adopt their manners is a departure from the very principle on which every impression of our superiority that rests upon good foundation is grounded. We should take a lesson on such

points from what we see occur to native princes and others, who ape English habits and modes: they lose ground with one class, that to which they belong, without gaining with the other, that to which they wish to approximate. The fact is, they ultimately lose with the latter; for even their attachment is useless, when they cease to have influence with their own tribe. The European officer, who assumes native manners and usages, may please a few individuals, who are flattered or profited by his departure from the habits of his country; but even with these, familiarity will not be found to increase respect; and the adoption of such a course will be sure to sink him in the estimation of the mass of the community, both European and Native, among whom he resides.

The intercourse to be maintained with the Natives within your circle is of two kinds,—private and official. The first should extend as much as possible to all ranks and classes, and be as familiar, as kind, and as frequent, as the difference of habits and pursuits will admit.

There is a veil between the Natives of India and their European superiors, which leaves the latter ignorant, in an extraordinary degree, of the real character of the former. He can only judge his own domestics by what he sees of their conduct in his presence; of the manner in which they perform their other duties in life, he is, if not ignorant, but imperfectly informed: so many minute obstacles, grounded upon caste, usages, and religion, oppose an approach to closer acquaintance, that it can never be generally attained; but in private intercourse much may be learned that will facilitate the performance of public duty, and give that knowledge of the usages and feelings of the various classes of the Natives, which will enable its possessors to touch every chord with effect. In joining with them in field-sports, in an unceremonious interchange of visits with the most re-

spectable, and in seeking the society of the most learned, the European public officer will not only gain much information, but impart complete confidence, and lay the grounds of that personal attachment which will ever be found of the greatest aid to his public labours. He will also obtain, by such habits of private intercourse, the means of elevating those he esteems by marks of notice and regard; but, in pursuing this course, he must beware lest he lose his object, by falling into the weaknesses or indulgences of the persons with whom he thus associates. It is in the performance of this part of his duty, when all the pride of station is laid aside, that he must most carefully guard that real superiority which he derives from better knowledge and truer principles of morality and religion; for it is from the impression made by the possession without the ostentation of those higher qualities, that he must expect the benefits I have described as likely to result from a familiar and private intercourse with the natives under his direction and control.

In all official intercourse with the natives, one of the first points of importance is, that these, whatever be their rank, class, or business, should have complete and easy access to personal communication with their European superior. The necessity of this arises out of the character of our rule, and of those over whom it is established. It is sufficiently galling for the people of India to have foreign masters: the impression this feeling must continually excite, can only be mitigated or removed by a recurring sense of the advantages they derive from the wisdom and justice of their European superiors; and this can alone be effected by direct communication with them. Though native servants must be employed and trusted, and though it is quite essential to behave to all with kindness, and to raise the higher classes of them by a treatment which combines consideration and respect, yet they can never without hazard be used as exclusive

mediums of communication: their real or supposed influence will, under whatever circumstances they are allowed frequent approach to an European officer in the exercise of authority, give them opportunities of abusing his confidence, if they desire it; and as our servants, who are seldom selected from the higher classes, cannot be supposed to have even the same motives with native rulers for good conduct, much less the same title to regard, men under our power will have, in aggravation of the feeling arising out of subjection to foreign rule, that of being, to a certain extent, at the mercy of persons of their own nation, whom they neither trust nor respect. There is no remedy for such an evil, except being completely easy of access; but this, however much the superior may desire it, is not to be established without difficulty and perseverance. It affects the interest and consequence of every man in his employ, from the highest to the lowest; but, in proportion to their efforts to counteract it, so must his be to carry this important point, on which, more than all others, the integrity of his personal administration and the good of the country depend. No native servant, high or low, must be allowed the privilege of either introducing or stopping an applicant or a complainant: all such must come with confidence to the European superior, or to such assistant as he may specifically direct to receive or hear them. It requires much temper and patience, constant activity, and no slight sacrifice of personal comfort, to maintain an intercourse with the natives upon this footing; but, unless it be done, (I speak here from the fullest experience,) the government of control now established* in Central

* In consequence of the success of the Pindarie war in 1818 and 1819, our power was established over almost all the country called Central India; but, with the exception of a few districts, its provinces remained with the native princes and chiefs who before possessed them.

India cannot be carried on for any period, and the changes which must ensue from relaxation in this particular will be brought about in the manner most unfavourable to our character and reputation.

In establishing this direct personal intercourse, it is perhaps better, when the habits are so formed as to admit of it, that the natives of all classes and ranks should have admission and be heard, at whatever hour of the day they come, except those of meals; but, where such constant intrusion is found to interrupt other business, as it may with many, certain portions of every day must be set aside to hear representations and complaints, and to see those who desire to be seen. The establishment of direct intercourse is, in my opinion, a primary and indispensable duty,—one no more dependent upon the inclination or judgment of the individuals to whom the charge of managing or controlling these countries is intrusted, than it is to an officer whether he shall attend his parade, or to a judge whether he shall sit a certain number of hours in his court: indeed, I consider that late events have so completely altered our condition in India, that the duties of almost every officer in the political department have become, in a great degree, magisterial, and, as such, must be more defined, and subject to more exact rules, than they formerly were.

Our right of interference (as will be shown hereafter) is so limited, that it is not in one case in a hundred of those that are brought forward, that an officer can do more than state calmly and clearly, to the party who seeks redress, the reasons and principles which prevent him from attending to his representation or complaint. He will have to repeat

These, with hardly what can be called an exception, became, under different treaties and engagements, dependent on the protection and subject to the control of the British government.

this perhaps fifty times in one day; but he must, in contemplating the good that will be ultimately produced, be content to take this trouble. The natives of India cannot persuade themselves that, possessing as we do the means of establishing our direct rule, we shall long refrain from doing so. This impression weakens those princes, chiefs, and ministers, whom it is our policy to support, in a degree that almost unfits them for being instruments of government. We can only counteract its bad effects by making ourselves understood by all, even to the lowest, upon this point: it is one on which they will never trust to a communication from any native agent or servant, nor indeed will they be convinced of our sincerity till they observe for years that our words and actions are in unison; and they must, to satisfy them that there is no prospect of those fluctuations to which they have been so habituated, see that everything originates with and is known to the superior. This knowledge, added to the right of approaching him at all moments, will gradually tranquillize their minds, and place them, as far as they can be placed, beyond the power of being made the dupes of artful or interested men.

It has been before said, that native servants of all classes should be treated with that attention and respect to which they were from their station and character entitled. These will, of course, have at all times the freest intercourse with the superior, but they should never have the privilege of coming to any conference between him and other natives, to which they were not specifically called. But these servants (whatever might be their inclination) will have little power of doing harm when a direct intercourse (such as has been described) is well established, and its principles and objects generally understood. Indeed, one of the best effects of that intercourse is the check it constitutes on all nefarious proceedings of subordinate agents, and persons of every de-

scription; as such must act in hourly dread of discovery, when every man can tell his own story to the principal at any moment he pleases.

The next important point to be observed in official intercourse with the natives, is "publicity." There can be no occasion to expatiate, here, upon the utility of this principle. It is the happy privilege of a state so constituted as that of the English in India, to gain strength in the ratio that its measures, and the grounds on which they are adopted, are made public; and this is above all essential in a quarter of India where we are as yet but imperfectly understood. There are, and can be, no secrets in our ordinary proceedings, and every agent will find his means of doing good advanced, his toil lessened, and the power of the designing and corrupt to misrepresent his actions or intentions decreased, in the proportion that he transacts affairs in public. He should avoid, as much as he possibly can, private conferences with those in his employ or others. These will be eagerly sought for; they give the individual thus admitted the appearance of favour and influence; and there is no science in which the more artful among the natives are greater adepts, than that of turning to account the real or supposed confidence of their superiors. I know no mode of preventing the mischief which this impression, if it becomes general, gives men the power of effecting, but habitual publicity in transacting business. This will, no doubt, be found to have inconveniences, which will be purposely increased by those who have their game to play, and indeed others; for natives of rank and station, even when they have no corrupt views, are from habit and self-importance attached to a secret and mysterious way of conducting both great and small affairs.

A public officer, placed in your situation, must always be vigilant and watchful of events likely to affect the peace of

the country under his charge; but no part of his duty requires such care and wisdom in its performance. He cannot rest in blind confidence, nor refuse attention to obvious and well-authenticated facts; but he must be slow in giving his ear, or in admitting to private and confidential intercourse, secret agents and informers, lest they make an impression (which will be their object) upon his mind; for there is no failing of human nature to which the worst part of the natives of India have learned (from the shape of their own government) so well to address themselves, as any disposition to suspicion in their superiors. From the condition of Central India, abounding as it must with discontented and desperate characters, intrigues, treasonable conversations and papers, and immature plots, must, for some time, be matters of frequent occurrence and growth; but such will, in general, be best left to perish of neglect. Established as our power now is, men cannot collect any means capable of shaking it, without being discovered; and it is, I am convinced, under all ordinary circumstances, wiser and safer to incur petty hazard, than to place individuals and communities at the mercy of artful and avaricious agents and spies, or to goad unfortunate men to a state of hostility by continually viewing them with an eye of torturing and degrading suspicion.

In the intercourse with the natives of your circle, it is hardly necessary to advert to the subject of giving and receiving presents. The recent orders upon this subject, which have been communicated to you, are very defined and strict; but there is a necessity, in this government of control, for every agent to maintain, on a high ground, not only the purity, but the disinterestedness of the English character; and you will avoid, as much as you possibly can, incurring any obligation to local authorities. These will sedulously endeavour to promote your convenience and comfort, and will

press favours upon you, both from design and good feelings; but there is a strength in preserving complete independence on all such points, that must not be abandoned. Our political superiority, to be efficient, must be unmixed with any motives or concerns, either connected with our personal interest or that of others, that can soil or weaken that impression on which its successful exercise depends.

The forms of the official intercourse between European agents and natives of rank were, before we obtained paramount power, a matter of more moment, and one on which we could less relax than at present, because our motives were at that period more liable to be mistaken. Though it is essential, in our intercourse with nations who are attached to and give value to ceremonies, to understand such perfectly, and to claim from all what is due to our station, that we may not sink the rank of the European superior in the estimation of those subject to his control; it is now the duty of the former to be much more attentive to the respect which he gives than what he receives, particularly in his intercourse with men of high rank. The princes and chiefs of India may, in different degrees, be said to be all dependent on the British government: many have little more than the name of that power they before enjoyed; but they seem, as they lose the substance, to cling to the forms of station. The pride of reason may smile at such a feeling; but it exists, and it would be alike opposite to the principles of humanity and policy to deny it gratification.

In official intercourse with the lower classes, the latter should be treated according to the usages of the country, as practised by the most indulgent of their native superiors. It will be found that they require personal notice and consideration in proportion as their state is removed from that knowledge which belongs to civilization; and it is on this

ground that the Bheel * must have more attention paid him than the Ryot. It is more difficult to give confidence to his mind, and to make him believe in the sincerity and permanence of the kindness with which he is treated, because he is in a condition more remote from the party with whom he communicates; and, before he can be reclaimed, he must be approximated.

The interference of agents employed in this country with native princes, or courts, or their local officers, cannot be exactly defined, for there will be shades of distinction in every case, that will require attention; but all must be subject, and that in the strictest degree, to certain general and well-understood principles, founded on the nature of our power, our objects, our political relations with the different states, the personal conduct of their rulers, their necessity for our aid and support, and their disposition to require or reject it in the conduct of their internal administration. The leading principle, and the one which must be continually referred to, is grounded on the character of our controlling power and its objects. It is the avowed, and I am satisfied it is the true, policy of the British state, while it maintains the general peace of the country, to keep, not only in the enjoyment of their high rank, but in the active exercise of their sovereign functions, the different princes and chiefs who are virtually or declaredly dependent on its protection. The principal object (setting aside the obligations of faith) is to keep at a distance that crisis to which, in spite of our efforts, we are gradually approaching—of having the whole of India subject to our direct rule. There is no intention of discussing here the

* The Bheels are mountain-robbers. For a particular account of this remarkable race, vide *Memoir on Central India*, vol. i. pp. 116, 550, and vol. ii. p. 179.

consequences likely to result from such an event. It is sufficient for executive and subordinate officers to know, that it is the desire of the government they serve, to keep it at a distance, to render it their duty to contribute their whole efforts to promote the accomplishment of that object; and on the manner and substance of their interference the local success of this policy will greatly depend.

On all points where we are pledged by treaty to support states, or to mediate or interfere between them and others, we must of course act agreeably to the obligations contracted; and, in such case, no instructions can be required. It may not, however, be unuseful to remark, that, on all occasions where they are referred to, treaties and engagements should be interpreted with consideration to the prince or chief with whom they are made. There is often, from opposite education and habits, much difference between their construction and ours of such engagements; but no loose observation, or even casual departure from the letter of them, ought to lead to serious consequences, when it appeared there was no intention of violating the spirit of the deed, or of acting contrary to pledged faith. When any article of an engagement is doubtful, I think it should be invariably explained with more leaning to the expectations originally raised in the weaker than to the interests of the stronger power. It belongs to superior authority to give ultimate judgment upon all points of this nature which come under discussion; but that judgment must always be much influenced by the colour of the information and opinion of the local agent. My desire is to convey how important every subject is that connects in the remotest degree with that reputation for good faith, which can only be considered our strength while it exists unimpaired in the minds of the natives: in this view the most scrupulous attention should be paid to their understanding

of every article of the agreements we make with them; for no local advantage, nor the promotion of any pecuniary interest, can compensate for the slightest injury to "this corner-stone of our power in India."

With the government of Dowlut Row Sindia * (a great part of whose possessions are intermixed with those of our dependent allies in this quarter) we have only general relations of amity; and, however virtually dependent events may have rendered that prince, we can (except insisting upon the exact performance of those settlements which we have mediated between him or his delegated officers and some of his tributaries) claim no right of interference in any part of his internal administration; nor should there, unless in cases of unexpected emergency which threatened the general peace of the country, be any disposition shown to interference, except on specific requisition from the resident at Gwalior †. Without interfering, however, we have hitherto, and shall continue to exercise a very salutary control both over Dowlut Row Sindia and his local officers, by the terms on which we communicate and act with the latter. When these are men of good character, and study the happiness of the inhabitants and the improvement of the country, we can, by the cordiality and consideration with which we treat them, and the ready attention we give to the settlement of every petty dispute they have with the subjects of our allies, as well as other friendly acts, grant them a countenance and aid which will promote the success

* This Mahratta prince (for a particular account of whose family and possessions, vide *Memoir on Central India*, vol. i. p. 116) is the only one who maintains a nominal independence of the British government; but he, in fact, now relies as much on that power as those chiefs who can claim its protection by treaty.

† Gwalior is the capital of Dowlut Row Sindia, with whom a representative of the British government resides.

of their local administration. The same principle leads to abstinence from all communication, and to our keeping aloof (except where the general peace is at hazard) from all intercourse with those of Sindia's managers who are noted for misrule or bad faith. This line of conduct towards the latter, grounded, as it publicly should be, on the avowed principle of keeping our character free of soil from their proceedings, will increase our local reputation, while it has the effect of rendering the employment of such men inconvenient and unprofitable to the state, and thus constitutes one of the chief means we have of working a reform in its internal administration: nor is it a slight one; for the impression of our power is so great, that the belief of a local officer possessing our good opinion and friendship, is of itself sufficient to repress opposition to his authority, while his forfeiting our favour is sure to raise him enemies, both in his district and at Gwalior.

With the courts of Holkar *, Dhar, Dewass, and almost all the petty Rajpoot states west of the Chumbul, our relations are different. These have been raised from a weak and fallen condition, to one of efficiency, through our efforts. But, though compelled, at first, to aid them in almost every settlement, we have, as they attained the power of acting for themselves, gradually withdrawn from minute interference on points connected with their internal administration, limiting ourselves to what is necessary for the maintenance of the public tranquillity.

There is so strong a feeling in the minds of the princes and chiefs above alluded to, and in those of all their officers (from their prime minister down to the lowest agent), of

* For an account of the Mahratta families of Holkar, Dhar, and Dewass, vide *Memoir on Central India*, vol. i. pp. 142, 97, and 112. A detailed account of the Rajpoot chiefs here alluded to is given in p. 463 of the same volume.

their actual dependence upon the British government, that it is almost impossible to make them understand that they are, in the conduct of their internal administration, desired and expected to act independently of it. Their difficulty of comprehending and trusting the policy which dictates our conduct in this particular, arises out of its being opposite to all their habits and knowledge. Time alone, and the most minute care of every European agent employed, can impart to them that confidence which is essential to their becoming competent functionaries of rule. To effect this object, the principles hitherto inculcated and acted upon must be steadily pursued, and we must decline all interference, except in cases where Grassiahs*, Bheels, or other plunderers are concerned. These, from their situation and strength, can only be kept in order by the power of the British government; but we must, in such cases even, have the limits of our interference exactly defined, that no belief may exist of our possessing the power of departing from the restrictions we have imposed upon ourselves; for on such impressions being general, and being confirmed by scrupulous consistency of action, depends our success in giving that efficiency to the various native authorities subject to our control, which is necessary to enable them to perform the different duties allotted to them.

In cases of interference with lesser rulers, such as the reformed Rajpoot plunderers and Bheel chiefs, we may be compelled to enter more minutely into their affairs; but the principles observed should be the same; and while we take care to repress every disposition to a return to predatory

* The Grassiahs are Rajpoot chiefs, who subsist by extorting, through force or intimidation, a part of the produce of those districts they once possessed, but from which they have been expelled by Mahratta invaders. For a particular account of these chiefs, vide *Memoir on Central India*, vol. i. p. 508, and vol. ii. p. 244.

habits, and see that men who have long cherished such possess themselves of honest means of livelihood, we must respect their prejudices, and not hastily break in upon the rude frame of their internal rule; but leave (down to the Turwee, or head of the Bheel Parah or cluster of hamlets) the full exercise of his authority over those under him, according as that is grounded on the ancient prejudices and usages of the tribe to which he and his family or followers belong.

The feelings of irritation and hatred with which almost all the princes and chiefs of this quarter regard the Grassiahs and Bheels, and the total want of confidence of the latter in their nominal superiors, have and will continue to render calls for our interference very frequent: but however high the character and condition of the one party, and however bad and low that of the other may be, we must never grant our name or support to measures of coercion or violence, without fully understanding the merits of the case, nor without having had direct communication with the party or parties inculpated; otherwise we may be involved in embarrassment, and become unconsciously the instruments of injustice and oppression.

Many questions will occur, deeply connected with our reputation for good faith, which cannot be decided by any exact rules; but whenever that is concerned, the tone of our feeling should be very high. It is the point upon which the moral part of our government of this great empire hinges; and in these countries, where our rule and control are new, and in which the inhabitants cannot yet understand any explanations that do not rest upon broad and obvious grounds, the subject requires much attention. There are many cases in which our faith, though not specifically, is virtually pledged to individuals: ministers, for instance, of minor or incompetent princes or chiefs,

who have been brought forward or recognised by us in the exercise of authority, have a claim upon our support and consideration, which nothing but bad conduct on their part can forfeit. We should, no doubt, be most careful of any interference that leads to such obligations. They are only to be incurred when a necessity that involves the peace and prosperity of the country calls for them: but they must be sacredly observed; for, with a people who look, in all questions of government, more to persons than systems, the abandonment, except from gross misconduct, of any individual who had been raised or openly protected by us, would excite stronger feelings than the breach of an article of a treaty, and locally prove more injurious, as it weakens that reliance upon our faith which is the very foundation of our strength.

We may rest satisfied, while we pursue the course I have stated (and it is the one to which our faith is almost in every case, either directly or by implication, pledged), that we have, from our paramount power, a very efficient check over states and tribes, whose rulers, officers, and chiefs will soon discover that they can only gain our favour and support by good conduct, or forfeit it by bad. With such knowledge and with means comparatively limited, we cannot expect they will be disposed to incur displeasure, when the terms on which they can gain approbation are so easy; at least no men possessed of common sense and discernment (qualities in which the natives of India are seldom deficient) can be expected to act in such a manner; but we must not conceal from ourselves, that their conduct in this, as in all other particulars, will rest chiefly on the value of that condition in which they are placed, or rather left; and in proportion as we render it one of comfort and dignity, so will their care be to preserve our good opinion and to merit our confidence. It is, indeed, upon our success in

supporting their respectability, that the permanence of a system of control over great and small native states, such as we have established in this quarter of India, will depend. We have no choice of means in the performance of this delicate and arduous part of our duty. Though the check must be efficient, it should be almost unseen: the effect ought to be produced more by the impression than the exercise of superior power. Our principal object must be to elevate the authorities to whom we have left the administration of their respective territories; we must, in all cases of interference, bring them forward to their own subjects, as the prominent objects of respect and obedience; so far from the agent attracting notice to himself, he should purposely repel it, that it may be given to the quarter where it is wanted, and to which it belongs.

When we aid any prince or chief against his own subjects, his name should be exclusively used; and we should be most careful in making our native agents and servants pay the full measure of respect to every branch of his administration, and continually be on the watch to check that disposition which is inherent in them, to slight local authorities, that they may, in the name of their master, draw that attention to themselves, which it is quite essential should belong to the officers of the native government. It is evident that our control can only be supportable, to any human being who has the name and appearance of power, so long as it is exercised in a general manner, and regulated by the principles above stated. When it descends to minute checks and interference in the collection of revenue, the administration of justice listens to the complaints of discontented, or even aggrieved individuals, and allows, upon system, its own native agents to interfere and act in the name of the paramount state; the continuance of independent power, in any shape, to either prince or chief, is not only impolitic but

dangerous, as his condition must be felt by himself, and by all attached to his person or family, as a mockery and degradation; and the least effect of such feelings will be the extermination of all motive to good or great actions. For when control is divested of its large and liberal character, and takes a more minute shape, whatever merit belongs to the administration becomes the due of the person by whom it is exercised, or his agents, and the nominal prince and his officers are degraded into suspected and incompetent instruments of rule.

In this general outline of our interference with the rulers, great and small, of this part of India, I have dwelt much upon the political considerations upon which it is grounded; because I am convinced, that there is no part of the subject that requires to be so deeply studied and so fully understood, as this should be, by every subordinate agent; for there is no point of his duty which is at once so delicate and arduous, or in which success or failure so much depends upon individual exertion. He will be prompted to deviate from the course prescribed, by the action of his best feelings, and by hopes of increasing his personal reputation; but he will be kept steady in that course by a knowledge of the importance of those general principles on which the present system rests. It is in the performance of this part of his duty, that all which has been said regarding manner and intercourse must be in his memory; for men in the situation in which those are, with whom he must in all cases of interference come in contact, are not to be conciliated to their condition, nor kept in that temper with the paramount authority which it is necessary for its interests they should be, by mere correctness or strict attention to justice. The native governments must be courted and encouraged to good conduct, and the earnest endeavour of the British agent must be, to give their rulers a pride in their administration: to effect this object, he

must win to his side, not only the rulers themselves, but the principal and most respectable men of the country. In his efforts to gain the latter, however, he must beware of depriving the local authority of that public opinion which is so essential both as a check to misrule and a reward to good government, but which would cease to be felt as either, the moment the ties between prince and subject were seriously injured or broken.

Where the public peace, of which we are the avowed protectors, has been violated, or where murders or robberies have been committed, we have a right to urge the local authorities (whom we aid with the means both for the prevention and punishment of such crimes) to pursue, according to their own usages, the course best calculated to preserve the safety of persons and of property. In other cases connected with the administration of justice, though there is no right of interference, it will be for their interest, and for our reputation, to lose no opportunity of impressing generally the benefit and good name that will result from attention to ancient institutions, particularly to that of the popular courts of Punchayet, which have never been discontinued, but in periods marked by anarchy and oppression.

The practice of Suttee* is not frequent in Malwa, and that of infanticide is, I believe, less so. The first is a usage, which, however shocking to humanity, has defenders among every class of the Hindu community. The latter is held in abhorrence by all but the Rajpoot families, by whom it is practised, and to whom it is confined; yet many of the most respectable chiefs of that tribe speak of this crime with all the horror it merits. You cannot interfere in the prevention of either of these sacrifices, beyond the exercise of that influence which you possess from personal character: indeed,

* Suttee is a Hindu term for the self-sacrifice of a female at the funeral-pile of her husband.

to attempt more, would be at the hazard of making wrong impressions, and of defeating the end you desired to attain. Praise of those who abstain from such acts, and neglect of those who approve or perpetrate them, is the best remedy that can be applied. It is the course I have pursued, and has certainly been attended with success.

That the line of interference which has been described is difficult will not be denied; but what course can we discover for the future rule and control of the different native states in India, which does not present a choice of difficulties? Men are too apt, at the first view of this great subject, to be deluded by a desire to render easy, and to simplify, what is of necessity difficult and complicated. Moral considerations come in aid of the warmest and best sentiments of the human mind to entice us to innovation; we feel ourselves almost the sharers of that crime and misrule which we think our interference could mitigate or amend; and, in the fervour of our virtue, we are too apt to forget, that temporary or partial benefit often entails lasting and general evil,—that every plan, however theoretically good, must be practically bad, that is imperfectly executed. We forget, in the pride of our superior knowledge, the condition of others; and self-gratification makes almost every man desire to crowd into the few years of his official career the work of half a century. Thus measures have been, and continue to be, brought forward "in advance of the community" for whose benefit they are intended. Of what has passed, it is not necessary to speak: the future is in our power, and I cannot conclude this part of the subject, which relates to an interference that is [calculated, according as it is managed, to hasten or retard the introduction of our direct rule, without impressing upon every officer employed under my orders the importance of a conduct calculated to preserve, while it improves, the established governments and native autho-

rities of the country. To these it is his duty to give such impulse as he can, without injuring their frame, towards an amendment suited to their situation, to the character of the rulers, and to that of the various classes under their rule. I consider, and the opinion is the result of both experience and reflection, that all dangers to our power in India are slight in comparison with those which are likely to ensue from our too zealous efforts to change the condition of its inhabitants, with whom we are yet, in my opinion, but very imperfectly acquainted. A person who entertains such sentiments as I do on this question, must appear the advocate of very slow reform; but if I am so, it is from a full conviction that anything like precipitation in our endeavours at improvement is likely to terminate in casting back those we desire to advance: on the contrary, if instead of overmarching, we are content to go along with this immense population, and to be in good temper with their prejudices, their religion, and usages, we must gradually win them to better ways of thinking and of acting. The latter process, no doubt, must be one of great time; but its success will be retarded by every hasty step.

There are few points on which more care is required than the selection and employment of native servants for the public service. The higher classes of these, such as Moonshees*, Mootsuddies†, and Writers, should be men of regular habits of life, intelligent, and of good characters in their own tribes. There is no objection to an officer continuing to keep in service a person he has brought from a distant province, who has been long with him, and on whose fidelity and competence he can repose; but, generally speaking, it is much better to entertain respectable natives or old residents of the country in which he is employed; such may

* Moonshee—Mahomedan secretary or writer.

† Mootsuddie—Hindu writer.

have looser habits and be less attached, but the former his vigilance will check and correct, and attachment will soon be created by kindness and consideration. Their advantages over foreigners are very numerous. The principal are, their acquaintance with the petty interests of the country, and their knowledge of all the prejudices and the jealousies of the different classes of the community to which they belong. On all these points the superior should be minutely informed, and, if he employs men not personally acquainted with the disposition and condition of those under his charge or control, his information on such subjects must come through multiplied mediums, which is in itself a serious evil. But, independent of this, the employment of the natives of a distant province is always unpopular, and they are generally viewed with dislike and suspicion by the higher and more respectable classes of the country into which they are introduced. This excites a feeling in the minds of the former, which either makes them keep aloof from all connexion with the inhabitants, or seek the society of, and use as instruments, men who are discontented or of indifferent character. It is difficult to say which of these causes has the worst effect. The one gives an impression of pride, if not contempt, and the other of design and an inclination to intrigue; and both operate unfavourably to the local reputation of the master.

I have observed, that the natives who are least informed of the principles of our rule, are ready to grant respect and confidence to an English officer, which they refuse to persons of their own tribe; but they are apt to form an unfavourable opinion of his disposition and character from any bad conduct of his native servants, if foreigners: on the contrary, when the latter are members of their own community, the exposure of their errors or crimes, while it brings shame and conveys a salutary lesson to the class to which they belong, is attended with the effect of raising, instead of de-

pressing, the European in their estimation. To all these general reasons might be added many, grounded on the particular condition of Central India. The oppression the inhabitants of this quarter have recently suffered, both from Hindu and Mahomedan Natives of the Deckan * and Hindustan † makes them naturally alarmed at these classes. There is also, in the impoverished state of many of the best families of the country, a strong additional reason for our giving them, in preference to strangers, what little we can of salary as public servants.

In the above observations there is no desire to exclude any member of Deckan or Hindustan families, who have settled for life, or for several generations, in Malwa; such objection would proscribe from our employ some of the most intelligent and respectable inhabitants of that province.

It has been before mentioned, that "publicity" in our transaction of business is most essential, chiefly as it puts at repose an alarmed and agitated population, and, beyond all, their princes and chiefs. We may greatly promote this object by the selection of servants. I early observed a very serious uneasiness, if not alarm, in Holkar's ministers, regarding the course I meant to pursue towards that court; and as one means of removing it, I chose as a principal native writer an intelligent Brahmin, whose family was attached to that of Holkar, in whose employ I found him; and who could, I knew, from his connexions, have no per-

* The term Deckan means South, and is given to the southern parts of India; but, in a limited sense, is now applied to the territories of the Nizam or Prince of Hyderabad, and to those above the mountains which formerly belonged to the Paishwah or head of the Poonah government.

† Hindustan, in its local and limited sense, comprehends the large and rich provinces which form the western parts of India, from Lucknow to the Punjab, and from the country of Rajpootana to the Himalaya mountains.

manent interests separate from his duty to that state. I was conscious of having nothing to conceal, but I knew the importance of Tantia Jogh * and others being satisfied that this was the case. No measure I have adopted has tended more to tranquillize their minds; and I state the fact, because its application may be suited to cases of daily occurrence.

In the employment of the higher classes of native servants, they should, as much as possible, be restricted to their specific duties, and no one should be allowed to take a lead, or mix (unless when directed) in the occupation of another. The keeping of these persons in their exact places will be found difficult, from the habits of the natives being opposite to such rules; but it is essential; for errors, if not guilt, will be the certain consequence of a confusion of duties, which destroys that pride which good men feel from possessing confidence, and enables bad to evade that personal responsibility which constitutes the chief check upon their conduct.

The employment of the lower classes of public servants requires much attention. These should be selected on the same principles that have already been stated, with reference to the duties they are to perform, which ought always to be exactly defined, and their conduct vigilantly watched. It will indeed be found useful to render as public as possible the nature of their employment, and to call upon all local authorities to aid us in the prevention of those unauthorized and odious acts of injustice and oppression towards the inhabitants of the country which this class will, in spite of all our efforts, find opportunities of committing.

I speak from the fullest experience when I state, that, though the natives of India may do full justice to the purity

* Tantia Jogh, the minister of the minor prince Mulhar Row Holkar.

of our intentions, and the excellence of the principles of our rule, they are undisguised in their sentiments regarding those parts of our administration in which the very dregs of their own community are employed. They cannot, indeed, but see with feelings of detestation and resentment a man raised from the lowest of their own ranks, and decorated with the official badge or stick of a civil or political English officer, become the very next moment insolent to persons to whom he and his family have been for ages submissive, or turn the extortioner of money from those tribes, among which he has before lived as an humble individual.

The power of this class of servants to injure our reputation is everywhere great, but more so in proportion as the natives of the country are ignorant of our real character, and where their dread of our power is excessive. Of the mischief they have done, or rather tried to do, in Malwa, I can speak from a perfect knowledge. I have endeavoured with unremitting solicitude to counteract their impositions and oppressions, by publishing proclamations, and giving high rewards to all who informed against or seized any of my servants, when attempting the slightest interference in the country, or affecting to have any business beyond that of carrying a letter, or some specified or limited duty; but I have, nevertheless, been compelled within three years to punish publicly and discharge one Moonshee, two Mootsuddies or writers, three Jemadars *, and upwards of fifty Hircarrahs †; and almost an equal number of the same class belonging to other public officers have been taken and punished, or banished the country.

* A Jemadar is the head or principal of the Hircarrahs.

† Hircarrah means literally "a man of all work," but is commonly applied, as in the text, to messengers who are distinguished by particular dresses, by bearing a stick or pike, and by wearing badges which denote the names of those by whom they are employed.

These examples will shew the danger of being tempted, by any convenience of service, or a desire to accelerate the accomplishment of our objects, to employ such instruments with any latitude of action.

The importance of encouraging the dependent states of India to do their own work, and to lean, on points of internal administration, as little as possible upon us, has been before noticed; and as long as we manage to keep clear of that species of interference which weakens and unsettles, without any proportionate good to balance its evil effects, we shall have credit in general opinion for all the good measures which the state under our protection adopts, and our reputation will be benefited (from the comparisons that are drawn) even by its acts of folly and injustice. But the latter advantage will be lost by any half and impolitic mixture in its concerns, and there is no mode in which this will be found so injurious as that of granting it the aid of native servants in our employ. Allowing the higher classes of these to enter into the affairs of such governments in any shape, would be destructive of every principle that has been inculcated; but the giving their rulers, ministers, or local officers, the aid of lower servants, would be still more to the injury of our reputation; for among the higher classes we might find men of virtue and firmness of character beyond what could be expected from the others, when exposed, as they would be, to such temptation. They would be used for purposes of coercion, if not oppression; and there would be sufficient art in those who thus employed them, to throw, when that was their object, the odium of what these instruments did upon the English government. But, in general, their desire would be limited to have the aid of the British name to alarm into compliance with their demands, individuals or communities. They would be aware that the Hircarrah or servant sent to assist their authority was a check

upon their proceedings, and this would lead to his being bribed; and, if he did not become an instrument of violence, it would only be because he received higher wages from the party he was sent to oppress. I have seen such manifold instances of the bad effects resulting from the employment of this class in the manner described, that I have for more than three years peremptorily refused any such aid to native chiefs, and must require all those under my orders to do the same. The best answer to all applications upon this subject is, that compliance is at variance with the system ordered to be pursued; and that the usage of granting such aid, though it might be found convenient, and in some cases accelerate the accomplishment of good measures, must in the end produce much evil, and be attended with loss of reputation to the British government, whose good name could not be intrusted to low agents and menials acting beyond the strict and vigilant observation of the European officer.

The right we have to act, when the public peace is threatened or disturbed, has been generally noticed under the head of interference; but it will be useful to say a few words on the mode of exercising that right, particularly as it relates to points which are connected with the internal administration of police and criminal justice.

In countries which have been long in the condition of Central India, there is a connexion formed between the most powerful and those who are apparently the most insignificant of the disturbers of the public peace, which will for some time require a vigilant attention to every act of the latter to prevent the revival of a disorderly or predatory spirit. In common cases we shall only have to prompt the local authority to exertions. But when our aid is required, and troops or any persons acting under our orders apprehend delinquents, they should invariably be given over to the ruler or chief in whose countries the crimes were committed,

by whom they will be examined, and punished according to established custom. I have usually limited my interference in this part of the administration of the native states of Malwa to two points. The first is, that in cases of robbery, but particularly cattle (the common booty of Bheels and other plunderers), there should be restitution to the owners the moment the property was proved; leaving those persons through whose hands it has passed, by real or pretended sales, to have their disputes and recriminations settled, and to recover from each other, according to usage. This practice is now general, and its enforcement for the last two years has done more to put an end to Bheel and other robberies than all the other measures that have been taken. The second point on which I have endeavoured to make a change in the practice of the administration of justice in the native states of Malwa, is that of preventing the crime of wilful murder being commuted for the payment of a pecuniary fine; but in all cases of this nature, where circumstances compel us to interfere, it is desirable that no execution should take place till guilt has been clearly proved. The observance of this rule is more necessary, as in cases where the criminals are of a plundering tribe, such as Bheels and Baugries *, the native ruler or chief will be disposed to deem the mere accusation enough to warrant the punishment; whereas, it is exactly with such classes that it is of importance to us to be more particular, lest we lose the impression we desire to make upon them, by becoming in any way accessaries to acts of violence or injury.

On all occasions when the local power is sufficient, it is most desirable to bring it into action, that it may cease to be dependent upon us for the maintenance of the internal peace. This is particularly advisable where excesses are

* Baugries, a tribe of robbers.—Vide *Memoir on Central India*, vol. ii. p. 182.

committed, that have, either as their real or professed causes, superstitious or religious feelings. In such cases, except where the mixture of political motives is manifest and avowed, or the danger imminent, we should call upon the native government, by its duty and allegiance to the paramount state, to put down all disturbers of the peace, particularly when fanatics, like those at Pertaubgurh *, combine with their atrocities the avowal of sentiments hostile to our rule. The actual condition of Central India makes it likely that such efforts as those above alluded to may be repeated, and they will always (however contemptible they may seem) require to be treated with much delicacy. It should be deemed a guiding principle not to act, if we can avoid it; and when absolutely compelled to do so, it is essential that we should appear, not as principals, but in support of the local government: for the spirit that engenders such excesses, whether they proceed from intrigue or fanaticism, will only attain strength by opposition; and any violent measures on our part, however justified by crime or outrage, might make the most unfavourable impressions upon an ignorant and bigoted population, who, while they confess all the benefits of our general rule and control, are easily excited to a dread of our success ultimately leading to attempts at changing the religion and institutions of their forefathers.

In cases of rebels or plunderers collecting in such force as to require British troops to suppress them, you will (if the emergency prevents reference to superior authority) make a

* The name of a town, which is the capital of a small principality. The fanatics here alluded to, under the direction of a female who declared herself an incarnation of one of the gods, committed several murders; and while these were perpetrating, she exhibited to her superstitious followers a mirror, in which was reflected the triumph of the Rajpoots and the defeat of the English.

requisition for aid from the nearest commanding officer that can furnish it.

The rules for such requisitions have been generally notified: the political agent will give the fullest information of the service to be performed, the nature of the country, the character of the enemy and his resources, leaving the military officer, when possessed of such knowledge, the selection of the force, both as to number and equipment, that is to be placed at his disposal. But it is to be strongly impressed upon both, that in a country like Central India, the means employed should always be above the object to be accomplished, as failure or defeat in any enterprise or action would be attended with very bad consequences.

It is almost superfluous to repeat what has been sedulously inculcated upon you as a primary duty during the last three years, the adoption of every preventive measure to avert the necessity of the employment of force. Its appearance has hitherto been almost in all cases sufficient to produce the required effect; and in the few instances where it has been employed, the moment of success has been succeeded by that of conciliation. To act differently, and to pursue those wild tribes who are the common disturbers of the peace with retaliation of outrages beyond what is necessary to evince our power, is to confirm them in their habits, and to add to their other motives of hostility those of resentment and despair. When engaged in warfare with such classes, we should be cautious how we inflict summary punishment on the individuals who fall into our power. These are often the mere instruments of crime, and act in its commission under as strong an impulse of duty to their superiors as the soldier in our ranks; and it is as unreasonable to expect their habits can be changed by making examples of such men, as it would that we could subdue the spirit of a nation by putting to death every soldier belonging to it

that we found fighting against us in action. The increased danger in which this placed individuals would only strengthen that powerful feeling by which they were attached to their leaders, while it added that of revenge against those who treated them with what they deemed cruelty and injustice. It is the duty of all agents of the British government to direct their efforts to effect a change in the frame of these savage communities; instead of commencing, in imitation of unprincipled and despotic native rulers, an unprofitable and interminable warfare upon individuals, who can hardly be termed guilty when they act by the express order of chiefs to whom and their predecessors they and their fathers have given implicit obedience for centuries. The nature and strength of the ties which subsist in these societies were fully discovered in the trial of Nadir Singh*, the celebrated Bheelalah chief of the Vindhya range. No one has questioned the justice of his punishment; but that of the persons who committed by his order the barbarous crime for which he was exiled, would have been deemed an act of oppression.

One of the most effectual means that you have to maintain the peace, is that of exerting yourself to render all (even the poorest and wildest classes) sensible of the benefits they derive from your protection. There is no point in which this is more required than against the excesses of our troops, camp-followers, merchants who have passes, and, in short, all who on any ground use the British name. The governments of the different presidencies have been long sensible of this evil, and have endeavoured, by the strictest orders and proclamations, to correct it. The pressing of begaries* and hackeries† has been posi-

* For a particular account of this remarkable chief of robbers, vide *Memoir of Central India*, vol. i. p. 550.

* Begaries are a class of natives of low tribe, whose occupation is labour. † Hackeries are a species of carts.

tively forbidden; but these orders must be enforced with a rigorous and uncompromising spirit by the civil and political authorities, otherwise they will prove unavailing. This is a point of duty in which I consider those under my orders to have no option or latitude. In the present condition of Central India, it is one of too much importance, both as it relates to the temper of the inhabitants and the reviving prosperity of the country, to warrant any deviation, either for the accommodation of individuals or the public service. The former, when no longer encouraged by improper or unwise indulgence to trust in any way to the country, will soon learn to be independent of its aid; public departments will in like degree become, from providing for their own wants, more efficient; and when the inhabitants are satisfied that it is not in the power of any person, whatever be his rank, to press them or their cattle, they will be inspired with a confidence that will lead to their furnishing more resources to troops and travellers, from a desire of profit, than has ever yet been extorted by an oppressive system; which, according to all natives I have heard speak upon the subject, has been carried to as great, if not greater lengths, in countries subject to our rule and control, than in the worst of their own governments.

There are, I fear, many omissions in these notes of Instructions; but an anxiety to render them complete has already made them far longer than was at first intended. One of my chief objects has been to impress, in the most forcible manner, the great benefits which are to be expected from a kind and conciliating manner, and a constant friendly intercourse with those under your direction and control. It is the feelings and knowledge which such habits on your part will inspire, that can alone give effect to the principles of action that have been prescribed for your observance. You are called upon to perform no easy task: to possess power,

but seldom to exercise it; to witness abuses which you think you could correct; to see the errors, if not crimes, of superstitious bigotry, and the miseries of misrule, and yet forbear, lest you injure interests far greater than any within the sphere of your limited duties, and impede and embarrass, by a rash change and innovation that may bring local benefit, the slow but certain march of general improvement. Nothing can keep you right on all these points but constant efforts to add to your knowledge, and accustoming your mind (as I have before urged you) to dwell upon the character of the British power in India, and that of the empire over which it is established. The latter, comprehending numerous tribes and nations, with all their various institutions and governments, may truly, though metaphorically, be viewed as a vast and ancient fabric, neither without shape nor beauty, but of which many parts are in a dilapidated state, and all more or less soiled or decayed; still it is a whole, and connected in all its parts; the foundations are deep-laid, and to the very summit arch rests upon arch. We are now its possessors; and if we desire to preserve, while we improve it, we must make ourselves completely masters of the frame of the structure to its minutest ornaments and defects: nor must we remove the smallest stone till another is ready, suited to fill the vacant niche, otherwise we may inadvertently bring a ruin on our own heads, and those of others, on the spot where we too eagerly sought to erect a monument of glory.

JOHN MALCOLM.

Camp Dhooliah, 28th June, 1821.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland court.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF INDIA.

CHAPTER VIII.

India Company's Progress to Political Power.—Lord Clive's Services—His Sentiments on Indian Affairs.—Scheme of Supervisors.—An Officer of the Navy Ambassador to the Nabob of the Carnatic.—Mr. Warren Hastings Governor-general.—Opposed by Members of his Council.—Neutral Policy; how far adhered to under the different Administrations in India: Mr. Hastings's, Lord Cornwallis's, Lord Teignmouth's, Lord Wellesley's, and Lord Minto's.—The Wars there ultimately sanctioned in England.

BEFORE we proceed to an examination of the many important points connected with the actual condition and government of India, it would appear expedient to take a summary view of the origin of our political power, giving particular attention to the characters of those by whom its foundations were laid, and to the astonishing rapidity of its growth from the days of Clive to the close of the administration of the Marquess of Hastings; a period of not more than seventy years, but which includes events and changes beyond those that usually occupy centuries in the history of other states.

From the time that the India Company first formed factories, and carried on a commercial intercourse with the East, a century and a half elapsed before they attained political power. This great change in their condition is to be ascribed to the hostility of the French, more than to all other causes combined. The scheme of establishing an eastern empire for his nation was first formed by Dupleix, the most able and ambitious of the governors of Pondicherry; and this plan, which he prosecuted almost to completion, comprehended, as a certain consequence, the destruction of the India Company, who, in their struggle to defeat it, were fighting for existence.

The first great contest between the English and French, on the coast of Coromandel, which terminated in the complete overthrow of the latter, involved the India Company in all the complexity of political relations with the native states, whom they had supported, while it made them just objects of future apprehension to those whom they had opposed.

The sudden rise of the Company on the coast of Coromandel was followed by a still more rapid and greater stride to power in Bengal. The capture of Calcutta, the plunder of their factory, the imprisonment and consequent death of a great proportion of their servants, were events which left them only the alternative of abandoning the shores of that part of India, or the employment

of all their military means to punish unprovoked aggression, and to establish themselves in a manner that should prevent its recurrence. They chose the latter; and the conduct of this great enterprise was intrusted to the talents and genius of Clive, who, aided by the skill and valour of Admiral Watson, not only recovered their possessions, but defeated and dethroned the sovereign by whom they had been attacked, establishing, in his place, a prince whose condition made him subservient to the dictates of those by whom he had been elevated.

Sujah Dowlah was deposed, and Meer Jaffier created Nabob of Bengal, in 1757. The desire of sovereignty made the latter promise beyond his power of performance. This circumstance, and the protection afforded by the English to natives of rank, whom he desired to oppress, rendered him (even before Colonel Clive left Bengal) very impatient under the burdens and restrictions which had been the price of his throne. From these he desired to free himself, as far as he could. His principal objects were to elude the payment of what was due to the treasury of Calcutta, and to displace some of the official persons, for whose continuance in their situations both the British government and himself were pledged. "He endeavoured," a well-informed and intelligent writer*

* Vide Grant's *History of the East India Company*, p. 172.

observes, " to gain the concurrence of Clive in these points, by individual liberality towards that chief. But Clive, who had neither asked nor stipulated for the presents which he had personally received, inflexibly demanded a fulfilment of the treaty and accompanying engagements."

While Colonel Clive opposed the attempts of Jaffier to evade his obligations, he gave him an example of his own adherence to faith, in rejecting the overtures* of the Shah Zada, or heir-apparent of the emperor of Delhi, who tempted his ambition by an offer of any terms he chose to dictate for the advantage of the Company and himself, provided he would desert Jaffier, whose territories that prince had invaded.

A short period before he left India, the reputation of Colonel Clive was greatly increased by his destruction of a Dutch armament from Batavia, sent, as was suspected at the moment, and afterwards ascertained, in communication with the Nabob, and with the exclusive object of co-operating with him in the expulsion of the English from Bengal.

The disinterestedness†, promptness, and energy, which Colonel Clive displayed on this occasion, places this act amongst the most brilliant of his life.

* A.D. 1759.

† The greater part of Lord Clive's fortune was at this period in the hands of the Dutch East India Company, through whom he had remitted it to England. Vide *Parliamentary Report.*

Besides the defeat of a daring attempt of an European rival, it had the salutary effect of putting an end, for the moment, to the intrigues of the Nabob, and of all other native princes, against the yet unsettled power of the English; but the departure of Clive from India, in 1761, was the signal for the recommencement of intrigue and the revival of hope in every enemy, secret or avowed, of the Company.

Mr. Holwell succeeded to the government till the arrival of Mr. Vansittart. The invasion of Bengal by the Mahrattas and by the emperor of Delhi, and several rebellions, spread terror and desolation throughout the country; and though in all the military operations which occurred, the British troops supported their character, our situation became every day more critical. Mr. Holwell, in the first instance, and Mr. Vansittart afterwards, entertained the strongest suspicions of Jaffier Ali's fidelity, and were decided as to his personal incapacity for government. These impressions were heightened by the continued collision which took place at this period, in every part of his dominions, between the Nabob and his officers on one part, and the servants of the Company on the other. Unfortunately for the political interests of the government, the latter, from the commercial spirit which still pervaded all branches of the administration, were remunerated for their services by dues, presents, and privileges. The privilege of trading free of duty with every part

of the interior was one of the most baneful. It was hurtful to the revenue of the Nabob, oppressive to his subjects, and, from the daily complaints and recriminations to which it gave rise, subversive of all harmony between the two states.

Mr. Holwell was decided in his opinion, that it was not only injurious but dangerous to the interests of the Company to leave Jaffier Ali any longer the possession of power; and his successor, Mr. Vansittart, was so strongly impressed with the same sentiments, that, within a month of his assuming charge of the government *, a secret treaty † was concluded with Cossim Ali, the son-in-law and general of the Nabob, by which he was guaranteed in full power as ruler of Bengal, under the title of Dewan or Minister. He agreed to cede to the Company, in payment for the troops with which they aided him, the provinces of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong.

This treaty was carried into execution at Moorshedabad by the governor in person. Though Jaffier acknowledged his deficiencies, and represented Cossim Ali as the fittest person to introduce reform, force was necessary to make him resign his power, and he indignantly rejected the name of sovereignty when the substance was taken from him. All that he stipulated for was, to return to Calcutta and live with his family under the protection of the English.

* August, 1760. † September, 1760.

Cossim Ali knew the violent opposition which many members of the English government had made to his elevation. He tried to gain them to his interests, but in vain: the spirit of party in Bengal was at this juncture so strong among the members of council and military commanders, that it superseded all other considerations. Added to the apprehensions which these divisions created in the Nabob's mind, he appears, by his letters and representations, to have been goaded almost to desperation by the continual quarrels between his subjects and the servants of the Company. The claim of the latter to exemption from duties was extended to their native agents, who were also vested with judicial power; and every act of the Nabob, or of his local officers, that affected the interests of these privileged traders, was brought forward as an indirect attack upon the rights of the Company. The measures taken by the Nabob, to remedy the evils of which he complained, were certainly too abrupt and violent: this was felt by Mr. Vansittart, who repaired to Monghyr, and, with the aid of Warren Hastings, negotiated a treaty, by which it was fixed that the dustucks or passports granted to Company's servants should be limited to foreign exports and imports, and that there should be, henceforward, no exclusive privileges in the inland trade. The duties on British goods were fixed by this treaty at a fair and moderate rate; and it was further stipulated, that the

native agents of the English should cease to exercise any judicial power, or enjoy that privilege of person which they had assumed, but should prefer their complaints when aggrieved, and become amenable when they injured others, to the native magistrates of the country.

This effort to correct existing evils had a directly contrary effect, owing to the violence of the Nabob and that of the majority of the council at Calcutta. The former, without waiting for that confirmation which he knew this treaty required, proclaimed it, the moment it was signed, as a triumph over his enemies. He sent orders for the execution of its stipulations, and his local officers, outstepping the imprudence and precipitation of their sovereign, furnished, by their acts of retaliative oppression, ample grounds to confirm the majority of the council in their resolution, to refuse their confirmation to the engagement which had been concluded by the governor. The Nabob, irritated at this proceeding, had immediate recourse to a very indiscreet and violent measure. He abolished all customs for two years. This was deemed an indirect breach of faith with the Company, for it destroyed the advantages of the exemption they enjoyed under former treaties. A deputation of two of their body, Mr. Amyat and Mr. Hall, was sent by the majority of the council to the Nabob, to demand the annulment of this order. The irritation of the parties was now, however, too much

inflamed to admit of a peaceful termination of their disputes. Every event tended to accelerate a rupture, but above all the violent conduct of Mr. Ellis, chief of Patna. He had been avowedly averse to the elevation of Cossim Ali, and all his acts shewed a very hostile feeling towards that prince, with whose local officers he was at constant variance.

Unfortunately, when affairs were in this state, two boats, laden with arms for the troops at Patna, happened to pass Monghyr; Cossim Ali, connecting this supply of arms with his belief of Mr. Ellis's designs, stopped the boats. It was in vain that the gentlemen who had been deputed to him remonstrated against this proceedure. He added to it a demand that the English troops should be recalled from Patna; or, at all events, that Mr. Ellis should be relieved by a more temperate person.

The statement of these demands was considered by the deputies, and the majority in council who had deputed them, as almost tantamount to a proclamation of war; and the chief of Patna, Mr. Ellis, was vested with authority to seize upon the fort at that place, should he deem such a step necessary in anticipation of actual hostilities.

It was in vain that the Governor and Mr. Warren Hastings recorded their dissent against such discretionary power being given to one who had shewn himself so disposed to extremities. It destroyed, they stated, all hopes of an amicable settlement. Their prediction was fully verified. The Nabob,

when war seemed certain, appears to have taken alarm, and released the boats laden with arms, and at the same time invited a renewal of negotiations; but the accounts he received from Patna made him withdraw this pacific overture: and the surprise of the fort at that place by the English troops, before any declaration of war, gave an apparent justification to all that he had anticipated.

The carelessness of the English at Patna allowed the Nabob's troops to surprise them in their turn, the day after they had taken the fort; and those who were not slain, on this occasion, were made prisoners.

One of the deputies, Mr. Hall, had been detained by the Nabob as a hostage, while the other, Mr. Amyat, was allowed to return to Calcutta; but he had only reached Moorshedabab, when he was attacked and murdered, by order of the Nabob, who, from the hour the fort of Patna was surprised, had declared himself the irreconcilable enemy of the Company.

The first step taken by the Governor and council was, the restoration* of Meer Jaffier to his dignities as Nabob. An army was pushed forward against Cossim Ali, who, after his troops had suffered some defeats, fled to Patna, having first put to death several of the principal Hindus of his kingdom, whom he suspected of being friendly to the English.

* 7th July, 1763.

From Patna, Cossim Ali* wrote to the English commander—"If you advance, I will cut off the heads of Mr. Ellis and the rest of your chiefs, and send them to you."

There were at this time fifty gentlemen, and one hundred persons of lower rank, in confinement at Patna. Major Adams, feeling for their situation, addressed a letter to them, entreating that they would, at any price, obtain their release. Messrs. Ellis and Hay, to whom this letter was addressed, answered in a spirit that redeemed any errors they might have committed. "Their escape," they said, "was impossible, but they were resigned, and desired that operations might not be suspended for a moment on their account." This letter was transmitted to Mr. Vansittart, who wrote to Cossim Ali, deprecating his intended cruelty. He also addressed him with menaces of vengeance; but all was in vain. Every European in the power of this cruel chief was barbarously murdered†, except one, Mr. Fullarton, a surgeon, who owed his escape to the respect entertained for his profession.

Patna was taken by storm, but Cossim Ali fled to the territories of the Vizier, who was called upon to surrender him, and the German Sumroo, who had been the instrument of this horrible massacre. The Vizier of Oude, Sujah Dowlah, not only refused

*Vide letter from Cossim Ali to Major Adams, dated 9th September, 1763.

†In 1763.

to comply with these demands, but advanced at the head of a large force to attack the British army. He was repulsed near Patna, and soon afterwards suffered a signal defeat at Buxar. The British army, now commanded by Major Munro*, entered his dominions, and defeated the Mahratta chief, Malhar Row, whom the Vizier had called to his aid. In this predicament, Sujah Dowlah acted a part worthy of his former character. He could not consent to bring a stain upon his honour by sacrificing those who had sought his protection. Cossim Ali and Sumroo were told to depart beyond his territory, and he repaired to the British camp, declaring that he threw himself unreservedly upon the clemency of that nation.

The state of Bengal, during the last three years, had caused the greatest anxiety and alarm in England; and the consequence was, that Colonel, now Lord Clive, had been nominated, with a select council, to re-assume the management of the public interests in that country. He arrived at this period, and to that complete confidence in his character, which Sujah Dowlah had in common with every native prince, may be ascribed the step which he took on this occasion; nor had he any cause to regret the reliance he placed on British generosity. A treaty was concluded with him by Lord Clive, aided by General Carnac, by which the Vizier, on paying fifty lacs of rupees towards

* Afterwards Sir Hector Munro.

the expenses of the war, and assigning the provinces of Corah and Allahabad for the support of the emperor of Delhi, was restored to all his dominions, inclusive of the country of Benares, which the king had granted to the Company.

Jaffier, the Nabob of Bengal, had died before Lord Clive's arrival, and his son Nudjum u Dowlah, a minor, had been raised to the musnud, with a stipulation that the administration of the country should be intrusted to certain high officers named by the British government. Lord Clive, after he had settled the treaty with the Vizier of Oude, negotiated an agreement with the emperor of Delhi, by which the dewannee, or administration of the countries of Bengal and Bahar, was vested in perpetuity in the English government, which, by a subsequent engagement with the Nabob of Bengal, agreed to pay him and his heirs the annual sum of fifty lacs of rupees.

Previous to the submission of the Vizier, the emperor Shah Allum had joined the British camp, where, though only attended by a few followers, he had displayed the imperial standard. Major Munro had transmitted the emperor's propositions for an alliance with the Company; and the governor in council had not only entertained them, but promised him, under certain conditions, the territories of Oude. Of this agreement Lord Clive highly disapproved. The emperor had personally no possessions, and his character was not such as promised success, either in the attainment or rule of

a kingdom. His name, which was still revered and recognised as the source of power, might have been used by the English as a pretext for the extension of dominion, if such had been their object; but Lord Clive very justly deprecated any such baseless project, and while he obtained fame to the Company's government by the generous restoration to power of Sujah Dowlah, a monarch of high reputation, he laid the foundation of the future greatness of the British empire in the east by acquiring the direct rule of a compact territory, fertile in soil, and abundant in all the resources which could render its future improvement valuable to the commercial and political strength of his country.

The political power of the English in India, grounded as it now was upon great territorial possessions, had risen with all the celerity * of an Asiatic conquest.

In our endeavour to examine the real character

* By the engagements with the Nabob of Bengal (1757), the Company had the privilege given them of coining money in the name of the emperor of Delhi.

In the same year, the lordship of twenty-four districts, adjacent to Calcutta, was granted to them in perpetuity, and their facilities of trade were greatly extended. In 1760, the rich provinces of Midnapore, Burdwan, and Chittagong, were made over to them by Cossim Ali, for the payment of a specified subsidiary force (*a*).

In 1763, at the restoration of the Nabob Jaffier Khan, the above provinces were ceded in perpetuity. In 1764, a grant from Shah Allum, emperor of Delhi, gave them the coun-

(*a*) 500 European cavalry, 2000 infantry, and 8000 sepoys.

of this extraordinary power, and to develope the causes which have since raised it to such magnitude, our first attention must be given to the opinions of Lord Clive, who contributed beyond all others to its establishment.

He ascribed the great change in our condition at Madras to the ambition of the French, and he appears to have deemed our situation in Bengal as nearly similar; for there, as on the coast of Coromandel, our European were intimately connected with our Asiatic enemies.

tries of Benares and Gazeepore; and in the following year, 1765, the same authority made them nominal administrators, but real rulers of the rich and fertile provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa.

Considerable cessions of territory were made to the Company, at this period, on the coast of Coromandel, in addition to some valuable lands made over in 1763, by the Nabob Mahomed Ali Khan. A jagheer, or estate, was granted in 1765, which included some of the most fertile districts in the Carnatic. A grant of the northern circars had been obtained from the Subah of the Deckan, by Bussy; but when Massulepatam was taken, and the French were expelled from this possession, in 1759, by the English, the circars were transferred to them, and their right to this territory, as well as to the lands ceded by the Nabob of the Carnatic, was confirmed in 1765, by a deed from the emperor of Delhi.

Bombay, the most ancient of the territorial possessions of the Company, was, in 1765, the most limited; but it had importance from its fine harbour, and its numerous dependent factories, among which it numbered Surat. This town and island, originally ceded by the Portuguese to King Charles II., as a part of the dower of his queen, the Infanta Catherine, was made over by the king to the Company in 1668.

Referring to this union, and the feelings which would be produced on the mind of Jaffier Ali by the attack of the principal settlement of the French, he expressed his opinion very strongly to the committee intrusted with the management of affairs at Calcutta.

"If you attack Chandernagore," he observes, "you cannot stop there, you must go further; having established yourselves by force, and not by the consent of the Nabob, he, by force, will endeavour to drive you out again.

"We have at last arrived," he states in another letter* "at that critical period which I have long foreseen; I mean that period which renders it necessary for us to determine whether we can or shall take the whole to ourselves.

"I could have wished that our operations had been carried on upon a plan of more moderation, and that we had not been obliged to maintain any other military force than what might be sufficient to preserve and pursue our commercial advantages; but since our views are extended, and since commerce alone is not the whole of the Company's support, we must go forward; to retract is impossible."

Similar sentiments were afterwards expressed by

* These sentiments of Lord Clive on the progress of our arms in India, and the ambitious projects to which success had given birth, are vividly expressed in a letter to a gentleman high in the Direction, written immediately after his landing in India.

Lord Clive and his council, in a letter* to the court of directors.

"The time now approaches," they observe, "when we may be able to determine with some degree of certainty, whether our remaining as merchants, subjected to the jurisdiction, encroachments, and insults of the country government, or the supporting your privileges and professions by the sword, are likely to prove most beneficial to the Company. Whatever may be the consequence, certain it is, that after having once begun, and proceeded to such lengths, we have been forced to go on from step to step, until your whole possessions were put to the risk by every revolution effected, and every battle fought."

Lord Clive, though satisfied that we were propelled in our career of empire by causes which were unavoidable, wisely endeavoured, by every effort, to render that progress slow and gradual. He tried to reconcile, as far as it was possible, the princes and natives of India to the dominion of strangers, by making every sacrifice to their habits, prejudices, and feelings, that could be made, without abandoning that power which had now become necessary to our existence.

The system of rule he established had too many serious defects to be permanent, but it displays in every part the mind of a great practical statesman, who suited his work to his materials, and

* 30th September, 1765.

who, while he accommodated himself to circumstances which he could not control, was content to be reproached with having done too little, rather than hazard the benefits he had secured by attempting too much.

The difficulties he had to encounter were rendered greater by his want of instruments. There were some individuals of distinguished talent, but nothing could be more defective than the general condition of every branch of the civil and military service at this period. While he laboured to reform these, he endeavoured to rouse the Company's government in England to a proper sense of the extraordinary change that had taken place in their affairs.

"Circumstances* are now widely different," he observes, "from what they were a few years since, when you confined your whole attention to commerce, and were happy in being able to complete your investments without insult or exaction from the country governments. You are now become the sovereigns of a rich and potent kingdom; your success is beheld with jealousy by the other European nations, who maintain settlements in India; and your interests are so extended, so complicated, and so connected with those of the several surrounding powers, as to form a nice and difficult system of politics."

Lord Clive, in the same letter, after taking a

* Letter to Court of Directors, 30th Sept. 1765.

comprehensive view of the condition of the Company's affairs in India, and referring to those feelings and sentiments which recent events had produced among the native princes, observes, "The princes of Hindustan will not readily imagine us capable of moderation, nor can we expect they will ever be attached to us by any other motive than fear. Meer Jaffier, Cossim Ali, and the Nabob of Arcot (the best Mussulman I ever knew), have afforded instances sufficient of their inclination to throw off the English superiority. No opportunity will ever be neglected that seems to favour an attempt to extirpate us, though the consequences, while we keep our army* complete, must be fatal to themselves."

We find in a letter, before noticed, nearly similar observations:—

"The very Nabobs," he remarks, "whom we support, would be either covetous of our possessions, or jealous of our power. Ambition, fear, avarice, would be daily watching to destroy us. A victory would be but a temporary relief to us; for the dethroning of the first Nabob would be

* "Peace," Lord Clive observes, in a letter to Mr. S. Law, dated 29th December, 1758, "is the most valuable of all blessings, but it must be made sword in hand in this country, if we mean to preserve our present possessions. There is no alternative; either everything in India must be reduced to their first principles, or such a standing force kept up as may oblige the Mussulmen literally to execute their treaties."—*Clive MSS.*

followed by the setting up of another, who, from the same principles, would, when his treasure admitted of his keeping up an army, pursue the very path of his predecessor. We must, indeed, become Nabobs ourselves, in fact if not in name; perhaps totally so, without disguise."

It is impossible to peruse the history of India, during the last fifty years, without subscribing to the truth of every word here written. Events have verified all Lord Clive's predictions. These were made from a correct knowledge of human nature, combined with an intimate acquaintance with the feelings, sentiments, and passions of the princes of India, and of the construction of Asiatic society and governments. His opinions, however, obtained little attention from men of whom a great part valued India only as it contributed to their own profit and that of their friends, or to the loss or increase of party influence.

Lord Clive, in his celebrated speech in the House of Commons, in 1772, adverting to the extent of the dominion which the English possessed when he left India, and of the light in which it had been viewed by the administration, observes*; "the Company acquired an empire more extensive than any kingdom in Europe, France, and Russia excepted. They had acquired a revenue of four millions sterling, and a trade in proportion.

"It was natural to suppose that such an object

* Vide Parliamentary Debates.

would have merited the most serious attention of administration; that in concert with the court of directors they would have considered the nature of the Company's charter, and have adopted a plan adequate to such possessions. Did they take it into consideration? No, they did not. They treated it rather as a South Sea bubble, than as anything solid and substantial; they thought of nothing but the present time, regardless of the future: they said, let us get what we can to-day, let to-morrow take care of itself: they thought of nothing but the immediate division of the loaves and fishes; nay, so anxious were they to lay their hands upon some immediate advantage, that they actually went so far as to influence a parcel of temporary proprietors to bully the directors into their terms. It was their duty to have called upon the directors for a plan; and if a plan, in consequence, had not been laid before them, it would then have become their duty, with the aid and assistance of parliament, to have formed one themselves. If administration had done their duty, we should not now have heard a speech from the throne, intimating the necessity of parliamentary interposition to save our possessions in India from impending ruin."

It will not be a matter of surprise that with such sentiments of the mismanagement of the affairs of the Company, Lord Clive became a strenuous advocate for parliamentary interference in the government of India. "If salvation can come to the

Company, it must come through this house*," were his emphatic words when opposing a petition which the directors had presented, praying against a bill which went to the limitation of their power.

Great efforts were made at the period in which he lived to detract from the opinions and authority of Lord Clive; and more recent writers, when referring to the various luminous records which he has left to illustrate the early history and government of British India, appear either to have given undue weight to the testimony of his enemies, or to have been incapable of appreciating the motives and views of this great statesman: but his character, as it tends to increase or diminish the value of his opinions, is too intimately connected with the examination of the progress of our political power to be passed over in silence.

The early part of Lord Clive's career meets from all parties with unqualified praise. It is, however, a great mistake to suppose that even during that period he displayed no qualities but those of a soldier: he evinced, from his first efforts in the public service, the most complete knowledge of the natives of India. He viewed, with a liberal and humane spirit, their weakness and prejudices; he addressed himself to all their higher qualities; and, by granting them his confidence, gained as much admiration in the performance of his political and civil duties as by his heroic achievements.

* Letter from Lord Clive to Mr. Grenville.

The revolution and changes which Lord Clive effected in Bengal opened a new scene to his ambition, and raised him to great and sudden wealth.

In accordance with the usages of the Company's service in India, at that period, he received presents, as commander-in-chief, to a very large amount. His acceptance of this reward (as it was termed) of his labours and success was * open and avowed; and, though subsequently made the subject of a charge against him, we do not find that at the time any one arraigned either the amount of the donation or the principle of receiving it. The fact was, that, at this epoch of our Indian government, the public officers of the Company had very limited salaries. Their perquisites and advantages, when employed on civil, military, or political stations, appear to have been such as had been enjoyed by native functionaries performing the duties to which they, in times of conquest and revolution, had suc-

* In Lord Clive's letter of the 21st of August, 1757, to Mr. Mabbot, one of the directors, after giving an account of the revolution he had effected, he adds—"I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the greatest success at Golconda could not have equalled the present one for advantages, either to the Company or myself. Indeed," he concludes, "there is nothing but the good of the service can induce me to stay in this unhealthy climate." In all his letters to his attorneys, to his friends and relatives, we find the amount of this donation represented as great; and he distinctly states in one letter, that he had no desire whatever to conceal the Nabob's liberality, which he evidently thought was as honourable to that prince as to himself.

ceeded. These, on ordinary occasions, were derived from a per centage on particular branches of revenue, privileges of trade, or presents from inferiors, and were always considerable: but when such events occurred as negotiating a peace *, or replacing a monarch upon a throne, the money, gifts, and territorial grants to the chief instruments of such changes, were limited only by the moderation of one party and the ability of the other.

When the alarm of the Indian government in England led to Lord Clive's second appointment to Bengal, eight years after he had returned home to the enjoyment of the noble fortune which he had acquired, every arrangement made, and every act during his short administration, showed a mind

* A remarkable instance of this mode of paying those concerned in such great transactions is afforded in the treaty of peace with Tippoo Sultaun, concluded by Lord Cornwallis in 1792. Thirty lacs of rupees were demanded and given, as *Durbar Khurutch*, or Durbar expenses, avowedly to be distributed amongst the officers concerned in settling the treaty. Lord Cornwallis, it may be observed, obtained no share of this money; but it may be answered, that, while a commander in Lord Clive's situation had not 3000*l.* per annum of direct salary, and could cherish no expectation of pecuniary reward in England, Lord Cornwallis had 30,000*l.* per annum, besides a doation of 100,000*l.* from the government he so honourably served.

The opposite principle, now established for the reward of services, will be noticed hereafter. It is alluded to here, to guard against opinions which we are too apt to form of the superior virtue of our own times, grounded, as that is in the present instance, upon a totally different state of circumstances.

as superior to the sordid * influence of self-interest, or personal considerations, as it was above the dictates of fear.

His knowledge of the true source of those growing evils and dangers which, at this period, shook to its foundation our unsettled power in India, led him to propose a plan (which was carried into execution) for binding himself, his successors, and all the officers of the Company's civil and military government by oaths and covenants, not to derive emoluments from any sources except those fixed for their remuneration.

The condition of the public service, when Lord Clive arrived at Calcutta, is described in his letter

* Lord Clive, in his letter to the committee, dated 7th May, 1765, when he took charge for the second time of the government of Bengal, observes:—

"I shall now repeat what you have often heard me declare, that I totally disclaim any emolument to myself; I will not add to my fortune one single rupee by the opportunities I might have as Governor.

"On the other hand, be assured, that every advantage to others, consistent with my idea of the Company's honour and interest, shall be promoted to the utmost of my power here, and my influence at home."

This pledge was faithfully kept, for he returned to England five thousand pounds poorer than he left it. Of his great liberality many instances might be adduced, amongst which none is more prominent than his willingness, and, indeed, desire, to give up part of his received donation at the elevation of Meer Jaffier, to make up the share to which he deemed Admiral Watson so justly entitled. To such an arrangement, however, the members of the committee refused their assent.

to the court of directors so often quoted. In this he gives a forcible picture of the general demoralization of the civil and military servants of the Company, and of the speedy ruin that must result from a continuance of that laxity, insubordination, luxury, and rapacity which pervaded every branch of the administration, and influenced the conduct of almost every agent employed.

The situation in which he was placed by this state of affairs when he arrived in India is eloquently described in his speech in the House of Commons *.

"Three paths," he says, "were before me,—one was strewed with abundance of fair advantages—I might have put myself at the head of the government as I found it—I might have encouraged the resolution which the gentlemen had taken, not to execute the new covenants, which prohibited the receipt of presents; and although I had executed the covenants myself, I might have contrived to have returned to England with an immense fortune, infamously added to the one before honourably obtained: such an increase of wealth might have added to my weight in this country, but it would not have added to my peace of mind; because all men of honour and sentiments would have justly condemned me.

"Finding my powers thus disputed, I might, in despair, have given up the commonwealth, and have left Bengal, without making any effort to save

* 30th March, 1767.

it—such a conduct would have been deemed the effect of folly and cowardice.

"The third path was intricate: dangers and difficulties were on every side, but I resolved to pursue it. In short, I was determined to do my duty to the public, although I should incur the odium of the whole settlement. The welfare of the Company required a rigorous exertion, and I took the resolution of cleansing the Augean stable. It was that conduct which has occasioned the public papers to teem with scurrility and abuse against me, ever since my return to England. It was that conduct which occasioned these charges; it was that conduct which enables me now to lay my hand upon my heart, and most solemnly to declare to this house, to the gallery, and to the world at large, that I never, in a single instance, lost sight of what I thought the honour and true interest of my country and the Company; that I was never guilty of any acts of violence or oppression, unless the bringing offenders to justice can be deemed so; that as to extortion, such an idea never entered into my mind; that I did not suffer those under me to commit any acts of violence, oppression, or extortion; that my influence was never employed for the advantage of any man, contrary to the strictest principles of honour and justice; and that so far from reaping any benefit myself from the expedition, I returned to England many thousand pounds out of pocket."

Lord Clive justly attributes the virulent attack

which was made upon his character, and the attempt, with which it was associated, to deprive him of his fortune as well as his fame, to that host of enemies which his conduct on this memorable occasion had raised against him, all whom he had dismissed or superseded, and the list was numerous, and contained high names, both civil and military. All whom he had checked in their career of plunder, or had crossed in their path of ambition, combined against him; and, through the means of their fortune, their ability, their advocates, their friends, and their relations, they sought his ruin. He was described as a man wallowing in wealth gained by undue means, who had turned upon those who were pursuing the same road to fortune, and who desired, by informing against them, and by using the power vested in him for their punishment, to raise his character for honour and disinterestedness. His talents, both as a soldier and a statesman, were questioned, and his success was ascribed to those he had employed, to the weakness of the enemies he had conquered, and to a concurrence of fortuitous events.

The acquisition of great dominion by the Company in India had been so sudden, that we are not surprised to find the minds of those who directed their affairs in England did not keep pace with it. They clung to their commercial views, and looked with apprehensions at political power, one of the earliest results of which was to weaken the control over their servants; while the latter, in their in-

trigues and struggles against each other, sought, as their only means to avert supercession, or obtain advancement, the support of friends in England. From such causes, the public interests, even when comprehended, were often compromised, to raise or to depress individuals. The most extraordinary of all the measures to which these combined motives gave birth was, the nomination, in the year 1757, of what has been termed a rotation government for Bengal, in which four of their civil servants were appointed by the Directors to succeed each other every three months; and what rendered it more remarkable was, the omission of the name of Clive from this favoured list of periodical rulers. The changes which had taken place, subsequent to the date of this measure, rendered its execution impossible, without the most serious hazard to the public interests. Impressed with this feeling, the four gentlemen who had been nominated governors (acting in a spirit of disinterestedness which does them high honour), in conjunction with the other members of the committee* at Bengal, unanimously solicited Colonel Clive to take charge of the administration. He complied with their request, and their resignation in his favour proved an anticipation of the resolution which the court of directors came to on hearing of the victory of Plassey.

Lord Clive's second appointment to India,

* Vide letter from the Committee to Colonel Clive, in the Parliamentary Report.

though called for by the proprietors and the public, was warmly opposed by a considerable party in the Direction; and his enemies in that body, recruiting their strength from all whom he had disgraced or punished, subsequently obtained a majority. Neither their efforts, however, nor the combined talent which was arrayed against him in Parliament, could daunt his courage, and he defended his own character with a manliness and eloquence that gave him a complete triumph over all his opponents.

The character of Lord Clive is associated with the rise of our power in India, and in that view merits much of our attention. Whether we consider his military or political career; the knowledge he displayed of the natives of India, their institutions, and government; his efforts to introduce order and principle into what was shapeless and without system; the promptness and courage with which he quelled a mutinous and insubordinate spirit in the military and civil officers of government; his use of victory; the efforts he made and recommended to consolidate the strength, and to improve the administration of our empire in the East; we are equally astonished at the extraordinary extent of his powers of mind. Nevertheless, no man was ever more violently assailed and calumniated by his cotemporaries. When events, over which he had no control, disappointed those hopes which his successes had raised, his opponents

took advantage of the change in the public mind to reproach him with results which were chiefly to be attributed to their own factions and mismanagement. The prejudices excited by their efforts have been continued by orators and authors, who, treating Indian subjects without reference to those local circumstances and considerations which peculiarly embarrass them, have pleased and satisfied general and uninformed men, by reducing the most complex points of policy to an easy abstract question. The necessity under which those who exercise power in India act, the comparative dangers they have to encounter or avoid, the means they have of executing one plan, or the want of means for another, the feelings and character of princes, and of nations, which they may flatter or offend, are to such persons matters of little consequence. Their conclusions are drawn from simpler sources, and they reject, as prejudiced and polluted, that minute information and local experience, which, if admitted, might destroy their favourite theories, or cast a doubt upon the validity of those fixed rules and principles by which they consider that the wisdom of every measure ought to be tried and decided.

With these persons the scene of Indian warfare and policy is degraded to a low level, and the actors reduced to insignificance, when compared with those who appear upon the stage in the western hemisphere. Nothing in India, if we refer to

such authorities, is upon a great scale, except the errors and crimes of British rulers, to the actions of all of whom they apply a standard framed for a wholly different state of society and government. According to such self-constituted judges, the claim of Lord Clive to the admiration of posterity is very equivocal. But his fame will rise, the more the particulars * of his eventful life are made known. These will prove that his qualities as a statesman almost surpassed those he displayed as a military commander.

In a letter addressed by Lord Clive to those to whom he left the government, when impaired health compelled him to return to England, he evinced great apprehension of the danger to which the empire would be exposed by the revival of that spirit of corruption and insubordination which he had with so much difficulty subdued.

"It has been too much the custom," he observes, "in this government to make orders and regulations, and thence to suppose the business done. To what end and purpose are they made, if they be not promulgated and enforced? No regu-

* The author has stated in the preface his obligations to Lord Powis, who has given him free access to all the letters and papers of his father, the late Lord Clive. These are numerous, and many of them very interesting; they will furnish excellent materials for a memoir, that will alike serve to illustrate the character of that great man, and the rise of the British power in India.

lation can be carried into execution, no order obeyed, if you do not make rigorous examples of the disobedient. Upon this point I rest the welfare of the Company in Bengal. The servants are now brought to a proper sense of their duty; if you slacken the reins of government, affairs will soon revert to their former channel; anarchy and corruption will again prevail, and, elate with a new victory, be too headstrong for any future efforts of government. Recall to your memories the many attempts that have been made in the civil and military departments to overcome our authority, and to set up a kind of independency against the court of directors. Reflect also on the resolute measures we have pursued, and their wholesome effects. Disobedience to legal power is the first step of sedition; and palliative measures effect no cure. Every tender compliance, every condescension on your parts will only encourage more flagrant attacks, which will daily increase in strength, and be at last in vain resisted. Much of our time has been employed in correcting abuses. The important work has been prosecuted with zeal, diligence, and disinterestedness, and we have had the happiness to see our labours crowned with success. I leave the country in peace. I leave the civil and military departments under discipline and subordination: it is incumbent upon you to keep them so. You have power, you have abilities, you have integrity: let it not be said

that you are deficient in resolution. I repeat that you must not fail to exact the most implicit obedience to your orders. Dismiss or suspend from the service any man who shall dare to dispute your authority.

"If you deviate from the principles upon which we have hitherto acted, and upon which you are conscious you ought to proceed; or if you do not make a proper use of that power with which you are invested, I shall hold myself acquitted, as I do now protest against the consequences."

Such was the parting advice which Lord Clive gave to his former colleagues; but the task of reform which he had commenced could have been completed by his own commanding talents alone, aided by the impression of his high personal character. It was far too great for the strength of those on whom it devolved.

The character of Mr. Verelst leaves no doubt of his disposition to pursue the path traced out to him; but he appears to have been too lenient, and to have early relaxed from that spirit of unyielding authority which Lord Clive had so forcibly inculcated. Had it been otherwise, it is not likely that he or any person could have long resisted the desire which the proprietors of East-India stock evinced at this period to control and paralyze the power of the local administration in India. Disappointment in their hopes of increased dividends, a wish to promote individuals, feelings of

resentment for injuries real or supposed to their friends and relations, combined to render the general court at this period an arena of discord and violence, in which different interests alternately prevailed, till the majority agreed in the expedient of appointing three officers as supervisors, who were to proceed to India with powers equal to those exercised by the government at home, and from whose knowledge, virtue, and moderation, the greatest benefits were expected.

Some objections were raised to this measure. They were, however, overruled, and the supervisors left England. But the vessel in which they sailed perished at sea, and this event put an end to a plan which, notwithstanding the high qualities of the individuals* selected for its execution, was not likely to realize the sanguine anticipations of those by whom it was adopted.

In the settlement of the definitive treaty of Paris, in 1763, an article was introduced to terminate the disputes, and to define the rights of the two nations in India.

By this article, Mahomed Ali Khan was acknowledged as lawful nabob of the Carnatic, and Salabut Jung, as Subahdar of the Deckan. The former was the ally of the English, the latter that of the French. Nothing could be more incongruous or more liable to error than this mixture of European with Indian diplomacy. The recognition of their

* Mr. Vansittart, Mr. Scrafton, and Colonel Ford.

ally, Mahomed Ali Khan, was sought by the directors, and it was only at the suggestions of Lord Clive, who took alarm at the terms of the article, that it was modified in such a manner as would probably have rendered it innoxious, had it not been converted by his Majesty's ministers into a pretext for one of the most unjustifiable and mischievous acts of interference with the powers of the Company that is to be found on the page of Indian history.

The pretext for investing Sir John Lindsay, the commander of his Majesty's squadron in India, with full powers as minister plenipotentiary to Mahomed Ali Khan, in 1770, was, that the King of Great Britain, having become party to an article of a treaty, had a right, without communication with the directors, to take care that the article was properly executed. The real fact was, that the Nabob of the Carnatic had for some years used every endeavour to free himself from the restraints in which he was placed by his engagements with the local government of Madras; and the English gentlemen by whom he was surrounded, expecting their own importance and fortune would increase with that of their patron, stimulated his ambition to an attempt to cast off his dependance on the Company, through the establishment of a direct communication, if not an alliance, with the King of England.

It is not surprising that Mahomed Ali Khan should have been the dupe of such advisers. His

object, the attainment of more power and consequence than he enjoyed, was fair and legitimate, nor can we wonder at the conduct of men, who, from a desire to raise their fortunes, encouraged him to such efforts; but where can we look for the motives, or rather the apology, of those who, by Sir John Lindsay's appointment, not only gave their countenance and support, but became principals in this attack upon the constituted authorities of their country! An able historian has drawn a true and forcible picture of this extraordinary transaction, and the subject has sufficient importance, not only as a record but as a lesson, to make us insert the passage:—

"An ambassador, Sir John Lindsay," he observes*, "with concealed powers, was deputed in the ostensible character of the commander of a frigate, and decorated with a ribbon and star of the order of the Bath, as a representative of the sovereign of Great Britain to Mahomed Ally. With these dignities the ambassador burst at once upon the governor and council, as if by ambuscade, and became, from that time, a partisan of this foreign power, to which he was deputed against the delegated government of his own nation."

The proceedings of the royal envoy were all directed to the same point, that of elevating the prince to whom he was deputed, and depressing, as far as he had the power, the local government.

* Vide *Wilkes's Southern India*, vol. ii., p. 16.

"The honour he sought on this occasion," the directors remark, "was that of humbling the Company before the throne of Mahomed Ali Khan."

Those who desire to be informed of the extent to which this extraordinary effort against our own power was carried must refer to the pages of the historians who have recorded the events of the period. It is mentioned here only to shew the character of that interference which his Majesty's ministers then exercised in Indian affairs. This it is essential to understand, for it gave rise to struggles for patronage and power, the effects of which soon pervaded every part of our eastern empire.

During the heat of this violent collision of parties, in 1772, Warren Hastings was nominated Governor-general. This extraordinary man has recently paid the debt of nature. He outlived (in the full possession of all the faculties of his rich mind) that violent spirit of hostility which a combination of causes had raised against him; and towards the close of a life marked by singular events, he not only was honoured by his sovereign, but received an unexampled tribute of personal* respect from the House of Commons, who, twenty-five years before, had voted his impeachment.

* In 1814 Mr. Hastings was called before the House of Commons to give his evidence on points connected with the renewal of the Company's privileges. All the members rose as if by one impulse when he entered the house.

The long period Mr. Hastings passed in India; the various offices he had filled from the commencement of his career, till he attained the high station of Governor-general; his acquaintance with the languages and usages of the natives of that country, added to the high qualities of his mind, gave him advantages without which he could hardly have saved the empire committed to his charge: but he, as well as Lord Clive, has been harshly judged by men who have listened to his enemies and accusers, and who, when drawing their general inferences from particular facts, have given little, if any, attention to the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed, the necessity under which he acted, and the obstacles which he had to overcome.

The act of 1773 made the East India Company more dependant than before upon the king's ministers. Mr. Hastings was nominated Governor-general, but in the same commission three gentlemen* were appointed to council, who had learned the lessons on Indian government in England, and whose views were in direct opposition to his upon almost every point. The consequence was, that the administration passed into their hands as the majority in council, and remained with them, till the death of General Clavering restored the preponderance to the appointed head of the government. The effect of such a state of affairs may be imagined. The spirit of discord which prevailed at the council-

* General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis.

board spread throughout every branch of the service, and the natives of India saw in our divisions a source of weakness from which they argued our downfal.

The intentions of those who created and maintained this evil might have been pure, but they possessed little knowledge of that tenure by which we hold India, or they would not have hazarded, as they did, the very existence of our power by such an effort to limit and control its local exercise. Mr. Hastings has drawn a forcible picture of his own situation. He may be objected to as an unfair evidence in his own case; but this only applies to facts and statements; general reflections, when drawn from admitted premises, and when grounded on experience and wisdom, do not alter their character, because they proceed from a partial quarter. On the contrary, we give opinions more weight, when the knowledge of those feelings which called them forth does not impair the impression of their truth. When describing the effect which the actual condition of the government had in obstructing reform, and perpetuating abuse, Mr. Hastings observes, "To enumerate every case would be endless. In a word, while the power of government is in the hands of many, and the smaller the number is, the greater is the evil in this case; while each hand holds an equal share of it; while the members of government retain their places by sufferance; and the terrors of dismission and disgrace

are held out against them at home; when their accusers and the expectants of their places are the judges of their conduct, and preparers of the evidence on which it is to be tried; when the members of the government themselves are in disagreement, and that disagreement (with regret and shame I suppose it) is excited by the voice of authority; when each member stands in need of support from home, and owes returns for the support which he receives; when each claims an indulgence from the others, and has it in his power to retaliate every disappointment, which may be easily understood, but can never be imputed; and lastly, when the most meritorious conduct is denied its credit, and even the sacrifices of interest are branded with the reproach of venality; from a government so constituted, what reformation can be expected?"

After these strong observations on the effects of an administration so constituted as that of which he was the head, in a subsequent part of the same memoir, he speculates on what would have been the result had a different system been adopted.

"If," he observes, "the same act of the legislature which confirmed me in my station of president over the Company's settlements in Bengal had invested me with a control as extensive as the new denomination I received by it indicated; if it had compelled the assistance of my associates in power, instead of giving me opponents; if, instead of creating new expectations which were to be accomplished by my dismission from office, it had im-

posed silence on the interested clamours of faction, and taught the servants of the Company to place their dependance upon me, where it constitutionally rested; if, when it transferred the real control over the Company's affairs from the direction to the ministers, instead of extending, it had limited the claims of patronage, which every man possessing influence himself, or connected with those who possessed it, thought he had a right to exert; and if it had made my continuance in office to depend upon the rectitude of my intentions, and the vigour with which they were exerted, instead of annexing it to a compliance with those claims, I should have had little occasion, at this period, to claim the public indulgence for an avowal of duties undischarged. But the reverse took place in every instance.

"If the interests of the nation," he continues, "are truly consulted, a total change in the system must take place; for whilst private interests are allowed to stand in competition with, or in opposition to arrangements founded on the public good; whilst those who censure the concessions made to them, in all instances which have not a reference to themselves or to their connexions, still persist in recommending them; and whilst the official existence, public reputation, and private fame, of the members of the government in Bengal are maintained or sacrificed in proportion to the concessions made or withheld, the interests of the British nation must in it verge to a decline.

"Enough has been said, to shew the pernicious

consequences of this system, which is publicly proscribed, and privately supported; which no man dares avow, yet many combine to maintain. To discuss it more minutely would be invidious, and perhaps entail upon me resentments, which, though I do not fear, I would wish to avoid. I have made a sufficient sacrifice to truth: my successors in office may perhaps benefit by this confession. The duties and functions of the supreme government in India will never be well discharged, unless it meets with the consideration due to it."

Mr. Hastings, justly considering that our political strength depended chiefly upon the excellence of our internal administration, laboured against many local and practical difficulties, to give it some shape and solidity. He effected as much, perhaps, as any man could in his situation. A board of revenue was established — collectors appointed — regulations published — courts of civil and criminal indicature were instituted, and their powers defined.

These measures were a great advance towards the consolidation of our power. Lord Clive, at the period of his rule, could go no farther than an endeavour to fix the principles of our interference with dependant states, and to lay down general rules for the management of our own territories, correcting, as far as a very limited selection enabled him, the evils of a loose and corrupt system by the qualities of the individuals he employed. Mr. Hastings took the next step towards the introduction of a better order of affairs, and all persons

minutely versed in Indian history, and who understand our condition and that of the natives of India at the epochs these changes were made, must be satisfied that those who effected them did as much as was practicable, without incurring the most serious hazard to the safety of the state by attempting too precipitate reforms.

Mr. Hastings, in a memoir which he published after his return to England, has given us a forcible and vivid description of the origin and growth of our power in India. "The seed of this wonderful production (he observes) was sown by the hand of calamity. It was nourished by fortune, and cultivated and shaped (if I may venture to change the figure) by necessity. Its first existence was commercial; it obtained in its growth the sudden accession of military strength and territorial dominion to which its political adjunct was inevitable. It is useless to inquire whether the Company, or the nation, has derived any substantial benefit from the change, since it is impossible to retrace the perilous and wonderful paths by which they have attained their present elevation, and to re-descend to the humble and undreaded character of trading adventurers. Perhaps the term of the national existence in India may have become susceptible of a shorter duration by it; but it is that state which it must henceforth maintain, and it must, therefore, adopt those principles which are necessary to its preservation in that state."

No one will doubt the truth of this description

of the rise and actual condition of our Indian empire. In a subsequent passage in the same memoir, Mr. Hastings, drawing his deductions from personal experience of the system by which it was then governed, makes the following impressive observations:—

"From the vehemence and perseverance with which my immediate superiors laboured during the course of ten years to weaken my authority, to destroy my influence, and to embarrass all my measures, at a time when their affairs required the most powerful exertions to sustain them, which I alone, by my office, could direct; and from the great importance which they have ascribed to points, some of which had no relation to their interests, and others were even repugnant to them; I much fear that it is not understood as it ought to be, how near the Company's existence has, on many occasions, vibrated to the edge of perdition, and that it has been, at all times, suspended by a thread so fine, that the touch of chance might break, or the breath of opinion dissolve it; and instantaneous will be its fall, whenever it shall happen. May God, in his mercy, long avert it!

"I affirm, as a point incontestable, that the administration of the British government in Bengal, distant as it is from the reach of more than general instruction from the source of its authority, and liable to daily contingencies, which require both instant decision, and a consistency of

system, cannot be ruled by a body of men variable in their succession, discordant in opinion, each jealous of his colleagues, and all united in common interest against their ostensible leader. Its powers are such, that, if directed by a firm and steady hand, they may be rendered equal to any given plan of operation; but may prove the very instruments of its destruction if they are left in the loose charge of unconnected individuals, whose interests, passions, or caprices may employ them in mutual contests, and a scramble for superiority. * * *

* * * * * * * * *

"The inference to be drawn from these premises is, that whatever form of government may yet be established for these provinces, whether its control be extended to other presidencies, or confined to its own demesnes; it is necessary that the Governor, or first Executive Member, should possess a power absolute and complete within himself, and independent of actual control. Though the state of kingdoms is liable to dissolution, from causes as mortal as those which intercept the course of human life, and though my opinion of the distempers which threaten that of the British empire in Bengal may obtain credit from all who read it, yet I fear that few will yield to its impression. Like the stroke of death, which every man knows will come, but no man acts as if he felt the conviction which he avows and thinks he feels, the very magnitude of the catastrophe may, in this

case, blunt the sense of those to whom it is visibly apparent."

We cannot be surprised that sentiments recommended by information and experience, and so enforced by truth and eloquence, should have carried conviction even to the minds of those who were hostile to the writer; nor is it to be considered as the least of the obligations which the country owes this great man, that his advice pointed out the only scheme of rule by which we could hope to preserve our power in the East. No one ever better understood the materials of which that vast fabric is constructed than Warren Hastings, and no man ever appears to have looked with less confidence to its durability; but his opinions upon this subject were expressed at a moment when, from the constitutional jealousy of the government of England, he did not anticipate the delegation of that absolute, but responsible authority to the Governor-general which he deemed indispensable, not only for the prosperity, but for the safety of our Indian possessions.

It is not meant to enter upon the merits of the political measures adopted by Mr. Hastings; these were violently opposed by his colleagues. We collect from a minute* of General Clavering, Mr. Francis, and Colonel Monson, (which was written a short period after their arrival in India,) the grounds on which they acted.

* Dated November 30th, 1779.

"The general principle," they observe, "on which we have acted, and which we mean to make the rule of our future policy and conduct, is no other than that which your authority and that of the legislature have equally prescribed to us—to maintain peace in India. The preservation of peace necessarily includes the vigorous defence of your own possessions, with such parts of the dominions of your allies as are guaranteed by treaty. On the other hand, it excludes every idea of conquest, either for yourselves or others. Adhering to this system, we never can engage your arms in any offensive operations for the aggrandizement of our Indian state, at the expense of another; much less could we have suffered the little states, which at the same time formed your barrier, and looked up to you for protection, to be swallowed up by the great ones."

Mr. Hastings was accused by his colleagues of making unjust wars, and these accusations were subsequently made articles of parliamentary impeachment. This is not the place to enter into the discussion of that question, but while the soundness and justice of the opinions (taking them in their general sense) given in the minute that has been quoted are admitted, none can deny the truth and wisdom of the principle which Mr. Hastings states as that which governed his conduct on such occasions. It is one applicable to all great states, and above all to India.

"Though I profess," he observes, "the doctrine of peace, I by no means pretend to have followed it with so implicit a devotion as to make sacrifices to it. I have never yielded a substantial right which I could assert, or submitted to a wrong which I could repel, with a moral assurance of success, proportioned to the magnitude of either; and I can allude to instances in which I should have deemed it criminal not to have hazarded both the public safety and my own, in a crisis of uncommon and adequate emergency, or in an occasion of dangerous example.

"I have ever deemed it even more unsafe than dishonourable to sue for peace, and more consistent with the love of peace to be the aggressor in certain cases, than to see preparations of intended hostility, and wait for their maturity, and for their open effect, to repel it."

It appeared difficult to arrive at any correct conclusion from the general reasoning of Mr. Hastings, or his opponents, with respect to those principles which would best apply to our extended political relations in India, or to define, by any prescriptive line, the exact demarcation between acts of defensive and offensive policy; but the general impression in England was so strong, at this period, regarding the ambition of our Indian rulers, and the consequent necessity of restraining their power of engaging in war within the narrowest limits, that the House of Commons voted resolutions to that

effect; and in the same act of the legislature which appointed the Board of Control, and granted the Governor-general power adequate to his sovereign functions, a clause was inserted, declaring, "that to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of Great Britain." It was further made unlawful, as has been already stated, for the supreme government to engage in hostilities with any state that had not commenced, or made preparations to commence, war upon them, or upon an ally whom we were bound by our engagements to protect, unless in cases where the previous sanction of the government in England had been obtained. The local government was also prohibited by this act from making any treaty guaranteeing the possessions of any native prince, except in cases where each party had engaged to aid the English in a war actually commenced, or about to commence.

The spirit and object of this law was just and wise; for the great danger we have had to encounter from the first was the too rapid extension of our empire; but our success in retarding, if we could not arrest the growth of our greatness, must evidently depend on the means we employed for this purpose, and the letter of the act in question went to fetter our government in the exercise of the most essential of these means. It forbade the seasonable use of that power and influence which

we possessed, to check combination or to counteract, while yet immature, the plans of ambition; and prescribed to a state situated amongst despotic princes, who recognised no objects but conquest and power, a course of policy they could not appreciate, nor even understand. These princes were, consequently, liable from their ignorance and their presumption to mistake our motives of action, to deem moderation and forbearance fear and weakness, and under that delusion to venture on a course of action which precipitated their ruin, and rendered our cautious and unwise policy productive of those very ends which it had been framed to avoid.

The preceding pages of this work have afforded abundant proofs of this fact; and a concise review of more recent events will bring it still more strongly under observation.

Lord Cornwallis had in his character an union of firmness and moderation, which gave the best promise of preserving peace with the native states, had that been possible. The aggression of Tippoo Sultaun, however, forced him into a war. Success led to his making a great accession to the Company's territories, and the alliance with the Nizam of the Deckan, into which he was compelled to enter in order to ensure the reduction of Tippoo, became the fruitful source of political embarrassment to his successor. It was before remarked, that Lord Cornwallis, by a communication to

Madhajee Sindia, kept "danger at a distance, by an alacrity to meet it." But it may be safely asserted that, had that nobleman felt himself at liberty to adopt measures of preventive policy, he might, with hardly a hazard of hostilities, have arrested the growth of a state which, within ten years of his leaving India, had accumulated means*

* Mr. James Anderson, the able resident at the court of Madhajee Sindia, gives, in his communications with the acting Governor-general, Sir John M'Pherson, and with Lord Cornwallis, the completest account of the progress and character of the power of that ambitious chief. After expatiating (*a*) upon the just grounds we had to expect that Sindia would better have appreciated the motives of our conduct in not obstructing, as we easily might have done, the progress of his ambition, he adds, "I am sorry, however, to observe, that the behaviour of Madhajee Sindia has been in many respects very unsuitable to the delicacy of our conduct towards him: in some instances he has presumed too much on the moderation of our conduct, and in all his transactions with the other powers he has laboured to interpret the delicacy of our behaviour towards him into a complete submission to his power. In short, it has become evident, that whatever reliance we may have formerly placed in his disposition must now be totally transferred to the circumstances of his situation."

After describing Madhajee Sindia's actual condition; his progressive efforts to make himself master of all Hindustan, under the name of the powerless emperor Shah Allum; the difficulties he had still to encounter from the numerous chiefs who were yet unsubdued; from the constitution and temper of a great proportion of his army; and from the dissatisfaction excited amongst his new subjects by his "various acts of treachery, cruelty, and rapacity," Mr. Anderson observes, "From

(*a*) Vide Mr. Anderson's Letter to Lord Cornwallis, 24th Nov. 1786.

which rendered it one of the most formidable enemies that the British government in the east ever had to encounter.

Lord Cornwallis, in abstaining from those measures which would have prevented the family of Sindia from obtaining a power which was likely to be directed eventually against us, acted in con-

this detail your lordship will perceive that Sindia's situation is yet in some degree precarious, and that at all events much time must necessarily elapse before he can realize his prospects. He has, undoubtedly, many advantages in his cunning and intrigue, and his persevering management, which he often uses successfully to supply the want of real power and other defects in his situation; but, on the other hand, he is frequently prompted by his avarice to act with little policy or foresight. From this latter circumstance, I was for some time inclined to think that his views in this quarter were rather of a temporary than permanent nature. It is, indeed, most likely that the expectation of treasure was at first his principal object in this undertaking, but that his views opened and enlarged themselves with the favourable events which afterwards fell out. It seems now almost as certain as any political point can be, that his object is, by connecting his own provinces of Malwa and Ajmere, with those of Agra and Delhi, to erect an independent empire of his own, and to shake off all subjection to the Paishwah." Mr. Anderson then expresses his opinion, that, after the dangerous ambition which Sindia has displayed, and the abuse he has made of the delicacy with which we have acted towards him, it will be "extremely necessary we should watch him narrowly;" and he concludes by stating, that, "on some occasions, perhaps it may be necessary for us to check him in his progress, where we may have favourable opportunities of doing it, without the actual commission of hostilities against him."

formity to the views and sentiments of his superiors in England, and to the provisions of the act of the legislature already cited; but this nobleman took advantage of every occasion (as we have already shewn) to satisfy the princes and chiefs of India that such conduct proceeded from motives of moderation, not of apprehension.

Lord Teignmouth acted throughout his administration with still more scrupulous conformity to the prevailing sentiments in England, and to the letter of parliamentary restrictions. He did this from a strict sense of duty, and with the full knowledge of all the evils which were likely to result from his non-interference; and his minutes and letters upon the political state of India at this period exhibit (like all the other productions of this virtuous nobleman) an intimate knowledge both of the condition of the British government, and that of the native states. The consequences of the efforts he made to preserve a system of rigid neutral policy have been fully described in the former chapters. Tippoo Sultaun wanted no motives to stimulate him to action, whenever he saw an opportunity favourable to his cherished designs against the British nation; but we may question whether the encouragement he received from our abandonment of the Nizam had not more weight in influencing him to the hostile measures he adopted than the advice of French emissaries, or the expected aid from the government of the Mauritius.

The reduction of Tippoo; the restoration of a Hindu prince to the throne of his ancestors in Mysore; the alliance with the Nizam, which stipulated for the dismissal of a strong French corps in his service, and of his aid in the war with the Sultaun, altered all our relations in the south of India. These were the first measures of Lord Wellesley, to the adoption of which he was compelled by a necessity that all admitted. The point to which success had carried him was one where he could not remain stationary. He must either retreat or advance. The first of these courses offered a temporary exemption from present evils, at the price of future security. The second led through difficulty and embarrassment to peace and prosperity. To enable him to subdue Tippoo and his French allies, Lord Wellesley had been obliged to pledge himself to protect the Nizam against the Mahrattas. This, like every step towards the establishment of order and tranquillity, was an attack upon a nation whose armies were not, and could not, from their numbers and construction, be supported, except by the annual attack of their neighbours, and who for nearly a century had deemed the territories of the Nizam as an inheritance of plunder. Lord Wellesley, satisfied of this fact, determined to direct all his efforts to the abolition of a predatory system which, under recent changes, it was quite evident could not be coexistent with the British power in India. The view he took

of this question has been fully given, as well as those means through which he carried his great plans to the very brink of completion; but his career was arrested in the hour of victory over the last of those Mahratta princes, who avowedly fought for the continuance of rapine and desolation.

The alarm taken by the authorities in England at this period was excessive. They arraigned the principles of the policy that had been pursued subsequent to the conquest of Tippoo Sultaun, the war with whom they acknowledged to be just and unavoidable. But in admitting so much, they admitted everything; for if the British faith was to be preserved, we had very little option as to the measures consequent to our alliance with the Nizam. The increase of our subsidiary force with that prince was the first step: the establishment of a similar force at Poonah, the second; the great object of Lord Wellesley's policy was, to extend such alliances, and through them, as they afforded an increase of force without increase of expenditure, and gave us the most commanding military positions, to secure the general peace of India; which, as was proved by the fullest experience, could not be even partially disturbed without involving us in war, or placing us in a condition which, from its effect on our reputation and resources, was more embarrassing and dangerous than war itself.

Though there can be no doubt that subsidiary alliances gave us the means of success in the ac-

complishment of objects of policy, which we were compelled by pledges of faith and considerations of safety to pursue, it is equally a fact, that they involved us in great embarrassments, and that they had the effect of weakening the protected state, whose princes either lost their crowns in an effort to regain their independence, or sunk into a sloth and luxury which deteriorated every branch of their government. But this was the consequence of the establishment and progress of our power in India, not of those alliances which formed the most moderate of all means by which we could regulate that march to conquest, on which we were propelled (as has been before shewn) by causes and events far beyond our power to control.

Alliances of the same character as those formed by Lord Wellesley had been entered into by almost all his predecessors, and, from Lord Clive downwards, the chief motive had been to preserve as long as possible the existence of the native states with whom they were contracted. The frequency of the expedient is a proof of its wisdom and necessity. There has seldom been an alternative between its adoption and measures which must have terminated in the introduction of our direct rule, and with it all those sudden changes in society which, independent of the misery they bring, have been, from the first hour of our existence in India, to the present moment, pregnant with the greatest danger.

In consequence of the ascendency in England of those who condemned Lord Wellesley's measures, the high name of Lord Cornwallis was sought and obtained to give character to an effort to revive a system of neutral policy. That venerable nobleman, worn out more by infirmities than age, dying soon after his arrival, was succeeded by Sir George Barlow; who, acting upon the principles which the authorities in England had prescribed, withdrew from every interference to which we were not specifically pledged by treaty. In one case, however, which has been noticed *, he found himself compelled to a departure from this course; and the arguments by which he justified his conduct on this occasion are a convincing comment of the impracticability of that system to promote which a sense of duty made him give the full aid of his great knowledge and experience.

The administration of Lord Minto presents us with a cautious, but gradual, return to the only principles by which our empire could be maintained. The tone in which he asserted the rights of the British government, whenever these were threatened, corrected, as far as was possible, the impressions daily made by the growing insolence and excesses of those freebooters to whom we had abandoned all the central provinces of India as an arena, in which it was vainly imagined they would continue to war upon each other.

* Vol. I., page 374.

Lord Minto, foreseeing the results to which this state of affairs must lead, sought, like his predecessors, to strengthen the government he ruled, by returning to the system of subsidiary alliances, and it was a matter of regret to him, as well as to the government in England, that he failed in his efforts to conclude one with the Rajah of Nagpore. This moderate and able nobleman, after describing with much truth and discrimination the nature and effect of such engagements, and pointing out, in the most forcible language, all their admitted evils (particularly as illustrated in the case of Hyderabad), concludes by observing*; "It is not the intention of these remarks to question the policy of those subsidiary alliances, or their great and beneficial influence on the condition of the British empire in India, in time past, present, and to come. They have added, most materially, to our power and resources, and they have placed for ever at a distance dangers far greater than any to be apprehended from the evils above described. But these alliances, like all other human arrangements, bear within them the sources of their own decay, and require the application of corrective measures to obviate their natural and progressive tendency to dissolution."

Lord Hastings, in every political measure of his government, evinced his sense of the necessity of an early return to those principles which had dis-

* Letter from Lord Minto to the resident at Poonah, dated 11th November, 1811.

tinguished the administration of Lord Wellesley, and of resting, as that nobleman had desired to do, the fame and prosperity of the British empire, upon the safe and honourable foundation of the general tranquillity of India, established and maintained by its commanding influence and power.

These sentiments were, as has been stated, fully expressed in a most able minute *, in which this distinguished nobleman, after painting in warm colours the excessive misery and desolation which had been the consequence of the neutral system pursued by us for ten years past, takes a view of the different results which might be fairly anticipated from a contrary policy.

His powerful arguments, enforced as they were by illustrations drawn from the history of other countries, as well as of India, might still have failed of effect, had they not been seconded by the occurrence of events which made it impossible for any person to advocate a system, the further adherence to which twelve years had proved to be impracticable.

The complete success of the war against the Pindaries and Mahrattas led Lord Hastings to proclaim the paramount power of the British government, and constitute it the arbiter of all disputes, and the conservator of the general peace of India. Such was the change of opinion in England, that not a voice was raised against a measure, the very

* December, 1815.

contemplation of which, a few years before, had been denounced as a dream of ambition. Events and fuller information have convinced the enlightened part of the public, that the opinions long prevalent in England, regarding the local administration in India, were founded in error. That the system prescribed by the legislature, however desirable, was altogether impracticable; for though parliament might dictate the course to be pursued by British rulers, its influence did not extend to the native states, with whom they were in constant collision, and whose despotic princes were urged by jealousy, by avarice, by ambition, by pride, and by love of independence, to continual efforts, secret or avowed, to destroy the English government, and to expel every individual of that nation from India. If this be the fact, who can doubt but that we have been impelled to the attainment of supreme power as the only means of maintaining our existence, in any shape, in that country.

The most eminent statesmen who have learnt their lessons in England, and those who have gained their experience in India, have uniformly concurred in the opinion, that extension of territory was not only undesirable, but hurtful. Those to whom the local government of our Eastern empire was intrusted, have had every motive to preserve peace, and to avoid war. Nevertheless, they have almost all engaged in war, and those who have avoided doing so, have confessedly left

it as an inheritance to their successors; and let us add to this strong fact, that the different presidents of the board of control, the very institution of which was associated with the object of preventing the pursuit of schemes of aggrandizement, and the extension of dominion, have almost in every instance concurred* in the wisdom and necessity of those measures of the local administration which have been attended with such results. This forces us to a conclusion, that all the English statesmen which this observation includes have either been, in their turns, tainted with that culpable ambition of which the Indian Governors are accused, or that their fuller information obliged them to give the sanction of their approbation to such wars, from being satisfied that they were just and expedient. There may be some cases where it is possible to

* There is one remarkable exception in the case of the late Lord Londonderry, who differed from Lord Wellesley as to the principles upon which the treaty of Bassein was concluded. The arguments on both sides are fully given in the body of this work: but the whole lies in a narrow question. Was it possible, after the conquest of Mysore, and the treaty of Hyderabad, for the British government, governed according to its established principles and usages, to remain without collision with the Mahrattas, whose system was predatory? If it was not, the only difference of opinion that could arise was, as to the measures which could render the existence of these two great powers compatible with each other. The only mode of effecting this, with any hope of avoiding war, was through alliances (of which Bassein was the first) that divided the interests of the great chiefs of this nation of plunderers.

prove that the temperament, or the judgment of individuals, has precipitated a contest; but on the other hand, it is clear that the most moderate have been compelled to the same course, and that the orders of superiors, and the enactments of law, have not only failed in the end proposed, that of arresting the growth of our power, but have actually caused it to be more rapid than it otherwise would have been.

These are the deductions which must be drawn from the events that have occurred; but the law which forbade conquest and interference is now a dead letter. We are the acknowledged lords of India; and there exists not a sovereign prince, or a chief, in that vast country, with whom we have not ties that imply friendship and protection on our part, and dependance or allegiance on the other. Such being the case, it becomes important to consider our actual condition, and those changes which an altered state of affairs may call for in the shape and principles of our government, both at home and abroad.

These important subjects will occupy the next chapters.

CHAPTER IX.

Observations and Reflections on the general Administration of the Indian Government in England.

The retrospect of the origin and progress of our political power, in the preceding chapter, has been offered with no view of reviving useless discussions regarding the comparative merit of individuals, or of any measures which they advocated or adopted. Whatever men's sentiments may be upon these subjects, every one will agree that the question respecting our power in India has altogether changed its shape. We are arrived at the summit long dreaded by many; and a knowledge of the paths by which we advanced, where our march was impeded, and where propelled with a velocity that we could not regulate, much less arrest, appears essential to enable us to understand the nature and character of the materials from which the fabric of our future power must be constructed; and we may rest satisfied that, unless the structure is suited to its component parts, it will not endure. We have conquered all our enemies on the con-

tinent of India, but that very consummation of our efforts exposes us to greater danger. In the facilities of improvement which our condition presents, we may find, if we do not use them aright, the seeds of early destruction.

Those who reflect upon the actual condition of our power in India will be satisfied, that the task of conquest was slight in comparison with that which awaits us, the preservation of the empire acquired. To the acquisition, men have been encouraged and impelled by the strongest of all the impulses of the human mind: fortune and fame have attended success; the preservation must be effected by that deep and penetrating wisdom, which, looking far to its objects, will oftener meet reproach than praise, and the very excellence of which will consist in the gradual and almost unseen operation of its measures. It must not only take into consideration the actual state of the English public servants, and residents in India, and that of the native population, but, judging from experience of the past, the general laws of our nature, the habits, prejudices and institutions of the rulers, as well as the ruled, it must calculate the various changes to which these communities are likely to be exposed, in order that care may be taken to avert those evils and misfortunes which the too sudden occurrence of such changes would inevitably occasion.

Sufficient has been said in the introduction to

this work regarding the changes that the Indian administration in England had undergone previous to the year 1811. The act of parliament passed in 1813, renewing the Company's privileges for twenty years, did not directly make any material alteration in the power of that branch of the Indian government; but the measure of opening the trade with India, by creating a large commercial body with separate interests from those of the Company, greatly weakened the latter, while it proportionally increased the strength of the ministers. From the earliest period, the court of directors had sought influence in the House of Commons, and on many occasions they had successfully combated the ministers of the king; but the present act imbodied a powerful party upon whose aid the latter could depend on all questions that went to a limitation of the Company's privileges and authority.

The right of nominating to the high offices of Governor-general, Governors, and Commanders-in-chief, at the different presidencies, was, by this act, as by former acts, vested in the court of directors, subject, however, to the approbation of the king. If that was withheld, a second person was to be nominated, and so on till the two authorities concurred: but to obviate the evil of a continued difference of opinion as to a proper person, a clause in the act provided that, on such appointment not being made by the court of directors

within two months from the date of the vacancy being known, the right of nominating lapsed to the king. This act supposes, and almost compels, agreement between the court of directors and his majesty's ministers on this most essential of all points, as connected with the welfare and permanency of our Eastern empire; and though its provisions may appear calculated to produce embarrassment and weakness, by dividing responsibility, they are framed in the true spirit of the British constitution. They impose a check, and no slight one, upon the abuse of patronage; and oblige the parties, when they differ, to come, to a certain degree, to the bar of public opinion. This must always do good, for we cannot anticipate the period when men exercising power in England can be indifferent to the sentiments of the public upon points which their acts force into discussion.

The court of directors, who, by this act, had the power* of recalling the Governor-general, Governor, or Commander-in-chief, as being their† officers

* When we consider the nature of this right of recall, and the constitution of the court of directors, we are not surprised that it has never been exercised; but though they have, even when dissatisfied with the high functionaries in India, shrunk from the responsibility of recalling them in opposition to ministers, their possessing the power to do so must have influence on the conduct of ministers.

† The Company cease to have the right of recalling in cases where the vacancies to the offices of Governor, Governor-

or servants, without the concurrence of his majesty's ministers, were by one of its clauses restrained, except with the consent of the commissioners of the India board, from appointing provisionally, or otherwise, to any offices in India, except members of council, generals on the staff, and a few other selections specifically left to their selection and nomination. The same concurrence and confirmation were rendered necessary to the exercise of the power, which they before enjoyed, of restoring civil and military officers who had been suspended or removed* by act of a local government.

Such limitation of the power of the directors was at once wise and salutary. Nothing could tend more to lessen the weight and authority of the local governments, and to discourage the efforts of those who laboured for their approbation, than appointments made from England, and the frequent restoration of persons who had been suspended the service, or removed from office in India.

general, or Commander-in-chief, in India, has been filled by the ministry, in consequence of the court of directors not nominating within the prescribed period. Vide 33 Geo. III., cap. 3, sec. 36.

* This Act did not include military officers dismissed by a court-martial; such cases were provided for by the 51 Geo. III., cap. 75, sec. 4 and 5. The latter act was passed in consequence of doubts whether the Act of 1793, 33 Geo. III., cap. 52, sec. 69, did not absolutely interdict the restoration of an officer dismissed by a court-martial.

The present state of the law renders it difficult for either the court of directors, or the board of control, to interfere with the local governments abroad, on any points connected with the conduct or employment of public servants. This restriction of the authorities in England is equally beneficial as it checks the operation of private patronage, and limits undue personal influence, and as it directs the exclusive attention of public servants abroad to their local superiors.

The court of directors long owed their chief consideration to their having the management of the great commercial concerns of the East India Company: but these, of late years, have been quite secondary to their other duties; and it is upon their competency to the latter, and their importance as a constituent part of the Indian government, that it is intended to offer some observations.

The merits of every species of government are comparative, and it can be no ground for rejecting any form or substance of rule, that it is incompatible with received ideas; that it is contrary to general opinion, or even inconsistent with common maxims of rule: all these are good grounds for not establishing a particular government, but they are not conclusive for destroying one that is established. If we had to constitute an administration for British India, as it now exists, the man would justly be deemed insane who should propose the present system. But the case is widely

altered when we recollect, that it has grown with our empire; that the managing partners of a body of merchants have gradually risen from the details of a factory to the charge of kingdoms: that their departments, in every branch of government, have kept pace with their enlarged functions; and that the result of the whole has been success and prosperity. Those, indeed, who are hostile to the Company, ascribe this result to the interference of the legislature, and the institution of a board of control. Much, no doubt, of the great reform that has been effected is to be attributed to those causes; but because the board of control has proved a good instrument for the purposes for which it was instituted, we must not conclude that it is a safe depositary for greater power. In the exercise of all with which it has hitherto been intrusted, it has acted under a restraint as great as it has imposed. The court of directors, rendered jealous and vigilant by their reduced condition, have scrutinized every proceeding of the board, in a manner that has rendered them a very efficacious check against the abuse of its influence or authority.

When the pretensions of the East India Company to have continued to them the share they now enjoy in the civil, military, and political government of India were discussed, previous to the last renewal of their privileges*, several members

* The charter of the Company is perpetual. The Act of 1813 renewed, to a further term, certain territorial and com-

of both houses of parliament were against that renewal; but the reasons they adduced for the abolition of the powers of this body were very different from the arguments brought forward thirty years before. They could no longer charge the Company, or their servants, with acts of tyranny or corruption; there was a happy and acknowledged change in the whole system: but the incompetency of the court of directors to their enlarged duties; the anomaly of the whole frame of the government, and the magnitude of the evils likely to arise from continuing to rule so great an empire through such an inadequate body, were strongly urged. The opponents of the Company admitted that there was a difficulty in disposing of the patronage enjoyed by the directors, which (they were agreed) it would be unwise to give to the crown; but various expedients were suggested, which, it was believed, would obviate any injury to the public interests from this cause. It was not difficult to reply to such general reasoning. The first admission made, namely, that a great change had taken place in the Company's government, proved that the defects of the system were not irremediable; and it is a maxim congenial to English legislation, not to destroy what

mercial privileges of the chartered Company, but the charter does not expire with that term. This is a distinction not unimportant, in reference to any arrangement that may be contemplated for altering the system.

is capable of improvement. With regard to the anomalous nature of this branch of our Indian government, it shared that character with all other parts of our free constitution; and as to its inadequacy to its enlarged duties, all that had occurred within the last twenty years was assuredly encouragement to proceed with ameliorations and reforms, instead of rushing upon the work of demolition, uncertain whether any authority could be substituted equally efficient.

Serious changes have taken place in the constitution of the Company, subsequent to the act of 1784; but none require more of our attention than those which have affected the court of proprietors. As long as the court of directors acted independently of the control of ministers, the proprietors interfered on almost all occasions, and frequently influenced nominations to high stations in India, as well as important political measures. But when the government became a party in the administration of Indian affairs, it was deemed necessary to prevent their arrangements being embarrassed by the general court, which was done by clauses in the enactments* of the legislature very seriously curtailing its power. Other circumstances have contributed, in no slight degree, to alter the views and principles of a great proportion of the proprietors, amongst which we may consider the

* The first of these passed in 1784, 24 Geo. III., cap. 25, sec. 29. The second in 1793, 33 Geo. III., cap. 25, sec. 23.

opening of the trade with India as the most prominent. The directors used to recommend to the proprietors a candidate on any vacancy that occurred in the direction; this recommendation, supported as it was by their individual and collective efforts, usually succeeded; and the new director came in with a strong feeling of gratitude towards the body of which he was a member, and with a disposition to maintain that principle of unity by which he had profited. For several years past the case has been very different; and candidates who are supported by some members of the direction, are frequently opposed by others. They consequently enter upon their duties with party feelings, which must have a tendency to break that union which was once the strength of this body.

These changes in England have extended their effect to India. The nature of those ties which formerly subsisted between the Company and their servants abroad, is greatly altered; and the latter no longer look exclusively to the court of directors.

A concurrence of events has tended, within the last thirty years, to bring the civil and military officers of the Indian service into general and prominent notice in England; and the consequence has been a very favourable impression of their character and advancement of their reputation. The army of India owes great obligations to the late Lord Buckinghamshire, for the manner in which he brought their claims to the notice of their sovereign, on the

extension of the order of the Bath. To Mr. Canning, when president of the board of control, the public are chiefly indebted for the appointment of the two distinguished men* who have, for several years past, filled the stations of governors at Madras and Bombay. Some solicitude was felt, and expressed, lest these appointments should effect the practice† of the court of directors to look rather to eminent men in England to fill such stations, than to the Company's servants; but the result of these selections must have satisfied all, that when the Indian service produces men like the individuals mentioned‡, the practice which excludes them from a fair and equal competition for any honours or employments that it is in the power of their king and country to bestow must be as contrary to sound policy as to justice.

One of the common-place objections made in England to India candidates for high office abroad is, the too near connexions which they are supposed to have with the public servants of that country.

* Sir Thomas Munro and the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone.

† Vide Mr. Canning's letter to the chairman of the court of directors, under date the 21st of September, 1818.

‡ This history closes with the administration of Lord Hastings, or it would have been the duty of the author to have noticed the measures of the late Mr. John Adam, who, while acting Governor-general, previous to the arrival of Lord Amherst, evinced a mind every way suited to the discharge of the duties of that high station.

There might be some ground for this objection, if it was probable that men of ordinary pretensions would be raised to such stations; but as we can never expect, considering the disadvantages under which they labour, that any persons are likely to be brought forward by the authorities at home till they have outstripped others in the race abroad, it may be asked, what friendships or connexions are such men likely to have in India? Certainly none but with the ablest and best of their fellow-servants. They must, no doubt, be personally acquainted with the abilities and deficiencies of those placed under their orders, and this cannot but give them incalculable advantages in the performance of their public duties. Standing distinguished amongst their compeers, they must be anxious to justify, by their conduct, the honour which their selection has conferred on the service to which they belong. Thus every motive arising out of the India connexions and acquaintances of men of superior character will tend to public benefit. Let their condition be contrasted with that of a person who has no previous knowledge of the scene on which he is to act, and no personal acquaintance or connexion whatever with any of those placed under his authority. Such a man, if he has attained any eminence, is likely to belong to a political party, and to have parliamentary interests; from such ties, independent of family claims, and of those of personal friendship, he must be exposed to solicitations in favour of many persons in India. If it is

admitted that examples have been found of men who had public virtue sufficient to resist the influence of all such ties and claims, still, even this rare individual, as a stranger to India, must, for a period, be dependent upon others for all information regarding the character and qualifications of the men to whom his choice is limited, and upon the judicious selection of whom for the various duties they have to perform the success of his administration will chiefly depend.

The power exercised by British rulers in India has none of that prejudice in its favour which often supports hereditary monarchies and national governments, even at a period of decline. It can obtain respect only by the intrinsic qualities of the person by whom it is exercised: great talents and active virtue will always obtain the suffrage of both the European and native subjects of our Indian empire, and in all human probability preserve it in peace, or, at all events, overcome danger; but moderate abilities, even though combined with information, will be found unequal to the great task in any times; and if the government of India ever passes into weak or inadequate hands, the high station will fall into disrepute, and all the dangers that flow from the contempt of a governing authority will be generated. The only safe view that Great Britain can take of her empire in India is, to consider it (as it really is) always in a state of danger, and to nominate persons to rule it competent from their knowledge of its interests, and from

superior energy of character, to meet every emergency that can arise; for it appears quite impossible ever to introduce any system of government into our possessions in that country which will render them secure, except under the management of able and firm rulers. If a succession of men of great talents and virtues cannot be found, or if the operation of any influence or party feelings and principles prevents their being chosen, we must reconcile ourselves to the serious hazard of the early decline, if not the loss, of the great power we have founded in the east.

There has been much speculative opinion on the subject of such selections: some have conceived that military men were best qualified for these stations; others, that they should be exclusively filled by those who had risen in civil life. It has been argued, that noblemen, carrying with them the impression of high rank and birth, should be alone appointed; while many believe that they would be best filled by servants of the Company possessing local knowledge, and a large and detailed acquaintance with the affairs and the people of India.

Any principle which excludes knowledge, talent, and virtue, in whatever rank or condition of life these qualities are found, from such fair and legitimate objects of honourable ambition, must destroy the competition necessary to form men for the government of British India: whether these be filled by persons who have risen in civil or military

life, provided such be qualified for the duties they have to perform, appears to be a matter of indifference; when talent for civil rule and military command are found combined, there is an advantage perhaps in vesting both powers in the same individual. That the high rank of the person employed, as it adds to that impression which such stations require, is of some consequence, cannot be denied; but that consequence can never be sufficient to supersede the claims of superior merit, or to remedy the defects of inefficiency. With regard to the servants of the Company, their local experience, unless attended with other qualifications, is but a poor recommendation to stations which do not so much require an acquaintance with details as that enlarged knowledge of human nature, that active energy of character, and that commanding talent for rule, which has, in all ages, distinguished those who have exercised power to the benefit of their country and mankind.

Whatever person is nominated, either to the high station of Governor-general, or to the governments of Madras or Bombay, should receive a full and liberal confidence from the authority by which he is appointed; nor should he be continued in his station one moment after that is withdrawn. The dangers which assail our empire in India from internal weakness are much greater than we can ever apprehend from external power; and these dangers will always increase, in an alarming degree, when

the administration abroad has not the decided support of the government in England.

There is an acknowledged necessity for those persons who fill the highest offices in India being vested with a power which is offensive to the feelings of an Englishman, and hardly in unison with any part of the character of our free constitution. But we cannot assimilate the rules and principles of British government with those which are essential to the maintenance of our sovereignty, as foreign conquerors, over the vast population of the continent of India. We may and do cast a heavy responsibility* on those to whom almost absolute power is intrusted; but the checks which are placed on those in authority in England are incompatible with the condition of a ruler in India. Under such circumstances, we can contemplate no improvement of more consequence than one calculated to form men capable of fulfilling duties of a nature so peculiarly delicate and important, both as they respect the peace and happiness of our Indian subjects, and the rights and privileges of the European community in our eastern dominions; but before any plan is suggested for the promotion of this purpose, it will be useful to see how far the object is impeded or advanced by the existing system.

His majesty's ministers have hitherto been, and

* One of the most effectual of the checks under which a governor in India acts is that publicity consequent on the positive necessity of making every act, however unimportant, a written record to be transmitted to England.

will continue to be, actuated, in all matters that relate to high appointments in India, by motives which must mix in their minds the objects of patronage and party interest with those of duty to the country; and it is from this cause that they will, in general, be found the advocates of a system which, under various pleas, excludes (as much as possible) the pretensions of Indian service. To admit these to a fair and liberal competition would, in many cases, be fatal to their views of promoting friends, of rewarding services performed in other quarters of the globe, and of making arrangements essential to the continuance of their own power. These are considerations too intimately connected with the frame of the English government, and with the interests of the individuals by whom that is administered, ever to cease to operate; but that does not render their operation less baneful to the Indian empire. Their action is least pernicious when that empire appears in danger; but better knowledge would teach that it is, as already remarked, every moment in danger, and never more requires superior ability and energy to govern it, than when, apparently, in perfect peace; for that is the moment to take preventive measures to avert those troubles to which the very nature and magnitude of our possessions in the east renders them so liable, and of which nothing but the continued watchfulness and wisdom of those who rule them can prevent the recurrence.

Among the many grounds taken to palliate, if

not excuse the appointment of persons to high stations in India, who are acknowledged to have little or no acquaintance with the interests of that empire, one of the most prominent is, the assumed information and competence of those servants of the Company who are in council, or who fill the subordinate and executive offices of the state: but those who assume this ground of confidence forget, that selecting and employing others is one of the first qualities of a superior mind; while incompetence too often takes alarm at talent, and is much more likely to rouse its resentment by neglect or jealousy, than to gain its support in aid of its own inefficiency.

It has been urged that, if his majesty's ministers had the sole responsibility of appointments in India, their fear of public opinion, and of attack in the House of Commons, would make them more guarded than when they have only, as at present, a concurrent or dissentient voice in the nomination of the court of directors. This might be true, if the affairs of the Indian government were as well understood, or excited the same interest as the affairs of Europe; but as this is likely never to happen, and as ministers must be expected to continue treating all that relates to the former as secondary, there would appear a necessity for a more constant, as well as a more efficient, check, and that can alone be found in an improved system, which would bring forward talent; and, through

respect for knowledge and weight of character, limit the improper action of prejudice, influence, or patronage, on points where the very existence of our Indian empire is at stake.

These observations refer, exclusively, to general principles; they have no allusion to any particular instances in the conduct of the court of directors, or of any set of ministers. Their choice of persons to fill the office of Governor-general, as these volumes have exhibited, has often fallen on men of great talent, who, aided by the able and well-qualified public officers they found in India, have advanced our power to that high but dangerous pinnacle which renders it more essential than ever to use the greatest caution and judgment in selecting those who are to govern it. The field of selection is very limited. The qualities requisite in the mere English statesman will seldom be found combined in any one individual; and, under present circumstances, the fitness of those whose chief claims rest upon Indian service will every day become more doubtful. The wars and negotiations of the last thirty years called into prominent action all the talent which belonged to that class, and the notice and applause bestowed upon individuals excited a high and honourable spirit of ambition; but this, if not cherished, must subside and perish. In ordinary times*, men soon fall into a lifeless routine

* The changes that have occurred in the political condition of India, within the last twenty-five years, have lessened, in a

of action, and those who return to England, discouraged by the construction of the Indian government at home from all hope of pursuing that course of life in which they would be most useful, will either devote themselves to pleasure, lapse into indolence, or give the whole weight of their opinions and reputation against a system, which, by almost destroying their hope of advancement, has generally the effect of arresting their public career exactly at the time when its continuance would be most beneficial to their country.

If this is admitted to be a true picture, the necessity of changes, opening wider the path of ambition to the servants of the Company, both in India and England, cannot be denied. Few would succeed, but all, by the objects being within their view, would be stimulated to efforts that could not fail of being essentially beneficial to the best interests of our Indian empire. Before, how-

great degree, those opportunities which persons in the service had of distinguishing themselves.

Those now employed in the highest stations are seldom called upon to exercise their discretion regarding measures of importance. Their duties have almost become those of routine, and the tendency of the actual system is, to place them as much under minute check and control as a collector of the revenue of a small district.

The effect of this system will be remarked upon elsewhere: it is noticed here, merely to establish the fact, that the civil and military officers of India have not the same means they before enjoyed of bringing themselves forward to public notice.

ever, such changes as have been alluded to can be effected, many deep-rooted prejudices must be overcome. The interests of individuals and of classes of men must yield to those of the public, and some parts of our Indian administration, by many deemed fundamental, must be modified or altered: but the necessity is paramount; and it may be asserted that, unless changes are made for encouraging and elevating, instead of excluding and depressing those who acquire experience, knowledge, and reputation in India, our administration of that empire will never preserve the health and vigour necessary for its permanent prosperity.

According to the established form of the Indian government in England, the board of control consists of a president, two active members *, a secretary, who is in parliament, and clerks in every department. We may assume that the four first stations of this board, to all of which liberal salaries are attached, are appointments which, generally speaking, will be given with more attention to the claims of those who form or support the administration, than with any reference to their peculiar qualifications for the situation. The office of president, though often filled by men of eminence, has not been considered as among the first in his majesty's

* There are several others, inclusive of the principal ministers; but all, except the president and two members, may be deemed honorary, as they neither receive salary nor perform any duty.

cabinet. This is unfortunate, for it leads to frequent changes; and few persons have held the office long enough to attain the knowledge necessary for the fulfillment of its important functions*. It happened lately at a critical period, (and the occurrence was favourable to the public interests) that a distinguished nobleman †, who had filled high station in India, presided at this board, and that he was ably aided by a near relative ‡, who had passed the early part of his life in the Company's service; but these nominations were to be referred to other causes than the competence of the individuals in point of personal knowledge and experience. Generally speaking, the president of this board, on entering upon his duty, is compelled to

* From the passing of the Act 24 Geo. III., 1784, the following secretaries of state for the Home Department, were presidents of the India board, *ex-officio*, and without salary: Lord Viscount Sydney; Lord (then Mr.) Grenville; Lord Melville (then Mr. Dundas.)

The system was changed in 1793, when the presidentship was made a separate appointment, with a salary; since which it has been filled by Henry Viscount Melville (then Mr. Dundas); 1801, Lord Viscount Lewisham (afterwards Earl of Dartmouth); 1802, Viscount Castlereagh; 1806, Earl Minto; Mr. Thomas Grenville; Mr. Tierney; 1807, Mr. Robert Dundas; 1809, Earl of Harrowby (about three months); Mr. Robert Dundas (now Viscount Melville); 1812, Earl of Buckinghamshire; 1816, Mr. Canning; 1820, Mr. Bathurst (about a year); 1822, Mr. Williams Wynne.

† The late Lord Buckinghamshire.

‡ The Right Honourable John Sullivan.

look to others. The members are usually in the same situation as the president; they, like him, have their lesson to learn, and sometimes commence in complete ignorance of Indian affairs.

The parliamentary secretary* of the board, being nominated on the same principle as the president and members, is not likely to be better informed. It is the clerks at the heads of departments on whom the board must depend. These are fixed; their sole attention is given to the duties of their respective offices, and the affairs under their superintendence are understood as well as it is possible to be by men who have only records to guide them: but supposing their industry and ability in their stations to be equal to that of any public functionaries in England, (and this is supposing no more than the truth,) still that system must be bad where the recognised depositaries of information are subordinate and irresponsible. This, it will be asserted, is to a great extent the case in other offices of the state. But a knowledge of the duties of other offices is familiar, easily attained, and may be said

* No deduction is to be drawn from the circumstance of the highly-respectable person now in that office having held it during a period of thirteen years. His remaining so long in the situation, where the experience he has gained is so useful, is solely referrible to the long continuation in office of the present ministers, and his not being nominated to another situation. In other words, the knowledge and experience which this public officer has gained is to be ascribed more to accident than to system.

to belong to the education of every English statesman, which is not the case with Indian affairs; they are foreign to the common studies of such persons, and, from their remote interest, can never be otherwise. It is consequently most desirable that there should be such a change in the composition of this board as would ensure to the state a greater portion of experience, and more accurate knowledge of Indian affairs. That can be done only by an arrangement which shall direct the hopes of those who have served with ability and distinction in India to the attainment of a share in this branch of the administration.

It will be urged, that the board of control is as open to those who have acquired experience and knowledge in our eastern empire as to any others; that there is no declared bar to their attainment of a seat, or even presiding at it, when returned from service in India, enjoying as they do the same rights as any other of his majesty's subjects. But what are the facts?—for it is by these we must be guided in deciding upon practical questions. Those who enter the Indian service are seldom men of high family connexion. Their early life is devoted to their public duties abroad, and they can therefore enjoy but few opportunities of forming those friendships with individuals, or those ties with parties, which so often help to bring into useful action men of information and talent. In former times the servants of the Company exclu-

sively filled all the high stations* in India, and the large and rapid fortunes they made in those stations, or in the exercise of military command, enabled them to come forward in parliament, and to establish influence through the means of wealth; but this is no longer the case. Riches are attained in India, as elsewhere, by commercial men, by agents, and by some few of the servants of the Company, who make that their chief or sole object. But it is a remarkable fact, that, amongst all who have been most distinguished during the last forty years, there is not one who possesses a fortune which can be deemed more than a competence; and several of them, after more than thirty years' service, have not acquired that. The reasons are obvious. Men seldom reach high office till after many years' service, and then their salaries, though liberal†, are not so considerable as to enable them to accumulate a large fortune, were that to become their pursuit: but their duties are of a character which raises the mind above the accumu-

* Lord Macartney, who was nominated governor of Fort St. George in 1782, was the first appointment of any British subject, not a Company's servant, to such a station.

† The salary of a political resident of the first class, which is one of the highest in India, does not exceed 3500*l.* per annum, and, though his establishment and expenses are paid to a certain extent, he cannot calculate on a less disbursement from it than 1000*l.*, which leaves him an annual saving of 2500*l.*, in a station which he is not likely to have attained before a service of from twenty to twenty-five years.

lation of money; and this high tone in those who fill the first stations in India has been wisely cherished, for the integrity of the service* depends on their example.

What has been stated will sufficiently account for persons of local experience and knowledge being most unlikely to attain any share in that branch of the administration of India which belongs to the crown; but the very circumstances which place them at a distance from such objects of ambition are those which, if the public interests were consulted, ought to approximate these objects. It is not more necessary to have naval lords at the Admiralty than to have Indian members of the board of control, nor indeed so much so; and, should a sense of its expedience ever introduce such a usage, its benefits would be very great.

Besides the aid which the minister of Indian affairs would receive from well-selected Indian members, the very prospect, however distant, of attaining such honourable stations at home would stimulate to action all the best talent in the Indian service. Those who obtained such distinction would receive and impart knowledge, and while

* It is difficult to make those who are locally unacquainted with India understand the vital importance of the preservation of this high tone in all who fill prominent political situations in that country; but in no government is the truth of the Persian adage more applicable, which says, "If the king takes an egg, there will not be a fowl left in the land."

they enjoyed an opportunity of bringing themselves into a notice that might be attended with further preferment, if they were fit for it, they would be placed in a situation which would enable them to preserve and improve the information they had acquired in India, and to offer useful information and advice daily to those who are called upon to decide on the most important questions connected with our eastern empire.

The president and members of the board of control may, and no doubt often do, seek information and counsel from the most experienced of the Company's servants in England; but these are only casually and partially consulted. Their judgment is asked on insulated points, affected by many circumstances and events of which they have no knowledge. It is also to be recollected that our Indian empire is, and, from its composition, must be, always in a state of change. Men who retire from the service, and do not, either from want of inclination or of means, keep up their information, may be said to be out of date in a very few years; but being naturally tenacious of preconceived opinions, we may assert, with the fullest respect for well-acquired reputation, that such persons are often the most misleading advisers; and an appeal to such may become the more pernicious, from error being sanctioned by high name and authority.

The adoption of the measure suggested would

do more than remedy this defect. It would produce a succession of men thoroughly informed, and with the opportunity as well as the ability of imparting their information to others. No good government can wish for mystery or concealment; such can be desirable only as veils to weakness and mismanagement. There never was a state to which publicity is calculated to be of more benefit, both as a check and as an encouragement to those by whom it is administered, than that we have established for India; but in order that the wise and just principles upon which it is conducted should be understood and appreciated, its real condition, and the nature of those peculiar circumstances under which it acts, should be fully before the public.

With reference to this principle, it is to be regretted that questions relating to India are so seldom agitated in parliament, and that the annual budget for the financial affairs of that empire, which it was long the usage to bring before the house of Commons, has been discontinued. This practice might have been attended with inconvenience, and perhaps occasional embarrassment, to the ministers of the crown; but its disuse, inasmuch as it has a tendency to perpetuate ignorance and apathy on all that relates to Indian administration, is unfavourable to the interests of that country, and, consequently, to those of Great Britain. Without speculating upon the reasons

which have led to past proceedings, it may be assumed, that men in official situations in England, who added to their practical knowledge of India the advantage of direct reference to the most authentic information in England concerning that country, would be able not only to correct errors and expose mis-statements, but to convey, when required, the most useful knowledge. Their minute acquaintance with persons, places, and circumstances in India would give them a confidence in the performance of such a duty far beyond what the mere study of records can ever impart; and on all such subjects they would receive an attention proportionate to the impression of their local experience, information, and judgment.

It has been asserted that the directors are more disposed to nominate, to the first and civil and military stations, persons who have acquired character at home, in the West Indies, or on the continent of Europe, than the officers of the Company. This belief, which is very general among their servants abroad, is not exactly grounded in fact. In such appointments, the directors alluded to are generally overruled by his majesty's ministers, though there can be no doubt that the victory is in most cases not very difficult. This arises from their participation in the greater admiration which the public bestow on services performed on scenes that are near than on those which are remote; from their yielding more respect to men whom they have

seen, or met in the highest sphere of society in England, than they do to persons whom, from their original nomination and career, they almost deem beings of their own creation, and in some respects below them; from their habits and feelings making them less attentive to the qualities which fit individuals for high stations, than to those which give them a value as subordinate instruments; and from being restrained, particularly in recommending for appointments to high military command, by a consideration of seniority *, which must, while persevered in, be fatal to the hopes of the Indian army.

Whatever may be the solid advantages of the Company's service, and they are neither few in number nor small in amount, all those who aspire at distinction must be hostile to a system which they believe unfavourable to their hopes of future elevation. Men of high and disinterested minds may occasionally divest themselves of self, so far as to advocate on general grounds what they feel as personally injurious; but such instances will be rare, and the ordinary motives of human nature will lead men to desire the abolition of an autho-

* Not one commander-in-chief has been chosen from the Company's army since Mr. Pitt's Bill. On an occasion when the court of directors sought to do away with this injustice, they brought forward the name of one of their oldest officers who had not served for many years; his character was highly respectable; but the objections taken against such a recommendation were just and unanswerable.

rity which they deem to be, either from its want of power or of disposition to support them, unfavourable to their advancement.

Mr. Pitt's Bill, though it subjected the court of directors to ministerial control in every branch of their administration, except in that which related to the management of the commercial concerns of the Company, made no changes either in the form of their election or the mode of executing such duties as were left to them: but one of the most important, the secret and political department, was, by this act, and a subsequent one, in a great degree taken out of their hands. This is one of the most delicate parts of the machinery of the present system, and, therefore, requires to be well understood.

In all cases of political negotiation with native powers, involving questions of peace and war, and requiring secrecy, the responsibility rests with the board of control, who, by the law, are empowered to frame despatches upon those subjects; which despatches the secret committee* are bound to forward to India under their signature. The committee may remonstrate verbally, or in writing, against instructions framed in opposition to their judgment; but their right to do so is not recog-

* This committee is formed of the chairman and the senior director, not filling one of the chairs. If the latter, from illness or other cause, is absent for any period, his place is filled by the next senior director.

nised by law*, as in the case of the public† despatches, and can, therefore, only be deemed one of courtesy and usage.

The proposed benefit of making the secret committee the medium for conveying orders in the secret and political department is, to uphold the authority of the Company in India, which, it is thought, would be injured by a direct official correspondence between the board of control and the government in that country. The signing of such despatches, when contrary to their judgment is, however, stated by an act of parliament to be purely ministerial on the part of the committee; but though the latter have not a legal right to propose alterations, or to delay the transmission of the board's despatches, still their condition as the head of a branch of the Indian government, and the means which, as such, they must possess of aiding or obstructing the minor measures connected with any important resolution the board of control may adopt, must always make it a matter of solicitude and importance for the board to carry this committee along with them; and the latter must give an influence in such affairs proportionate to the in-

* Vide Geo. III. cap. 3, sect. 19, 20, 21.

† The public despatches are framed by the court of directors, and approved or altered by the India board. If the court of directors delay, after requisition from the board, to frame despatches upon any subject connected with their civil or military government, the board have the power to frame them; and they must be forwarded by the directors. Vide Geo. III. cap. 3, sect. 15.

formation and talents of those of whom it is composed.

It is to be remarked, however, that the value of the privilege which courtesy and usage have given to the committee, of expressing, or even recording, dissentient opinions must, like many others that belong to the different parts of the Indian government, depend upon its rare and temperate exercise; for the frequency of that would convert a salutary restraint into a source of embarrassment; but if such consideration operates, as it no doubt does, to make the secret committee, in most cases, aid and promote, instead of weaken and impede, the action of that power which is vested in the superior board; the latter should, on the same principle, refrain, as much as possible, from interference in less important affairs. The right of control is much more exercised at present than it was for a long period after the Indian board was established. This has been occasioned by a variety of causes, and in many cases may have had a beneficial effect; but we must not overlook the great evils which may arise out of such gradual encroachment. If the interference of the board descends into every minute question, and its power of dictation is in frequent exercise, the court of directors will either sink into a mere channel for its orders, or the respect for the board will be diminished, and there will be an end of that feeling and good understanding which it is essential should subsist between these two authorities.

In such case, we might apprehend the complete fulfilment of Mr. Burke's prediction* of the result of the present form of our Indian administration: that can alone be averted by the temper, moderation, and knowledge, of those at the head of its separate branches.

When the board of control was first instituted, the same general letters from the different presidencies contained every subject. This was changed. The correspondence was divided into four departments; the public, the revenue, the military, and the commercial. The convenience of this new arrangement was recognised by the supreme government; and, at its suggestion, a fifth or political department, which included all the correspondence, not secret, with or regarding European or native powers in India, was added to the other four.

The court of directors divide themselves, according to usage of long standing, into committees, for the performance of their various duties; those divisions have reference to seniority of standing in

* "The scheme of reconciling a direction really and truly deliberative," said Mr. Burke, "with an office really and substantially controlling, is a sort of machinery that can be kept in order only a short time. Either the directors will dwindle into clerks, or the secretary of state, as has hitherto been the case, will leave everything to them; often through design, and often through neglect. If both should affect activity, collision, procrastination, delay, and, in the end, utter confusion, must ensue."

the direction, not the qualification and fitness of the individuals.

The chairmen are almost invariably chosen from the senior directors. The most important of the committees for affairs, not secret, is that of the correspondence, which is formed of eleven of the senior directors, inclusive of the chairman and deputy chairman. On this committee devolve the reading, examining, and answering of all the despatches from India, except those in the secret or commercial departments. Almost all measures of importance originate with them, and their opinion is, in most cases, a guide for the court.

Generally speaking, a period of at least ten years must elapse from the election of a director, before he can become a member of the committee of correspondence; previous to that, he is attached to one of the junior committees*, and his time is chiefly occupied with its duties c detail, having no concern with the larger questions that relate to the general administration of India, except when those are agitated in court. It is true that every member of the court has a right, not only to call for papers (not secret), but to originate measures. This right, however, is rarely exercised; for the

* The inferior committees are divided into classes, and the directors succeed to them also by seniority, without reference to qualification: they are numerous, and embrace every department connected with the commerce and property of the Company.

sense of the inconvenience which must attend taking subjects out of those departments to which they belong creates a salutary forbearance from this course of proceeding.

From the mode in which the duties of the court of directors are at present allotted, it is obvious that the election of an individual who, from the stations he may have filled abroad, possesses full and valuable information respecting the actual condition and government of that empire is, as far as the political interests of India are concerned, of little or no benefit to the public. On entering the direction, he is almost exclusively employed on duties of a totally opposite character to those which have occupied his past life; and when seniority advances him to a place in the committee of correspondence, or secret department, he carries with him, not that fresh and useful knowledge which he would have done had his mind gone along with events, but the bias of an attachment to old opinions, many of which may have become obsolete.

These facts cannot be controverted, and it follows as a consequence, that a minute knowledge of the affairs of India, and of the political interests of that country, is rarely possessed by any of the senior directors. It is possessed by the secretaries and head clerks, many of whom are men distinguished by talent, as well as industry; but to them, as the principle depositaries of knowledge, there

exists the same objection as that which applies to the constitution of the board of control.

There are many causes which give a vacillating character to the proceedings of the court of directors, and tend, at times, to precipitate, and at others, to retard, measures of vital importance; but one of the most prominent is the shortness of the period that each chairman fills the chair. His business during that period is overwhelming, and much of it must be hurried through, or neglected, or transferred, half done, to his successor; who, very possibly, has different sentiments upon several of the points under consideration. We may add to this cause of frequent and sudden changes in their views, that of the annual retirement and re-election of six members* of this body. The ex-directors for the year having no right to see any papers, or to have access to official documents during their recess, they return to their duties

* Those six ex-directors must be re-elected; they form what is termed the house list; their re-election, except in extraordinary cases, is almost certain: it is most desirable it should be so, for where it otherwise, the situation of a director, which it is politic to raise, would be greatly decreased in value. Many respectable and highly-qualified individuals are deterred, by the nature of the first canvass, from seeking a seat in the direction. If this canvass was to be repeated every six years, some of the most useful members might be lost to this body; and among those that remained, a greater spirit of conciliation towards their constituents might be introduced than was consistent with the impartial performance of their public duties.

ignorant of the measures under discussion, or at least with the disadvantage of having the chain of information entirely broken.

The government of the court of directors is marked by strict attention to rule, and alarm at every measure contrary to usage, or that can create a precedent for future deviation from it. These are good general maxims of ordinary administration, for limited and unchanging states; but, in an empire like that of India, their constant and cold observance must be fatal to that life and animation which ought to pervade the whole system. Every latent spark of honourable ambition should be kindled, and the anxiety should be to promote, by encouragement and by reward, the efforts of individuals to attain distinction in the public service. No government can be highly respected which, entrenching itself in forms, is more solicitous to avoid the reproach of injustice, than to inspire zealous exertion. Its acts may be just, and even liberal; but unless they are suited to the character of the individuals and classes subject to its authority, and evince complete competence in the rulers to go along with the rapid changes of the peculiar empire they have to rule, such government must fall into disrepute with those by whom they are served. That this has been the case with the court of directors, no man acquainted with facts can deny; and an increase of information and knowledge is not more necessary in that court to

enable it to withstand the daily attempts made in England to lessen and degrade it, than to maintain its reputation with its servants abroad, many of whom, under the influence of personal feelings, contemplate the termination of the power of the Company with little reflection on the probable consequences of such an event to India, and to Great Britain.

This is not the place, nor is it, perhaps, the period to suggest the details of any plan of reform; but those who desire the continuance of the Company may be satisfied, that all who aim at its destruction will be enemies to any change in the constitution of the court of directors which shall tend to raise that body, by making it more efficient to the performance of its large and increasing duties. It is to a system of depression they trust for ultimate success; but nothing can be more hazardous to the interests of the Indian empire than this mode of killing, as it were, by inches, the body through whom it is governed. The court of directors should not only be maintained in all their rights and privileges, but elevated, if it is desired to render it a useful and efficient branch of the Indian government: if not, the sooner it is abolished the better. To understand this question, let us look to its actual condition. The character of this court has undergone great alterations; the changes which have taken place in the views and sentiments of the proprietors have extended to the

directors. A separate and extensive commercial interest has already gained the greater part of the trade of the Company, and threatens the remainder. That service, which once exclusively looked to them, no longer does so; the public press, which is every day becoming a more powerful engine of change, is, from many reasons, far from favourable to them: that all these causes have combined to lower the court of directors in public estimation cannot be denied; but there are others of equal, if not greater force. The acts of 1793 and 1813, by transferring almost all real territorial and political powers to the ministers of the crown, deprived the court of directors of much of that consequence which they before enjoyed; and their unpopularity has been recently increased by the growing dislike of all monopolies, and an increasing desire for new openings of trade. This desire, so far from being lessened, has been greatly augmented by the partial opening of the India trade; the benefit of which, to the public, is considered to be much impaired by the command which the Company still maintain over the foreign market. The consequence has been, that the Company, by ceasing to be rulers, and by remaining monopolists, have lost the consideration which belonged to their former character; while the odium ever attached to the latter has been increased.

No person, possessing a knowledge of the constitution of England, can desire to change the

composition of the court of directors in any manner that would more approximate them to his majesty's ministers. Their separation from the latter, even in the common intercourse of life, owing to their different occupation and connexions, has its importance; but the useful check which it constitutes must be weakened, if not destroyed, unless it is supported by personal character, and acknowledged information and talent. The deterioration of the court in public estimation must deteriorate it as respects the talent and character of its individual members. The office of director will every day become less an object of ambition to men of high feeling, and who have already obtained distinction.

Under the present circumstances, it appears difficult for the Company to maintain their ground as an efficient branch of the administration of India; perhaps, indeed, impossible, unless changes take place which shall give to the court of directors, as a body, more weight and consideration than they now enjoy with the public: this weight and consideration, all who are favourable to their existence must desire to see them attain.

The limitation of the Company's monopoly in trade has produced considerable changes as to persons chosen for directors; but still no qualifications are required beyond the possession of a certain amount of stock; and the condition and avocation of a great majority of the voters of both

sexes offer no security as to the fitness of a candidate for the direction. There existed, until lately, restrictions which barred any person* who continued in the service from being a director, notwithstanding he had acquired a right, unless specially called upon to reside in his native country. Such restrictions, which had their birth in that spirit of narrow and jealous policy that characterized the early days of the Company, are ill suited to its present condition, and at variance with the usage of the government of England. The latter admits unemployed officers to every office† of the state, wisely obtaining all the advantage it can from that increased knowledge and experience which the duties of their profession enable them to acquire; and even when these are not publicly employed, they are often officially called upon to give

* The exclusion of such persons from being directors was continued by a bye-law, which has been lately expunged, as being contrary to the provisions of the legislature, from which it appears there is no restriction against officers so situated as commandants of regiments residing in England entering the direction. The only pretext on which an objection could be raised is, their liability to be called upon for foreign service; but every officer of his majesty's service, in civil or political employ in England, is in the same situation, and the usage of the Company's service since 1796, when colonels of corps were entitled to live in England, establishes, that their return to India is deemed optional.

† There are several situations in England in which the employment of officers, who continue in the Indian army, would be alike honourable to the service and beneficial to government.

their opinions individually, or collectively in committees, upon points on which their professional experience, or recent knowledge, enables them to judge with accuracy. Such calls are seldom, if ever, made upon Indian civil or military officers who are retired, or on furlough in England; and yet it would be difficult to point out any government in the world, which, from the character of its duties, stands so much in need of this kind of aid. But until considerable changes are made in the construction, both of the India board and the court of directors, this assistance will never be attained in any degree that can render it beneficial to the country.

The increasing difficulties of governing such an empire as that we have established in the east imperiously call upon us to avail ourselves of all the means we possess to enable us to overcome them: but we must not deceive ourselves as to the real cause of opposition to measures of alteration, such as have here been suggested. It is the alarm of individuals and classes of men lest injury should arise to their own interests; but in this conclusion they are assuredly deceived. The effect would be the reverse, for the admixture of men who have knowledge of India with those who have a knowledge of England would early destroy those baneful prejudices which both parties entertain towards each other; and, while it diffused correct information and just principles, would give strength

and permanence to a system which cannot much longer exist on its present foundation.

In the actual condition of our Asiatic possessions, there is no principle in their administration of such consequence as that of keeping those who are employed abroad as much European as possible, consistent with their attainment of the qualities essential to fit them for their local duties in India. We can contemplate no danger equal to their looking to the latter as the country in which they are to pass their lives; such a sentiment, if ever it becomes prevalent amongst the public servants, must ultimately prove as fatal to the interests of England as of India. This is fully understood by the government at home; and whilst they have very properly done away those means of accumulating wealth which were at variance with our improved system of rule, they have recently made liberal arrangements to facilitate the return of those who have served a certain period, either in the civil or military service; but one effect of this branch of expenditure will be, to make numbers (many of whom are in the prime of life) pass the remainder of their days in an unprofitable manner, unless objects* are presented to their ambition both in India and in England. In the

* The liberal measures lately adopted are so far a benefit, as they prevent men fixing in India, and accelerate promotion; but their utility stops here; and it will probably be found, that measures will be hereafter necessary to regain services which will be lost by the effect of this liberality, unless some objects

pursuit* of these in the latter country, men of information and talent would soon lose their limited and local feelings. Their importance with themselves and others would rise as the sphere of their utility became enlarged. Their patriotic attachment to their native land will be strengthened, and the weight and influence of their character will be the means of keeping alive such sentiments in others, who will give more ready assent to the wisdom and expediency of measures that are associated with names to which they have long and habitually given respect and confidence.

Some who admit that the mode proposed is the best by which prejudices can be removed, and attachment to their native country revived and strengthened, will perhaps startle at a plan that suggests the necessity of facilitating to those who have served abroad the attainment of employment in both branches of the Indian administration in England; but such objection stands on narrow, indefensible, and most unconstitutional grounds. Has any officer, political, civil, military, or naval,

are held out to lead men of talent to continue to serve their country in India after they have attained a title to return on a competence to England.

* It has been sometimes stated, that men generally return from India at an age when they are more fit to retire than to enter on new scenes of public employment. This assertion is not supported by facts; besides, the employment to which it is proposed to turn their attention would not be new, but an useful continuance of the labours of their past lives.

of his majesty's service, when retired upon pension, half or full pay, ever been considered as less qualified to enter any department of the state, because he had been in a particular line of service, or might again be called upon to act in it if his country required? Do we not meet with persons of this description in various offices and stations? Do they not often fulfil duties which lead them not merely to differ with, but to control and censure those very authorities under whom they had formerly acted, and may again act? That such is the case cannot be denied: and who will contend that there is any principle in the administration of India which should constitute a difference to this practice.

Some will argue, that employment in India is reserved for a privileged few, and that those who enjoy it should not repine if it, in a great degree, throws them out of public life in their native country; and they will perhaps add, that the persons with whose prospects they might interfere, if such facilities were given as have been suggested towards their obtaining office in England, might justly complain unless the India service was opened to their ambition. Such arguments might have force, if the English public officers were qualified for stations in India, or if, in the administration at home, we could dispense with that information and knowledge which is alone possessed by India public officers. But we must not try this important question by a reference

to the claims or privileges of individuals, or classes of men. It is one of state policy, and intimately connected with the preservation and good government of one of the most extraordinary empires that ever was founded in the universe. With all the means we can prepare and employ, we shall be too likely to fail in these objects; but that failure will be certain, if we allow our efforts for their attainment to be circumscribed by ordinary maxims, and rules adapted to the routine administration of petty colonies, or the regulated forms of the most admired national constitutions, which differ from that in question either by the temper and genius of the governed, or the principles and system of the government.

The education of the youth who enter the service in India is liberal: their occupations abroad are of a character to enlarge their minds. The evils and misfortunes they continually contemplate as arising from despotic rule must render them more attached to the free government of their native country; and no great class of men can be placed under circumstances more calculated to give them extended views of national policy, or to qualify them for different public duties. Acting in countries remote from each other, and whose inhabitants differ in language and customs as much as the nations of Europe, some members of this class rise to the exercise of almost kingly rule; others fill political, civil, judicial, fiscal, and military stations. Such a variety of occu-

pation must in India, as elsewhere, produce an infinite variety of character, and qualify men to pursue the most opposite courses, if such are open to them in England. It is a sense of injury alone, at the operation of causes which virtually almost exclude them from public life, that can unite them in hostility against a system, which, under other circumstances, it must be their interest to support: nor would the prejudices they may have imbibed from a residence in India long survive their return to England, unless they found themselves placed under circumstances discouraging to their ambition, and almost compelle ginto a community of sentiments and feelings by being considered as a distinct class. This is, to a great degree, their present situation, and no reflecting man can doubt its injurious effects on the public interests, which require a mixture of Indian and European knowledge that can only be effectually obtained, by the union in public office as well as general society, of those whose lives, though passed in different hemispheres, have been directed to one object, the good of their country. The useful approximation of such persons to each other must, however, depend on a parity of condition, which, while it promotes intercourse, gives birth to that respect and attention which men do not readily entertain for the opinions of those whom they consider to be their inferiors in rank or in knowledge.

Amongst those whose industry and talent have

contributed to the good government of India subsequent to the establishment of the board of control, the secretaries and clerks at the heads of departments of that board, as well as those of the India-House, must not be passed over. It would be difficult to point out any class of men in similar situations who have laboured harder, or more to the benefit of the public, or who have preserved a higher character for integrity and ability. The information and minute knowledge of Indian affairs which some of these have attained from the huge volumes of the records of our Eastern empire, is quite surprising; but the good that the public might derive from their labour and talents is diminished, not only (as noticed before) from the disadvantages inseparable from their own want of local knowledge and experience, but also from their superiors often but imperfectly understanding the details of the matter laid before them. The latter, even when they have the disposition and the leisure, must wade through a mass of writing on subjects, of which a minute knowledge is rendered more unattainable by the local references, and the very names of persons, places, and things, as foreign to the ear as confusing to the sense of the English reader. Any change of system, giving increase of knowledge to their superiors, must ultimately prove most beneficial to the interests of this class. Men who had confidence in their own competency could have no reserve as to the resources from which they

derive assistance, and their experience and discriminating judgment would be favourable to the rise* of all whose industry and talent rendered them conspicuous.

Existing establishments must always be liable to attack, and in a free and enlightened nation like England we may trace much of their excellence to this cause. They are kept in a state of vigilance and activity by their assailants: the public opinion must go along with them, or they would soon cease to exist; but that public opinion is not to be taken from the speeches of members of parliament contending for victory; nor from the daily effusions of contradictory papers and publications; nor from the clamour of numbers acting under some momentary impulse; nor from the pages of philosophers, who theorize upon institutions that are to give a new character to the human race: but though no one of these is the representation of public opinion, they all influence and help to form it, and as education

* The duties of the subordinate officers at the board of control and the India-house are quite distinct from those of any other offices in England. The great application and study necessary to attain that competent knowledge which it is essential the heads of departments should possess must withdraw the persons filling such stations from all other studies and views. This consideration demands that such functionaries should be placed on as high a footing as the nature of their situation will permit. Their elevation, while it rewards their efforts, will stimulate that of others, and be every way productive of public benefit.