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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF THE

RIGHT HON. WARREN HASTINGS,

FIRST GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF BENGAL.

COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL PAPERS.

BY THE REV. G. R. GLEIG, M.A.

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AUTHOR OF

THE LIFE OF SIR THOMAS MUNRO.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1841.



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LONDON:

Printed by W. Clowes and Sons,
Stamford Street.

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&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

State of Affairs in Carnatic and at the different Native Courts—Correspondence with different Functionaries.

WHILE these things were going on elsewhere, the important business of the war, including the immediate defence of the Carnatic, and the conduct of a variety of subsidiary operations, was not neglected. Of the mission of Sir Eyre Coote to assume the command of the army at Madras, as well as of the march of a large detachment of troops overland from Bengal, notice has elsewhere been taken. Sir Eyre found, on reaching the scene of action, that everything was there in confusion. The Sepoys, dispirited by recent reverses, could scarcely be brought to look the enemy in the face. The Europeans, few in number, were dispersed and broken up into petty garrisons. There was neither unity of purpose, nor vigour of design, among those whose business it was to direct in the field. There was wrangling and mismanagement, and extreme jealousy of foreign interference among the persons composing



the cabinet. Moreover money, stores, cattle, provisions, every thing on which the efficiency of an army depends, was wanting. And while the Nabob, from whom the means of supporting the war was expected, declared himself unable to furnish a single rupee, and complained bitterly of the insults that were offered to him, Hyder, the common enemy of him and of the English, ranged over the open country at pleasure. Nevertheless, Sir Eyre Coote, though he reported these things to the Supreme Council with the acrimony and querulousness that characterised his temper, spared no personal exertions to repair the evils which they were eminently calculated to produce. The troops were paid a portion of their arrears. Cattle for draught and carriage were, as far as possible, provided, a bold face was put upon affairs in general, and the army took the field. I need not follow it in its career of drawn battles, and somewhat profitless victories. Whatever could be done to work a machine so imperfectly mounted as to defy the ingenuity of man to work it effectually, Sir Eyre Coote accomplished; and he had the satisfaction, at the close of the campaign to perceive, that, though the Carnatic was not free, his own troops had recovered their confidence, while Hyder, dispirited by the results of various encounters, was become proportionably deficient in enterprise.



Sir Eyre Coote complained that from the Governor and Council of Fort St. George he did not receive the support to which he was entitled. They would neither supply his wants by their own efforts, nor permit him to find supplies for himself, and he sought from the Supreme Council such an enlargement of powers, as would render him in the conduct of the war quite independent. Lord Macartney, on the other hand, accused Sir Eyre Coote of acting towards himself and his colleagues with intolerable insolence. He would pay no attention to advice, far less obey an order in matters purely military; yet he was for ever interfering with civil affairs, which no wise concerned him. Neither were these gentlemen content to make their appeals by letter. Each sent his agent to Calcutta,—Mr. Graham, Sir Eyre Coote's Persian interpreter, coming on behalf of the General, and Mr. Staunton, private secretary to Lord Macartney, offering himself as the representative of the Governor. Mr. Hastings could not but feel that he was thrown by these proceedings into a difficult situation. He therefore strove, as the best and wisest course, to reconcile the complainants one to another; and wrote with this view the following letters:—

To the Right Honourable Lord MACARTNEY.

Fort William, 21st March, 1782.

My Lord,—I have derived the highest satisfaction from the receipt of your letter of the 2d ultimo, by the



hands of Mr. Staunton. I am truly sensible of the force of your Lordship's sentiments in my favour when I consider that, in the most arduous and critical situation of affairs under your Government, you have deprived yourself of the able assistance of your confidential secretary for my ease and information. The impression which so flattering a mark of your Lordship's attention has made upon my mind, I will not attempt to describe, persuaded that Mr. Staunton has observed, and will do justice to them. I will content myself with simply making you my warmest acknowledgments. I have endeavoured to give effect to your Lordship's design in this ingenuous proceeding by the most free and unreserved communication of my sentiments to Mr. Staunton upon every subject which you have charged him with, and I trust that they are such as will convince your Lordship of the anxious desire which I have to co-operate with you, firmly and liberally for the security of the Carnatic, for the support of your authority, and for the honour of your administration, by every aid which this Government and my personal influence can afford.

I refer your Lordship to Mr. Staunton for the detail and result of the long and frequent conversations which we have had; he will give you complete information, and I hope as complete satisfaction on every point which has been in discussion.

I am persuaded that, after those clear explanations which have now taken place, no future interruption will happen to that mutual good understanding and cordiality with which our correspondence commenced, and I beg leave to assure your Lordship that few things are more the objects of my wishes than to preserve and improve this harmony for the protection and advancement of the important interests committed to our charge. I have the honour to be, with the highest



esteem, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most faithful humble servant.

To Lieut.-Gen. Sir EYRE COOTE, K.B.

Fort William, 21st March, 1782.

Dear Sir,—The public letters which you will have received from this Government since Mr. Graham's arrival will have convinced you of my particular and ready desire to afford you every support which could be given to you by the influence of this Government, nor has that of the other members of it been less zealous for the same effect. You will have perceived that we have confined our interposition to influence only. The reason, and that which operated with greatest force on my mind was, that the tone of authority would but have given offence, and perhaps excited defiance, and though the Court of Directors have empowered us to issue our orders to the other presidencies, and have commanded them to obey us, yet as they have given us no power to enforce our orders, the obedience which may be paid to them remains as optional as the compliance which they might have given to our advice, before we were invested with this extraordinary charge. The president and select committee are possessed of our full sentiments on the points which you have specifically referred to us, and it is at their peril if they refuse to conform to them.

Notwithstanding your pointed reference to us of the subject of cattle, and its essential consequence to every movement of your army, I own that I felt a repugnance at the interference of this Government in a point of such inferior detail; but this sensation was much removed by Lord Macartney himself, who had instructed Mr. Staunton to consult me upon the subject. From the charges of oppression and venality which have been publicly and universally thrown on some of his prede-



cessors, great allowances must be made for his Lordship's apprehensions of the consequences which every act of apparent violence may produce on his reputation, and I have no doubt that he will be equally pleased and relieved by the opinion which we have given upon this subject, for it is impossible that he should have any other doubt or scruple respecting it. If the service should require the appropriation of every bullock in the Carnatic to save it from impending destruction, none but a visionary casuist, and he must be far removed from any interest in it, would seriously object to it. The same principle will equally apply to every other exigency of the war, and more especially to your particular command, which we have said ought to be unlimited both in its place and operations. We have exacted from the select committee, as far as we could exact it, their fullest confidence in your conduct, and their assured sanction to all your acts.

That liberal allowance which we have recommended to them to give, I should recommend to you to assume in every case which falls under our description of the necessity requiring it; that is, to repeat the words of our letter, the conciliation of the dependant chiefs of the Carnatic, the acceptance of terms offered by those of the enemy, and in general such other acts as do not fall within the express line of military command, but which may contribute to the success of its operations, either by adding strength to our arms, or weakening those which may be opposed to them. And I believe I may venture to say that such would have been the terms of our letter to you, dictated for the purpose of removing the restraints which your late difference with the government of Fort St. George might induce you to impose on your conduct, but for our apprehension that both its construction and operation, if our sentiments were conveyed in an official form, would



contradict and defeat the conciliatory spirit which has dictated the mode of interference which we have adopted.

I can readily believe that it must be foreign from your wishes to add to your unavoidable vexations any grounds of contest with the government of Fort St. George, to which you are not compelled by some very strong necessity. But in a service of such hazard as yours, many cases must occur to which the regular powers of your command may not be competent, for which no provision has been made, which will not wait for express instructions, or which may be defeated of their objects by communication. These may be of the most important consequence, and perhaps such as may decide on the existence of the Company's interests in the Carnatic. In every such case I must suppose that you would act by the inherent authority of your general trust, and that the Government under which you act would ratify it. I understand that opportunities have occurred, and it is sufficient for the application of the principle which I have recommended that such may occur, of reconciling and binding the Polygars and other dependant chiefs of the Carnatic to our interest by concessions pledged to them under a guarantee in which they could confide; of offers made by men of high command in the service or dependant on the enemy, of engagements for money or provisions on specified conditions; of districts either newly recovered or unprovided of agents, for the security of their revenue, and too remote for their timely appointment in the regular mode. These are instances which occur to my recollection, of such a necessity as I have supposed would warrant your acting without express instructions, and bind the Government of Madras to ratify and confirm it. But even these may require for your complete justification, both that they should be combined



with such other circumstances as will form the necessity of a discretionary latitude, and that the mode in which it is exercised should be in itself unexceptionable. Neither could this Government prescribe on points of such nice distinction, nor will they admit of a specification. They are in their nature contingent and indefinite.

I feel that I write under a check that will not allow me the free expression of my decided judgment, for I am imperceptibly led to advise caution, where I had intended to excite confidence and decision. I will therefore close the subject by assuring you that you cannot possess the confidence of this Government in a greater degree than that which it is already disposed to give you; but you immediately depend upon another Government, whose actions we have no power to control, and whose confidence we should wish, even if we had that power, to flow spontaneously to you, rather than that it should be yielded to our authority, or to the compulsion of necessity. I am afraid I must speak plainer to be clearly understood. In a word, if I myself stood alone in the charge of the government of Fort St. George, I would give you an unbounded liberty of action, or if I had not given it, and you had assumed it, I would approve or ratify your assumption of it. But in the application of this doctrine to others who will judge for themselves, and have a right to judge for themselves, I am fearful of saying what they should give, or you should take, lest my opinion, which cannot operate as authority, should prove the occasion of fresh differences, and draw on me the imputation of having excited them, in contradiction of my professed desire of reconciling those which have already arisen.

I have but a word to say upon the allusion which you make in the beginning of your letter to the long intermission which has happened in our correspondence. I



will own that I could not but regret that while I was labouring to afford you all the aids of this Government, my intentions, even in the very instances in which I had been impelled by the most friendly consideration for your reputation, scarce less than for the public service, were either misrepresented or misconstrued as injurious to you. How you could credit such a suggestion I cannot conceive. But I have made allowances. Its impression on my feelings, though not slight, was transient, and you have done me justice in the conviction which you express that it has produced no cessation in my zealous endeavours for the general success of our affairs; for perhaps you are the only man now on earth from whom I could sustain personal grievances, and not only forgive them, but allow him to extort from me my applause, and even my esteem for his public virtues. Your exertions and sacrifices have been such as exceed any credit which could have been given you for them, or could have been expected from any man.

You are already so fully informed on other points by the letters of the Board, that I will not add to the length of this by repeating them, further than to refer you to Mr. Graham, to whom, considering him as your confidential agent, I have explained my sentiments in the fullest manner upon every point relative to the public affairs, and our objects in them upon which you can desire to be informed, and I trust to his comprehension and judgment for the faithful repetition of them. I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

The results of this reference to the Supreme Government were so far advantageous, that Lord Macartney and his colleagues in office gave way; and the General was enabled, so soon as the return of dry weather would allow, to take the field again



with powers considerably enlarged. It cannot be said, however, that the campaign of 1782 was in any respect a glorious one. The British army still laboured to a fearful extent under the disadvantage of inadequate means of transport, while the whole country within which its operations lay, was a desert. Perhaps, too, Admiral Souffrein, however inferior to Sir Edward Hughes in seamanship, at least equalled his gallant adversary in activity and mental resources; by which means large reinforcements of French troops made good their landing, and the important fortress of Trincomalee was lost. The English, on the other hand, were not successful in an attempt to surprise Arnée, within which a large amount of Hyder's treasure was deposited. They fought but a doubtful battle in its neighbourhood, and sustained the loss of a regiment of European cavalry, which was drawn into an ambuscade and destroyed, on the march back to Madras. Moreover it was at this juncture that the General, made aware of the treaty into which the Bengal government had entered with the Mahrattas, endeavoured, by threatening Hyder with an attack from that quarter, to lead him into negotiations for peace; a proceeding which was greatly blamed by the civil authorities as an encroachment on their privileges; and which, not, as was insinuated, without some secret interference on their parts, led to nothing. Finally,



after various encounters at sea, and marches and countermarches on shore, the former in no instance decisive, the latter harassing and unsatisfactory to those engaged in them, the army returned in September to its cantonments at Madras; where the General, having sustained two shocks of paralysis, gave up the command, and set out soon afterwards for Bengal.

And now, before I proceed to describe the consequences of this unfortunate event, or to follow up the progress of the war to its termination, it may be well if I insert one or two specimens of the sort of correspondence which the Governor-general kept up all this while with his public and private agents in various parts of the world. Let it be borne in mind that India was not then, as it is now, subject, either directly or indirectly, throughout its length and breadth, to British influence. Native powers there were in every quarter independent, and jealous one of another; to preserve peace among whom was a point of scarcely less importance to the Company than to hinder them from combining for the destruction of the English. Accordingly, residents were stationed at the courts of Hyderabad, Naugpoor, and Poonah, not less, as a matter of course, than at Lucknow; while Delhi itself, in spite of the decay of the Mogul power, was not overlooked. For the King's great supporter, Nudjeff Cawn, was dead; many powerful chiefs were intriguing to receive the



vacant honour, while the Mahrattas strove to wring from the King's weakness a grant of territory, which would have brought them into dangerous and inconvenient proximity with the English. At Delhi, therefore, as well as at the other capitals, Mr. Hastings was determined to establish a resident, through whom he might be informed of events as from day to day they befel, and to whom he might trust for the proper maintenance of British interests.

I subjoin a few specimens of the manner in which this important species of correspondence was carried on. Mr. Hastings's letters are never, as will be seen, formal or stately. They are, on the contrary, open, frank, and friendly; indeed, it was a marked feature in his character that no man ever served under him, and did his duty, but that he succeeded ere long in establishing a strong claim on his personal regard. Mr. Holland, to whom the following are addressed, was the gentleman whom the Madras government thought fit to remove; but who was continued at Hyderabad by the authority of the Supreme Court, and did good service there.

TO JOHN HOLLAND, Esq.

Fort William, 6th March, 1782.

Sir,—A letter which I had the pleasure to receive from you, dated, as I believe, the 5th of December, 1780, or written about that time, contained the detail of a conversation which you had with the Nabob



Nizam-ul-Moolk upon the subject of the confederacy which had been formed against our nation, and of which in the conversation he acknowledged himself to have been the author, justifying it on the principles of self-defence, and charging Sir Thomas Rumbold with having compelled him to it by his threats, and actual infringements of the treaty subsisting between him and the Company. Your letter was laid before the Board, but by some accident has been mislaid, as neither the original nor duplicate after a long search can be found in the office. I shall esteem myself greatly obliged to you if you will send me an attested copy of it in duplicate, as it is of the utmost consequence to the defence of my public character against the attempts which have been made in England to charge me with having been the occasion of the present war in the Carnatic. What I recollect of the Nizam's declarations is so full and absolute a confutation of that aspersion, that I believe it will require no other. I am, with great esteem, Sir, yours, &c.

To the same.

Calcutta, 14th March, 1782.

Sir,—I have just received your favour of the 8th instant, and all the preceding in their order, with (as I believe) all their duplicates. The reports of the Berar agents are absolutely false, and appear to be as contrary to the policy of their master, who is himself no less anxious than your Nabob to obtain possession of the person of Ragonaut Row.

Having committed the charge of the treaty for peace with the Peishwa to Mr. Anderson with full powers, and Mahdajee Sindia having also received full powers for the same purpose from the Peishwa, it is unnecessary, and might tend to impede the effect of their commissions, were we to make his highness acquainted



with any of the points of our positive instructions, or to give him an effective participation in the negotiation. Yet I think it may be of use to undeceive him upon the points which he has supposed us disposed to yield, whether the supposition be his own, or the suggestion of others. You may therefore affirm on the surest authority that we never will consent to deliver up Ragonaut Row to any one, or to do any act that shall abridge his personal liberty; that we will not surrender Salsette; that we will not pay a single rupee either as an indemnification for the expenses of the war, as a restitution of revenue, or on any other ground; nor that we will subject the Company to the chout or any other tax or tribute. With respect to the last article, you may qualify the assertion, by supposing a bare possibility of it in the event of his abandoning us, and compelling us to purchase an alliance as a counterpoise to his power if opposed to us. Though I express such a supposition, it is so inconsistent with his wisdom, his interest, and his good faith, that the improbability of it places it almost beyond the bounds of possibility.

You will be pleased to observe that I have confined these negative assertions to the three points contained in your letter, it being unnecessary to add what resolutions have been formed on others which are not objects with the Nabob Nizam Ally Cawn.

Mr. Holland was as yet comparatively a stranger to Mr. Hastings; Mr. Chapman was not; and hence the difference of tone observable in the letters addressed to each. Yet in the former instance, not less than in the latter, a spirit of kindness and personal interest is shown, which could hardly fail of insuring the zealous co-operation of the individual who was its object. It was Mr. Chapman's



duty, on the other hand, to conciliate and manage the Court of Berar, which the interference of Sindia, in adjusting the Mahratta peace, had considerably disconcerted. Let the subjoined tell their own tale; for they are selected at random from many more which relate to the same subject.

To CHARLES CHAPMAN, Esq.

Fort William, 9th March, 1783.

Sir,—I have received yours of the 15th and 16th ultimo. I have but one answer to the Rajah's message, and that he has repeatedly received with full replies to all his letters.

I made advances to Mahdajee Sindia by the advice of Moodajee. It produced an immediate treaty of peace with Sindia separately; and a general cessation of hostilities. It has since produced a treaty with the Peishwa, which has been ratified on both sides, and is doubtless by this time interchanged, as the 24th of the last month was appointed for that final ceremony. On what grounds can I now depart from it, or Moodajee require it? I have declared him to be the prime mover of this negociation. Is it his wish that I should break the treaty with which it has terminated, and say that this also was by his advice? If I could submit to practise so weak and faithless a policy, what credit would he give to my professions of friendship towards himself? Besides, you may assure him that the consequences would be fatal to myself in the punishment which the justice of my country would inflict on me for the violation of its faith.

In a word, I shall ever consider Moodajee as the friend of the English nation, to whom I first made him known, and in whose favour have exacted its gratitude for the instances which I have experienced of his attach-



ment to its interests. But as I never depart from the path which I have once chosen, and as I have never yet committed or countenanced a breach of engagement, I must adhere to those which I have concluded with the Peishwa and Mahdajee Sindia, and as he was the original author of both, I expect his support of both. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.

To the same.

Fort William, 9th March, 1783.

My dear Chapman,—I am sorry to perceive the great alteration which has taken place in the disposition of the Naugpoor government to ours, and that you have experienced the effects of it so sensibly in its present treatment of you. Be patient: pay no unbecoming court or submission to any; nor seem to perceive any cause for resentment, unless the provocation be such as you cannot pass without notice. If they talk of your leaving them, acquiesce; and rather demand your dismissal than stay with indignity: but do not, I repeat, too precipitately construe it. I cannot account for the present appearances, either in this change of temper in Moodajee nor in the uncommon spirit of procrastination which has prevailed in obstructing the ratification of the treaty, although the Mahrattas are more noted for this quality than any other nation on earth. Endeavour to discover the grounds of it at your court.

One specimen more I feel myself called upon to give, of the style, rather than of the matter, of Mr. Hastings's Indian correspondence. The following is addressed to a gentleman who, in consequence of certain changes introduced into the manner of providing the Company's investments, had com-



plained to the Governor-general of the heavy losses to which he was exposed.

TO SIMEON DROZE, Esq.

Wednesday.

Sir,—I am sorry that I have kept you so long in suspense; but I have had more to say in answer to your letter than could be comprised in a written reply, solicited as I am by the incessant and present calls of other affairs. I am, I know not how, the only responsible man to individuals, as I am, of course, principally responsible to the Company for the success of this undertaking. Every person whose interest is affected by it looks with resentment to me as the author, and I fear none make distinctions of times or of circumstances, but all claim as a right the same emoluments to be drawn out of the new investment, as they privately and unconfessedly drew from the regular investment, without regard to the public distress, to the Company's wants, or to the personal hazard to which the members of this Government, and myself especially, are exposed, by so daring an innovation. When the produce of the investment yielded the proprietors of India stock their dividends, the intermediate profits which it afforded were subjects of envy to many, of mere speculation to others, but of real concern to none. The produce of the present investment must go wholly to the payment of the bills which were granted for the money which was raised to provide it. (wholly, I say, for little of the little surplus will go to the proprietors.) Their dividends will be stopped, and the whole body will be in arms upon so trying an occasion. They will be told, and, true or not, it is universally believed, that every article of the investment is provided for the Company at 30 or 40, and even 50 per cent. beyond its real cost; this difference



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will be stated (not true) as a clear profit to the Board of Trade, and a comparison will be drawn between their situation and that of their principals. The advantages of the plan will be overlooked; it will be imputed to the worst motives, and myself and my colleagues shall be charged with the whole guilt, because we were the authors of it. Punishments for collective acts generally stop at the most conspicuous actors, and I shall probably be sacrificed for the sake of example, and my name and fortune blasted and ruined.

After this statement, I leave the application to your candour. If you reply, that all your hopes after twenty years' service must end in disappointment, and the prospects of irretrievable indigence, you may hurt me by the reproach, but I cannot reply to it. I cannot affirm, though on the strongest conviction, that you have yet a fair prospect of a reasonable subsistence; that much more moderate rates will leave you still a profit of which our employers in England would grudge you the attainment. You may have years of service yet to come, which will yield you a compensation for a present and temporary forbearance; and a forbearance of what? of advantages which were unknown to the service till lately, though now become the rights of office. I have passed some years on the spot of which you have now the first charge, and in my younger days held for some time the charge of the chiefship, though not the name; and I can safely swear, that I neither gained, nor looked to gain, a rupee from the investment itself. My profits arose from a different source. I do not mean to express a wish that the service should return exactly to the same situation, and I am aware that the change of circumstances has made it difficult to draw a comparison between the means of profit which were offered at that time and those of the



present; but I affirm that a wide difference ought to be made between a time of distress and a season of prosperity; between an unpopular and desperate expedient, which nothing but success can prevent from falling, with the most dreadful vengeance, on the heads of its projector, (I will no longer use the plural number,) and the ordinary process and return of a trade which, in the worst management of it, gratified all the expectations of its proprietors. Let me add something in my own behalf. I think I have not shown myself an enemy to the Company's servants. My enemies charge the reverse to me as a crime; I hope you have never found me adverse to your interests or wishes. Place a slight and temporary difference of private interest in one scale, and my ruin and disgrace in the other, and let your own justice determine whether you shall add or diminish the weight of the first.

I now answer particular points of your letter. I doubt whether I can honourably tell you the specific rates of the proposals which were tendered to me, since they were entrusted to me for the use of the proposers, and it would be an abuse of confidence to make the conditions the ground of your own defeat, nor, I apprehend, will it be necessary. I have seen others yet much below these, and I know the general estimate of them. You have better opportunities of attaining the same knowledge.

You have the Board's general opinion of the preference which ought to be given to the Company's servants; and especially members of the Board of Trade.

I have but one word more. If you propose such terms as will warrant their acceptance, and such I meant when I gave you similar assurances in our last conversation, I am myself disposed, and have no doubt of the like disposition in my colleagues, to give my



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assent unhesitatingly, and without looking too nearly to comparisons for their instant acceptance.

I have said but a very small part of what I feel on this subject. I wish that you may see what I have said through its proper medium. If you do not, a volume of reasonings will pass discoloured to your judgment of it.—I am, &c.



CHAPTER II.

Intelligence of the proceedings at Home reaches Calcutta—Correspondence with Lord Shelburne and Major Scott.

IN the midst of cares and anxieties such as these, when every thought of his heart was devoted to the public service, Mr. Hastings received from home intelligence of the proceedings which had been taken, as well in the House of Commons as in the Court of Directors, against himself. The news was not very gratifying, neither had it the effect of encouraging him to further exertions in so thankless a cause: yet there was a principle within which enabled him to bear up against it; and he determined to persevere in his own course, because he knew that it was the best. It was impossible, however, that he should refrain from giving vent to his indignation in the letters which noticed these attacks, and set his own conduct in its proper light. Nevertheless the most vehement of them all proves, that motives infinitely superior to those of personal feeling swayed him; and that if ambition were in any degree the cause of his adherence to office, it was ambition of the purest and noblest kind. He desired to win a lofty reputation for himself, by bestowing important benefits on



his country. Lord Shelburne's accession to power had just been communicated to him when the following was written.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of SHELBURNE.

Fort William, 12th December, 1782.

My Lord,—I have had the honour to receive a letter from your Lordship by the hands of Mr. Dunkin, to whom I have given such assurances of my desire to promote his interests as my great respect for your Lordship's recommendation required; and I shall be happy if I can afford him a more substantial proof of it.

I return your Lordship many thanks for the professions of esteem which you have done me the honour to make to me. I read them with a pleasure not, I own, unmingled, and should at this time feel less embarrassment in my acknowledgment of them were your Lordship's situation now the same as it was when they were written. You are in a condition too elevated, and my relation to it is too dependant, to allow me to distinguish between the sensations excited by my own interest and the pride of being so honourably noticed by a person of your Lordship's eminent talents and virtues. Yet I think that my veneration for your Lordship's character has not always been accompanied by the same grounds for imputing it to an unbecoming bias, if a wish to obtain the support of your authority in my public station can be ranked under such a construction. I think not; for I can truly declare that I do not wish to hold my place longer than the duration of the present scene of multiplied warfare; and so far I am most perfectly disinterested.

Permit me, my Lord, to add, that I shall be most happy if I may profit by the favourable sentiments which you have entertained of me, so far as to be



honoured with your friendship, when all my views of ambition and fortune are closed; and in the mean time I will promise you that you shall see nothing in my conduct that shall discredit your present opinion of it.

I shall now address your Lordship in your ministerial character.

It is now more than two months since the news arrived of the severe censures passed upon my conduct by the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, and this was speedily followed by the intelligence of the subsequent resolution of the House of Commons for my dismissal from office. It is unfortunate for the public welfare that this act, if it is to prove effectual, did not reach us in its complete state, and that my removal and the effective succession could not take place in the same instant with the denunciation of the former. This Government subsists more by the influence of public opinion than by its real power or resources; and it never required the support of that credit (I had almost said delusion) so much as at this time, in which all its exertions are required for the desperate support of the Carnatic. A more important negociation, likewise, has been for some months depending for a new connexion with the Mahratta state, and for its alliance against the invader of the Carnatic. I had entertained the most sanguine expectations of the event, which has only been retarded by the mutual jealousy of the different powers who are interested in it, each aspiring to be the principal, and opposing it as the act of a rival. I now greatly fear the reverse. Think, my Lord, of the English newspapers and Leyden gazettes circulating through every state in Europe, and every European colony in Asia, the suspension of the powers of the first British Government in India, at a period such as the present, in the express words of the resolution of the House of Commons; and a French emissary at Poona



in possession of such an instrument to work on the procrastinating spirit of the Mahrattas!

I have not seen the reports of the Secret Committee, but I have read the resolutions which closed them, and boldly venture to assure your Lordship that either the former consist of partial selections, or they are most positive and direct evidences of the opposite of every resolution which was professed to be formed upon them, and which contains my condemnation. As your Lordship must be in possession of the reports, and has been minutely informed of the train of events and measures which have passed since the commencement of my Government, I will avail myself of the credit which I believe I possess with your Lordship for veracity, and of the sure means which you have of detecting me if I part from it, by affirming, without reference to a long train of argument to prove it, that I have never in a single instance broken the faith of a treaty, or deserted or injured the interests of the Company; that I have never sacrificed the honour of my nation; that I had no more concern in the origin and commencement of the Mahratta war than the Lord Advocate of Scotland; that it began without my knowledge; that it was resumed not only without my knowledge, but on principles as adverse to me as the Mahrattas; that I supported the government of Bombay in the prosecution of their first plan with money, with a powerful military aid, and (I confess) with encouragement; and I believe it is generally understood that if the detachment sent from Bengal had not seasonably arrived for their salvation, that presidency was lost; its credit, and with it our military reputation, were utterly ruined. We retrieved both; we in our turn reduced the Mahratta state to a condition which, but for the calamities which ensued in the Carnatic would have enabled us to command a peace on our



own terms, and that was the only issue of the war that I looked for. I affirm also, my Lord, that the invasion of the Carnatic was not caused by the Mahratta war, but by the known weakness of the Carnatic, the dissipation of its forces, its poverty, caused by private embezzlement, and by a great confederacy formed against all the British governments in India, a confederacy which was the avowed act of the Nabob Nizam Ally Cawn, and declared by him to have been prompted by a consideration for his own security against the menaced hostilities of the presidency of Fort St. George; that his reliance on the faith and justice of this Government had induced him to withhold his support of the confederacy; that my influence with the government of Berar withdrew that member of it; and that a diversion, projected by me, opposed by Mr. Francis, and enforced by violence, both deprived it of its most active member (Hyder excepted), and produced a general peace with the Mahrattas. In a word, my Lord, the Mahratta war was the war of the presidency of Bombay and of the Court of Directors. The prosecution of it was mine, and the Mahratta peace is exclusively mine. Forgive me the boast when I add that I have been the instrument of rescuing one presidency from infamy, and both from annihilation; and desperate as the affairs of the Carnatic are, if my hands are not tied or enfeebled, I will yet be a contributor to its ultimate preservation.

I fear to load your Lordship with papers, but I may presume to refer you to such as are material in the despatches which will come officially into your possession, and therefore I beg leave to recommend to your Lordship's attention as a part of the means by which the great aids have been furnished which we have been enabled to afford to Bombay and Fort St. George, an account and explanation of the extraordi-



nary resources of this Government which were created in the course of the last two years, consisting in an increase of revenue, a diminution of charges of collection, a reduction in the cost of the investment, and above all, a new fund, which my colleagues, against their declared judgments, permitted me to form on my own separate responsibility, which, without territory, the eclat of conquest, or the addition of military establishments, already yields more than fifty lacs of rupees. I have an infinite pleasure in testifying to your Lordship that I owe the success of this plan to the incomparable industry and ability of the person whom I chose as an essential part of it for its execution, the son of my late and most valued friend, Mr. Vansittart.

Your Lordship will hear that we have waited these six months for the ratification of the Mahratta treaty, and probably that the Mahrattas were forming designs to invade us, for such reports are always fabricated on the eve of every despatch. I will assure your Lordship that no such designs exist in any known foundation, and that peace is as durably established with the Mahrattas as if it had received every possible sanction that the most powerful guarantees, or all the obligations of religion, could give it. The principal, Mahdajee Sindia, is bound by interest to support it, and the state exists by his power. The chief of Berar complains that he is not a party, and has written to me that he will obtain the instant accomplishment of the treaty, if I will constitute him the guarantee in the place of Mahdajee Sindia. The Nabob Nizam Ally Cawn, in all the pride of a descendant of the great Nizam Al Moolk, indignantly resents the neglect shown to the sovereign of Deccan, who alone has authority to regulate all its interests, still professing, but with more reserve, the same conciliating disposition; and



Nanna Furneess, though the titular ruler of the Mahrattas, yet possessing no support in himself, hesitates through fear of the other parties. In the mean time, the presidency of Bombay is in the actual collection of a revenue yielding, by their account, fifty lacs of rupees, which they must restore when the treaty is ratified; and to balance this advantage, we are deprived, by the indecision of the minister, of the assistance of the Mahrattas against Hyder, who has usurped a territory of near eighty lacs from them, and they are as impatient to reclaim it as we are to gain their co-operation.

I forbear to speak of the affairs of the Carnatic; Sir Eyre Coote is with us, but his constitution is so broken that I fear for his existence. Yet infirm as he is, he is our only resource, and his presence would yet retrieve the miserable state of the Carnatic, even though he should be deprived of the powers of motion. He is willing and sometimes impetuous in his resolution to return thither. He has infinite merit for his exertions, and he cannot have a better testimony than mine, for he has never been over-partial to me.

I know not in what direction the tide of popular prejudices may have run when the news arrived in England of my transactions during the last year at Benares; but in the fear of misrepresentation and of misconstruction, I made out an early report of it for the immediate information of this Council, and joined to the report all the vouchers and attestations which could confirm the truth of it. For the same reason I have caused a number of printed copies to be made of it, and one of these I have directed my agent, Major Scott, to present to your Lordship. I entreat that you will honour it with your acceptance, and that you will bestow an early half hour of your leisure to read it. Allow, my Lord, this kind indulgence to the soli-



citude which I feel to preserve your good opinion ; for even your Lordship's candour may not be proof against suggestions fortified by the general opinions which are entertained against great revolutions. I trust to my narrative for my clear acquittal of any criminal imputation ; and I solemnly assure your Lordship that I neither added a rupee to my fortune by the excursion, nor ever intended it. I could in truth add that I am a sufferer by it.

It may perhaps prove a gratification of curiosity to your Lordship to receive a book which is in every process of it the manufacture of this country.

While I am writing this, I have received a letter from Major Scott, dated the 30th June, in which he mentions it to be the expressed injunction of your Lordship's friends, communicated to mine, that I should continue to exert myself for the public service, without suffering myself to be influenced by any discouraging reports, of whatever authority, from England. While I offer my grateful acknowledgments for this fresh instance of your Lordship's favourable disposition, I beg leave to assure you that I shall most literally fulfil your commands, which have added to my confidence, but not to my determination, to persevere consistently in one line of conduct, from which I have never suffered myself to deviate under the worst denunciations of public disgrace and dismissal, nor ever shall, while I am not disabled by them from the power of discharging my duty with effect to the Company and my country. I am certain that I shall be honoured with your Lordship's most strenuous and effectual support, if you can give it without a sacrifice of more important interests ; but I can well conceive situations of things which may compel even your judgment, however repugnant to your inclinations, to make the little interest which the public may have in



my continuance in office yield to higher acquisitions. In such a case I shall submit to my lot with cheerfulness, and still retain the due sense of your Lordship's goodness. This only I beg of your Lordship, that you will not suffer my character to be blackened by criminal accusations, nor joined with the names of others with whom it never had a connexion, nor my peace of mind wounded, and my influence blasted with official reproaches and invectives, by those who may seek my removal. These indignities I have borne during a long period of time, because the state over which I preside could bear it. It is no longer in a condition to sustain the depreciation of its executive member, and in such a case I should consider myself as a noxious incumbent on it. I will further declare that I cannot act effectually with a mere negative sufferance; I stand in need of the confidence and support of those under whose authority I act, most publicly bestowed. If on these conditions I cannot remain, I declare it to be my wish to be honourably relieved; and if such be your Lordship's commands, I thus formally and previously assure your Lordship that they now have, and shall receive, my most willing submission, acquiescence, and concurrence.

I most heartily congratulate your Lordship on the new and elevated dignity which I hear his Majesty has been pleased to confer upon you, and unite my wishes to those of thousands who feel for the prosperity of the British nation, that it may long enjoy the benefit of your Lordship's administration. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and faithful servant.

P.S.—I cannot close this letter without expressing to your Lordship the great satisfaction which I feel in my colleagues, men of unexampled benevolence and equality of temper, of uncommon but different talents,



and all warmed with a cordial affection to each other, and a confidence in mine to them, and in my experience and integrity. Of these your Lordship will be pleased to know that I place a particular confidence in Mr. Macpherson, from whose activity of mind and pleasantness of manners, no less than in an exact concurrence of sentiment formed perhaps on a mutual communication of some years, I have derived the most useful assistance when I was in a state of health which very much required it, and which might have proved fatal had it reduced me to leave the administration in the hands of men adverse to each other, or to my own general line of conduct. To the effects of the same cause and continual interruption, I beg your Lordship to attribute the length of this letter, which with more leisure I should have endeavoured to comprise within a more reasonable compass, and to have given it the same materials of information.

The same ship which carried the above conveyed to Major Scott a long letter, in which most of the topics touched upon in Mr. Hastings's communications to Lord Shelburne are noticed at length. In this he speaks bitterly of the probable effects of the circulation through India of the resolutions hostile to himself, and makes no secret of his contempt for the qualifications of the individuals by whom it was proposed to supersede him. He then goes on to notice the existing state of the Mahratta negotiations, and says, "I am impatient for the ratification of the Mahratta treaty, only because others are so. War may be made by one party only, and best when the other is averse to it.



Peace must be the work of both. The clamours for peace have not influenced my conduct, which has been formed on my own principles. I have never discovered an impatience, but sometimes affected an indifference about it. Let new negotiators come, and avow peace to be their determination and sole object, and they will revive every claim that the composed insolence of Marhatta presumption can devise; namely, Chout, Ragoba, Salsette, collection of Guzerat, indemnification for expenses of war, acknowledgment of being aggressors, restoration of Cheyt Sing, Tanjore, tribute to Nizam, surrender of Northern Circars."

In like manner he refers to the arrangements which had been made for ensuring a continuance of the Company's investments; the addition secured to the permanent revenue by the salt monopoly; the large reductions of expenditure which he or his colleagues had been effecting; "but which will now," he adds, "be suspended till I am more certain of my fate; for I will not create enemies in order to ease the burthens of my successors." Then passing on to the affairs of Oude, he says, "I have sent Mr. Bristow to Lucknow. This is due to the authority of the Directors when not inconsistent with my own; if he does his duty, the superior advantages he possesses will enable him to restore the officers of the Nabob. He cannot make them



worse than they were made by Mr. Middleton and Mr. Johnson." So also in reference to the Carnatic, he explains, that all is in confusion there. "Lord Macartney has quarrelled with Sir Edward Hughes, driven away the old General, writes insolent letters without information, and has treated the Nabob with unparalleled indignities." But it is unnecessary to go on, inasmuch as the reader will find in the following ample information respecting the political aspect of affairs at the moment. It also is addressed to Major Scott.

Fort William, 1st February, 1783.

My dear Scott,—Mr. Berrie is arrived with your remaining despatches. Nothing could be more satisfactory. You have far exceeded my most confident hopes, and bound me yours for ever. I beg that you will make my grateful acknowledgments to Mr. G. Johnstone. You cannot express them in terms stronger than the sense which I entertain of what I owe to his support. This is the second time that he has been the essential and effectual champion of my reputation. I shall write to him by the Fox now under despatch. I send you a copy of our general letter of intelligence. The great events which it reports are, 1st, the death of Hyder; 2d, that of his only political emissary Nersing; 3d, the defeat of Tippoo; three fortunate coincidences; 4th, the ratification of our treaty with the Mahrattas; 5th, Sir Eyre Coote's intention to return to the coast on the instant of the Medea's arrival; 6th, the appearance of the French squadron and its departure, I think, to the islands; it has done little mischief and the last; 7th, arrival of our squadron at Bombay, to be expected back early in March;



8th, the Bengal detachment now at Guzerat, ordered to return to our own dependencies; 9th, the departure of General Matthews to Angengo. His force united will be 1,500 Europeans and Company's battalions of sepoys; 10th, Tippoo's return to his main army; and 11th, its junction with the French from Cuddalore. The rest must be more detailed. The Nabob Wallah Jaw has preferred a long list of charges against Lord Macartney. One that he has granted sunnuds to the collectors in his own name, and without the Nabob's confirmation, in violation of the condition on which the assignment was granted, and the only mark of sovereignty reserved to the Nabob. This is avowed, and on the weakest grounds. We have pronounced it a breach of our treaty, have ordered the Nabob to be replaced in charge of the revenue, and of his entire authority, and accepted his engagements to deliver one-third more of money (with Soucar security) of cattle and of grain, than the amount received under Lord Macartney's administration of the province. If Lord Macartney refuses, I will move for his suspension, and expect the Board's concurrence. Nizam Ally Cawn detests the Nabob, yet exclaims against our treatment of him, and Hyder has used it as an argument to deter others from a connexion with us.

By Bassalut Jung's death, Guntoor reverted to the Company. Lord Macartney proposed to reclaim it; sent forces to the frontier, and entered into a negotiation with the son of Fazil Beg, in actual rebellion against his master Nizam Ally Cawn. We have peremptorily forbidden the select committee to proceed. We have availed ourselves of the Company's orders of the 11th April, 1781, to invest Sir Eyre Coote with an absolute command of the forces, and the war in the Carnatic. His unexampled zeal and past exertions warrant this: their inactivity requires it. On his de-



parture they disbanded the army, dismissed or separated all its followers, and when Hyder died, they could not assemble it. What an advantage lost! If Sir Eyre arrives safe, our success is morally certain. We shall give him ten lacs. Tippoo's funds are exhausted, the crops have failed in Mysore. The Carnatic is destitute both of grain and plunder. His troops discontented, his army reduced, his authority unsettled, and intrigues suspected. The French have no resource, if he abandons them, and if they follow him, are lost to their national service for ever. The Mahrattas will certainly attempt to recover the possessions wrested from them by Hyder, and have probably begun their operations. Bussy was sick at Mauritius in September, and all his people sick. Nizam Ally Cawn and Moodajee profess friendship to us. Nizam Ally is engaged in quelling the rebellion of Elesham Jung, the son of Fazil Beg, and Moodajee sick. Mahdajee Sindia is firm and consistent. *He will prove the best ally we ever had.* Remember this. Our revenue increases: the demands on it are still large; but we will answer them. Early last year I projected the revision and correction of our establishment. Mr. Macpherson's illness prevented it. We began, and I fell sick. Since my recovery, the arrears of business and Mr. Wheeler's indisposition hindered its renewal. I shall propose to resume it as soon as the Fox is gone, and hope with hard working to accomplish it in two months. A great reduction may be made, and shall. If I am confirmed and trusted, I know myself able to restore to this Government its former abundance, and pay all its debts in two years of peace; but if I am to be still threatened with dismissal, my acts reprobated, the whole responsibility thrown on me with only an equal voice in the Council, I cannot discharge my trust with credit or effect, and



will relinquish it; for the season of contention is past. Write frequently, and by the post; direct your letters to Mr. Latouche, at Bussora. Send no gentlemen emissaries. They arrive late, and become a perpetual charge upon me. Present my most grateful respects to Lord Mansfield. I am in better health than for many years past, and Mrs. Hastings's is much mended. She joins in compliments and good wishes. Adieu. Yours ever most affectionately.

Let Mr. Sullivan know that his son and grandson are well. May God bless him.

There was no proceeding on the part of his superiors which more effectually roused the indignation of Mr. Hastings, than their eagerness to condemn his line of policy in reference to Benares, of which their own despatches proved that they were not competent to judge. I subjoin a letter to Mr. Scott on this head, because it is both clear in its reasoning, and singularly characteristic of the writer.

Fort William, 5th February, 1783.

My dear Scott,—Again accept my thanks for your incessant labours in my cause, and, more than all, for the affection which prompted them. I cannot express the sense which I have of them, but be assured that they have made an impression on my mind which never can be effaced while I have life.

You have justly observed that it is for my reputation, and not for my office, that I am solicitous, or for the latter only as the first is involved in it. To this let me add another consideration, which has ever operated, and shall to the last operate, as a fixed principle on my



conduct; viz., that if I am at length driven to the mortifying necessity of throwing up the service, it shall not proceed from personal disgust or resentment, but solely from the united conviction that I cannot retain it without public ruin and private ignominy.

A late occasion had nearly warmed me into a resolution of this kind. As I make it a rule to allow my first impulses to cool, I have recovered my correct judgment upon it, and will wait the issue without any predetermination. The circumstance to which I allude is this:—

Three days ago I received a letter from Mr. Hornby, with a copy of the resolutions of the Court of Directors in July last, condemning my conduct in the affairs of Benares as a breach of treaty, &c., and justifying Cheit Sing. Are these men aware that, in their eagerness to vilify me, they sow the seeds of distrust and rebellion among their own subjects, and that a declaration so authentic in the favour of a rebel, now residing under the protection of the chief of the Mahratta State at the crisis of our negotiations with him, might tempt the former to resume his pretensions, and the latter to espouse them; that the present Rajah might be terrified into measures as desperate from despondency as those which ambition and ingratitude dictated to his predecessor, and that a slight spark would be sufficient to blow up our possessions and those of the Vizier, if it fell on so combustible a ground? What is to follow these resolutions? An order to restore Cheit Sing? The conclusion is inevitable; for if we were bound by treaty with him, if he faithfully performed all his conditions of it, and we have broken our engagements with him, and the Court of Directors solemnly pronounce this as their judgment, they must render him justice, or they are the violators of public faith by their own avowal.



It will not be expected that I should obey such an order, and how can I oppose it without exposing my person, fortune, and reputation to the most fatal extremities? And how can I elude it but by resigning the trust which imposes on me so infamous a duty?

I had written a letter upon this occasion to the Court of Directors, and another to Lord Shelburne; but on mature reflection I have suppressed both. The former you shall see. I trust to Lord Shelburne's assurances, and to the injunctions of Lord Ashburton and Sir Robert Palk. In the meantime I hope that my narrative, which I find must have arrived in England within a few days of the passing of these resolutions, will have completely defeated them; for if there ever was a demonstration produced by argument, I have demonstrated the falsehood of Cheit Sing's pretences to independency, and those of his advocates who assert that we were bound by any treaty, or any engagement differing from that of a common zemindarry sunnud. While the Court of Directors assume the style and form of the late Parliamentary resolutions, they may affirm what they please with the preface that "*It appears to this Court,*" for who can contradict them whilst they have the dishonest discretion to conceal the grounds of the assertion? I fight with an invisible enemy when I attempt to repel such an assault, for if I suppose the quarter from which it came, I may be assailed from another, and after all my defence comes too late to evade the blow. I have looked over the original minutes of the Council which relate to the first settlement with Cheit Sing, and these (if they can be copied in time,) shall be sent to you. My own proposition, which was the ground of the treaty, though most liberal to Cheit Sing, amounted to no more than this; that a temporary settlement should be formed with Cheit Sing, subject to the correction of the Court



of Directors, with a revenue fixed, that he might not be made the tool of private rapacity, or, in other words, as Mr. Barwell will well remember, of Philip Francis's; and therefore, that no demand should be made on him, nor any authority permitted to interfere in the management of his zemindarry, while he paid his rents punctually, and was obedient to our Government. These concessions were never proposed to be made engagements, but optional indulgences, or rather obligations, which we might choose to impose on ourselves, not which he should claim. Attend to the words, *settlement, management, revenue, and zemindarry*, and to the reference made to the pleasure of the Court of Directors for a final arrangement, and you will find that my plan, had it been adopted, would have bound this Government to no other conditions than those which are granted to any other zemindar. But my plan was not adopted; so there is an end of it. The second authority which I meet with in our proceedings is the letter of instructions given to Francis Fowke, dated 24th August. In this his tenure is styled a *zemindarry*; the agreement, a *settlement*; the Company's relation to him, a *sovereignty*; his, a *vassalage*; his charge, *management, collection, and regulation of the revenues*. The word *tribute* is twice used to express *revenue*, and an assurance is added that *we do not mean to increase his tribute; and so long as he adheres to the terms of his engagement, will never demand any augmentation of the annual tribute which may be fixed*.

But these instructions (which by the bye are very ambiguous in the two clauses which I have last quoted, viz., *we do not mean*, and *we will not*) are the surest rules of Fowke's commission; they are not an engagement, but the directions by which an engagement, or more properly a *settlement*, was to be formed. These, therefore, whatever the author of them meant, impose no



obligation; but they evidently show that neither Mr. Francis nor his colleagues considered Cheit Sing in any other light then but that of a zemindar, a dependant, and a vassal. This authority, therefore, is out of the question.

The third authority is by no means equivocal. It is a letter written on the same day by the Board in my name to Cheit Sing. In this he is informed that Mr. Fowke is ordered to take possession of the zemindarry which he held; and to grant the zemindarry to him on the footing of his former tenure, with a reservation twice expressed of the Company's sovereignty; and a denunciation of forfeiture if he ever proved unfaithful to the Company.

The sum of the revenue is fixed, and is called a *tribute*, but no assurance is given that it should not be exceeded, nor was such assurance intended.

But even this authority, weak as it is, conveyed no rights. It only announced to him the outlines of the settlement which was to be made with him, and was in effect Francis Fowke's credentials. In effect, none of these are authorities. The only authorities are the interchanged deeds of the settlement, that is to say, the *sunnud* and *cabuleeat*. I never conceived myself bound by any other, nor had a thought of any other, and these are clearly and absolutely against every pretension of his independency, and as clear a justification of my conduct towards him. If the loose and desultory passages of our consultations are to be accepted as national obligations affecting our public faith, no man in office can be secure from error, for no man can know by what obligations he is bound. I have now before me a great volume, as much as I can lift, which comprises the business of the settlement made with the Rajah of Benares, and it contains no more than three months' consultations. All the books of our secret



department only from October, 1774, to the present time, I suppose, amount to fifty great folios. But even on this ground I dare rest my vindication. If the subject is not already obsolete, you will gather from this loose discussion sufficient argument to refute all that can be alleged against me.

I shall bear with patience and forbearance every article of abuse that is yet to come; but the right of judging when I ought to quit the service, because I can no longer retain it with effect or with credit, I shall certainly exercise; and at all events I shall stay till I know the result of the present deliberation in Parliament concerning India. I wish to see the war closed in the Carnatic, by the dispersion of Tippoo's followers, and the defeat and capture of the French; and this, I trust, will be effected before the month of October, if Coote gets safe to the coast and lives. When this work is accomplished, I care not what they do with me in England.

I can write few other letters, and those must be very short; but you must supply them with my friends, and remember that the moment you have received and read any of my letters, and can afford an hour's leisure, you must carry them to Mr. Sullivan, and read them to him. Adieu. Yours most affectionately.

The following refers to the state of the Carnatic, whither Sir Eyre Coote, though still an invalid, was preparing to return. The agreement alluded to was that into which the Supreme Government had entered with the Nabob, during the anarchy of Sir Thomas Rumbold and Mr. Whitehill's administrations. It had always been a thorn in Lord Macartney's side, and he laboured incessantly to



dissolve it. But to this Mr. Hastings would not consent.

To the same.

Fort William, 6th February, 1783.

My dear Scott,—The accompanying extracts from our proceedings fully explain both their objects and motives. You will perceive that they had been the subjects of our private discussions, by the question put to Mr. Holland, before they were formally debated. The presence of the General enabled me to bring them to a termination. The behaviour of Lord Macartney has been unpardonable to the Nabob, and has certainly proved of great injury to our credit. As it manifestly proceeded from personal indisposition, and that originated with our agreement with the Nabob, of which it is a direct infringement, I at least could not refuse to afford the Nabob such redress as it might be in the power of our Government to afford him; and if his Lordship refuses to submit to our decision, I am determined to propose, though I should stand alone, to proceed to the last extremity with him. Mr. Wheeler stands on the same ground with me, having been joined with me in forming the agreement, and Sir Eyre Coote will support and enforce our resolutions. It is not pleasing to pass judgment on the conduct of the gentlemen of Fort St. George, or to interfere in the detail of their affairs; but our own faith is concerned; our revenues are exhausted to defend the Carnatic, our grain feeds it, our forces have constituted the principal strength of their army, and we gave them the man who has saved it from destruction. They were unable to face the enemy till Sir Eyre Coote commanded their army, and it was reduced to a state of inaction and inability the instant that he quitted it. If he had remained there, the death of Hyder would



have been instantly followed by the dispersion of his followers. This is morally certain, as certain as that no movement has been made since, and that none will till he resumes the command. His zeal and spirit are without example. His constitution is irrecoverably gone; yet he has enough left to bear him through one campaign, which, I trust, will be a short one, and may God grant him life to enjoy at home the reputation, rewards, and honours that are due to his virtues. I am resolved to give him all the support of this Government, though I am certain that he will quarrel with me the moment we are separated. I will forgive his private failings while his public merit entitles him to my respect.

Read these proceedings with attention. Believe me that I never will interfere in the concerns of the other presidencies, but where the faith and interests of our own are at stake; and assert this for me. An opinion prevails that we may lawfully suspend the members of the other presidencies for making treaties without our sanction, but that our control does not extend to the breach of treaties, which the Act of Parliament allows with impunity. I maintain that the power in the second instance is implied in the first, or the first is nugatory. I will put it to the test if I am forced to it; and whatever consequences may personally befall me, I am certain that it will be attended with one public benefit, in bringing the absurdity of the law before the notice of Parliament, and exacting from it a more effectual or better defined provision. I am, my dear Scott, most warmly and most affectionately yours.

Many more letters, all in the same strain, though addressed to different persons, and therefore differing in the minutiae of style and expression, are



now before me, but I do not think it necessary to insert them. It will be more to the purpose if I state, that of the effects which Mr. Hastings anticipated from the temper displayed in the Court's despatches, one, and that not the least inconvenient, began immediately to be felt. The support which his colleagues had heretofore freely rendered became lukewarm and doubtful. They saw difficulties before them where none had previously appeared, and distrusted even their own judgment in more than one important transaction which was passed. Perhaps there was nothing unnatural in this, yet Mr. Hastings felt it acutely, and expressed himself, as will be seen, like a wounded man as often as he found occasion to notice it. On the other hand, the recommendations conveyed to him by many of his most influential friends in London, neither to answer nor obey the ill-judged instructions from home, staggered him. He knew that obedience would in many instances prove fatal, but he knew at the same time that its opposite must exasperate the anger if it did not add to the number of his enemies. Take the following as a specimen of the state of his mind at this juncture.

To the same.

Fort William, 22d March, 1783.

My dear Scott,—I am much distressed. You press me to pay no regard to the orders of the Court of Directors, nor suffer them to influence my resolutions.



You tell me that this is the advice of Lord Mansfield, and for his opinions I feel an almost religious veneration. Mr. Bensley goes further in what you quote of his declaration to the Court of Directors, and says that I ought not to obey them. I judge from this expression that the state of my influence in this Government was very much misconceived in England. I was very feebly supported, if supported, before the late letters from the Court of Directors arrived. Since that period my colleagues have wholly withdrawn their support, and seem anxious to show that they have withdrawn it. This is all that I will allow myself to say of them. But, as a specimen of their present disposition towards me, I will send you the minutes delivered on a proposal made by me for the appointment of Mr. Richard Sullivan to be our agent at Hyderabad. You will judge whether the objections are candid or ostensible, and will form your own conclusions on the reference made to orders of the Court of Directors not in being, but in possibility. I must yet except Mr. Wheeler from the preceding reflections. He has acted honourably towards me, and I believe wishes to support me both from principle and affection.

The order for the recall of Markham and the re-appointment of Francis Fowke has passed. I do not know what will be the effect of the order if the Court of Directors shall pass it for the restoration of Cheit Sing; but I am certain that it will be supported by Macpherson and Stables.

Our treaty with the Nabob Wallah Jaw has drawn on him such a load of misery and infamy as he has never experienced, ill as he has been ever treated. We have annulled his assignment, and the Court of Directors have cancelled the treaty of which it was a part. Lord Macartney will probably, I am convinced he will, retain the assignment against all justice and



faith, against the authority of the Company too ambiguously expressed, and in defiance of our engagements. Our Board will be unanimous in passing the severest censures on him, but I fear will proceed no further. They will probably protest, but leave their own acts unsupported, and the Nabob the victim of them. I will do my duty, and if I can do no more I will protest against them.

I have been the principal instrument of prevailing on Sir Eyre Coote to return to the coast. He avows his dependance on me, and though I have at no time received his support, he shall have mine if all the other members of the Council should withhold; for in his public character he merits it, aye, and every sacrifice that can be made with it. He is gone: we have given ten lacs with him, though we have passed orders on the treasury for near eighty lacs undischarged. This sum is consigned to him, and we have exercised the authority given us by the Court of Directors, to order the Governor of Fort St. George to allow him the uncontrolled command and conduct of the army. The rest will depend materially upon him. If he is not counteracted by Lord Macartney, he will assuredly finish the war in the Carnatic, the troubles of which now require nothing but opposition to end them. If Lord Macartney shall refuse to allow him the command of the army and conduct of the war, if he shall refuse to part with the revenue and sovereignty of the Carnatic, and shall withhold its resources of treasure, grain, and cattle from the army, I know not what may be the consequences.

In the mean time I will do my utmost to maintain the credit and influence of the Superior Government, and to provide resources for all its wants. Great exertions I cannot make, for we want decision; we want vigour and unanimity; and I possess but a single voice,



though I am charged in all obnoxious measures with the sole responsibility. I dread the effects of such a state at such a season; but I must bear my part in it until I can be properly relieved from it, and for that purpose I have written a letter to the Court of Directors declaratory of my resolution to resign. My friends, who do not know the disability to which I am reduced, will be apt to impute this to impatience and precipitation. I cannot describe my condition even to you, but it will be self apparent ere long, and you may trust me, when I declare to you that I feel it more distressing than even the vexations which I suffered in 1775; for then I was free from responsibility, though disarmed of power. I am now without power, with a thousand urgent calls for it, and am alone responsible. Can I, in such a situation, wish to retain an office which may involve me in everlasting infamy? for if any great calamity shall befall us, and I can see many openings through which calamity may come, the world, which never waits to listen to long stories, and which wants the understanding to discern the nice points of discrimination between acts done under a collective authority, and those which spring from divided powers and different opinions, will fix the guilt of it on me alone, and my reputation will be the victim of others' misconduct.

For the rest I refer you to the letter itself; it speaks my real feelings and describes my real situation. Pray Lord Mansfield to read it. I would rather retire to indigence and obscurity, which may be my lot, possessed of his esteem, than remain as I am, and waste years yet to come in reproach, shame, and fruitless expectation. The person for whose sake alone I wish for wealth has expressed the same sentiment, and for myself I can live on a bare competence.

I wish you to print and publish the forty-four and following paragraphs of the letter of the Court of Di-



rectors of the 28th of August, 1782, the fourth, fifth, and sixth paragraphs of the same letter, my minute of the 7th of March, and my letter to the Court of Directors, but not without the approbation of Lord Mansfield and Mr. Sullivan. These form my justification to the proprietors. Those to whom my letter is addressed will probably suppress it, or use it only for a subject of resentment, although I think I have given no cause for this; for surely I have not exceeded the bounds which the necessary defence of my own character prescribed, and I have even weakened that defence in the endeavour to preserve that respect which under every provocation is due from me to them, while I remain subject to their authority. I own that it would be more pleasing to me could the publication be made the act of authority. I think it ought, for if I have received the most flattering support from the Proprietors of the East India Company, I have served them with fidelity, zeal, and gratitude; and, however I may complain, I wish to mark the distinction which I make and feel between them and thirteen of their representatives, to retain their approbation even of my departure from their service.

The papers to which I allude shall be copied and enclosed with this. Adieu, my dear Scott, yours ever affectionately.

The following will, I think, be read with an almost melancholy interest. It describes the condition of a noble spirit torn and agitated with the sense of wrongs endured; yet nowise forgetful of the respect due to itself, even in the utterance of complaint. For on all sides, and by all parties with whom he was officially connected, Mr. Hastings seems at this moment to have been betrayed. The Court of



Directors, that is to say a majority in that body, rendered furious by their lack of power to remove him, adopted every imaginable expedient to harass and annoy. They condemned his general policy without understanding it, and stooped so low as to take from him and from his Council, for he never acted except with the authority of the Council, the right of nominating individual servants to particular offices in the country. The obvious effect of such hostility was, that his colleagues ceased to trust either him or themselves, and wavered and hesitated, not because they saw just ground of hesitation in the measures that were proposed, but because they were taught to believe that they could not more gratify their superiors at home than by opposing the views of their Governor abroad. Moreover Lord Macartney, of whom Hastings's best friends had entertained the highest opinion, and in whom Hastings himself had expected to find a steady and an able coadjutor, took, as has been shown, an early opportunity of acting for himself. It is necessary that this matter should be placed in a proper point of view, and a few words will suffice for that purpose.

When it was first proposed to recommend Lord Macartney as a fit person to succeed Sir Thomas Rumbold in the government of Madras, there were many sensible and influential proprietors, who felt that a step was about to be taken of grave import-



ence. Hitherto the individuals advanced to offices of trust under the Company had all been trained in the Company's service ; the nomination of Lord Macartney, if carried into effect, would entirely innovate upon this practice. And independently of the wound thus about to be inflicted on the immediate interests and ambition of an influential class of persons, there was at least some danger lest the absence of local knowledge, on the part of those to whom the field would thus be thrown open, might prove of serious hurt both to their employers, and to the people whose destinies they should be appointed to control. For though it was admitted on all hands that there had been of late extreme mismanagement, and worse than mismanagement, at Fort St. George, men were not quite prepared to avow, that the evil could be cured only by seeking elsewhere than among the Company's experienced servants, for one to whom the functions of government might be entrusted. Accordingly the proposition, when first brought forward, was received by many with disapprobation ; by almost all with the sort of misgiving, which a little address from one side or the other would have at once converted either into approval or its opposite.

Mr. Hastings's friends were then, as they continued to be throughout, very powerful in the Court of Proprietors. It was, therefore, an object of the first importance with Lord Macartney, and



his patrons, to secure their support, while they again desired nothing so much, as to have at the head of affairs in the Carnatic one who should approve of Mr. Hastings's policy, and be prepared to go heartily along with him. Lord Macartney was thus taught, that he could not better serve his own interests, than by appearing to hold Mr. Hastings and his system of administration in respect, and he omitted no opportunity, so long as the question remained undecided, of professing an ardent admiration of both. Accordingly his nomination, after a feeble resistance, was carried; and he took office, morally pledged to carry out Mr. Hastings's measures, as far as his influence, at the head of a subordinate government, would enable him to do so.

Mr. Hastings's friends lost no time in communicating to the Governor-general, both the fact of Lord Macartney's appointment, and the grounds on which they had themselves sanctioned it. Indeed there is now lying before me a letter from Mr. Pechell, in which the writer not only congratulates Mr. Hastings on an event which could not fail of proving as satisfactory to him as it would without doubt be beneficial to the Company, but entreats his correspondent to communicate with Lord Macartney as with one towards whom not even the appearance of reserve would be necessary. Therefore the new Governor was no sooner established at Madras, than Mr. Hastings proceeded



to lay before him, not formally and officially, but with all the openness of private confidence, his own views and opinions on every subject connected with the interests of the presidency. He explained to him the reasons why such ample powers had been conferred on Sir Eyre Coote ; and showed him that to withdraw them now would be fatal. He stated his own opinions as to the course which it would be judicious to follow in dealing with the Nizam, with the Nabob, and with the Rajah of Tanjore. He explained the nature of the agreement which the Supreme Government, superseding that of his Lordship's predecessor, had entered into for the management of the Nabob's revenues during the continuance of the war. He advised Lord Macartney to consider well, whether it would not be judicious to absorb Tanjore in the general government of the Carnatic. He urged him to purchase the alliance of the Nizam, and to turn his arms against Hyder, even by restoring to him the Northern Circars, should such a sacrifice be necessary ; and last of all he gave the surest proof of a generous spirit of confidence, by telling his Lordship that, as some of these measures would in all probability prove distasteful both at home and on the spot, he was free to speak of them as emanating from the Governor-general, to whose experience he had been taught to bow, and by whose advice he acted. I confess that I do not know how



any man in Mr. Hastings's situation could have gone further to prove his perfect reliance on the good feelings of a colleague, and his assurance that the good feeling was mutual. For he issued no orders, he assumed none of the bearing of a superior. He merely offered suggestions to be acted upon, or not, according to the dictation of Lord Macartney's judgment, while at the same time he professed his willingness to relieve an inexperienced functionary from odium, by taking upon himself the responsibility of certain acts, should they be carried into effect.

Lord Macartney left his friends in London, fully impressed with the belief, that he intended to make Mr. Hastings his great master in the science of Indian politics. His first proceedings, so soon as he had established himself in his government, contradicted that belief. There was not one of all Mr. Hastings's suggestions of which he approved. There was not one step taken by the Supreme Government, previous to his arrival, which he did not condemn. Unquestionably he had a perfect right to do all this if he chose, and to argue each question on its own merits, in his correspondence with Bengal. But he had no right first to reject Mr. Hastings's propositions, and then to communicate the substance of them to the Court of Directors, as furnishing ground of censure against their Governor-general. Yet such was the nature



of his proceeding; and it is of this that Mr. Hastings complains. Who can be surprised to find that, from that hour, everything like friendship or cordiality between them ceased?

TO LAURENCE SULIVAN, Esq.

Fort William, 27th March, 1783.

My dear Friend,—I am very apprehensive that my friends, not aware of my situation, will blame me for a resolution which I have lately taken and notified in form to the Court of Directors by these despatches. After eleven years that I have held my station under discouragements unknown to my predecessors, opposed and thwarted by my colleagues in office, counteracted and reviled by my superiors, and never possessing any but accidental and temporary power, you, my good friend, will not impute to me the imbecility of sacrificing my place and all my hopes to a momentary impatience and the petulancy of disappointment. No, my dear Sir; you may believe me when I assure you that I cannot retain it with any hope of credit, nor without the hazard of losing all the little which I have acquired. The advice which has been repeated to me in all my letters from England is, that I shall not regard the late orders of the Court of Directors. They were not aware of the effect of those orders in depriving me of my influence abroad, and of support at home. They considered these orders but as an empty sound, which would produce the terror of a moment and pass without consequence. In truth, they have as effectually disarmed me as if they had reduced me to the state of a mere secretary of the Board. My authority is not only taken from me at a time when I most require it, but proclamation of my deprivation is made to all the world; and the men who were supposed to be my firm



and determined supporters, and to whose appointment many were induced on that consideration only to yield their consent, at least I was told so, object to the most trivial matters if I propose them, and in their minutes affectedly join their professions of submission to the Company's orders, with their opposition to me in such a manner as if they were afraid of being suspected of any thing like a leaning towards me. I may injure them by this construction of their intentions, but the effect is the same from whatever cause it proceeds. With Mr. Wheler I am every way satisfied.

If there is any department of Government which is exclusively mine, or which would be left to my absolute choice by men disposed to act with me cordially, it is the appointment of my own representatives in foreign courts. We wanted one at Hyderabad. Richard Sullivan, whose brother had been destined to that appointment from home, who was recently removed from a similar office with the Nabob Wallah Jaw, but without any expression of displeasure which was aimed at him, appeared to me a proper person for it, and surely well qualified, for (David Anderson always excepted) I do not know his equal. I mentioned it privately to Sir Eyre Coote, who eagerly approved it. I did the same to Mr. Stables, who hesitated and I postponed it. After an interval of near a fortnight, the Nabob, Ally Cawn, having extricated himself from a war in which he had been some time engaged with one of his own vassals, I thought it wrong to leave him longer without some minister attending him from this Government, especially as he was sore on the Mahratta treaty, and that was just concluded. I proposed the appointment and recommended Richard Sullivan for it, having in the mean time written to him and learnt that it would be agreeable to him. It was opposed on the grounds that Nizam Ally Cawn would be averse



to it on account of Sullivan's connexion with the Nabob Wallah Jaw, and that it would displease the Court of Directors. Mr. Wheler assented. The old General was warm for it, but minuted no opinion as I could not prevail on the other members to minute theirs. These were afterwards delivered to the secretary, but Mr. Graham, the General's secretary, has since told me that the General would give no opinion upon the question, because he thought it liable to the objection of being disagreeable to Nizam Ally Cawn. For these reasons, though the question stands determined, I have resolved to write to Nizam Ally Cawn, and state the doubt which has been suggested, leaving it to him to decide on the issue of this business.

Some time ago, when Richard Sullivan and Assum Cawn, the Nabob Wallah Jaw's Dewan, were here, I had concerted a plan with the latter for effecting a reconciliation between the two Nabobs. Assum Cawn was to go first from his master to Hyderabad, and secretly persuade Nizam Ally Cawn to propose a meeting with me, which he was assured the Nabob would eagerly solicit, and it was planned that the Nabob Wallah Jaw should be a party. We have many points depending with Nizam Ally Cawn which we must settle, and with the support and confidence of my council I think that I could have settled them better than any other could, and have transferred the terms of his alliance from a partial to a general connexion, and added some advantages to it. As soon as the late advices arrived from England, I saw that the design was no longer practicable, and let Assum Cawn know that I had dropped it. I had flattered myself with closing my service with a measure which would have reflected a lasting credit on me. Mr. Macpherson only was privy to it, and this makes me the more distrustful of his motives in the objections which he has since made to Richard Sullivan's appointment.



Major Scott will show you the minutes of this transaction, I mean of my proposal respecting Richard Sullivan.

I cannot hope to be allowed independent powers, nor other colleagues. Neither do I wish to remove these, though I foresee that I shall be less able to act with them, than I now am. It would relieve me if I could engage the decided support of Mr. Wheler; but I cannot exact it, nor would he give it beyond certain lines.

Perhaps even you, my respectable friend, while you feel for my difficulties, may yet entertain so favourable a sense of the source from which they have originated, as to be more inclined to reprove my opposition to it, than to wish it removed. It is natural, and whenever a man of business like you shall be at the head of the direction, every man like myself will be glad and proud to obey him. No man has ever manifested the principle of obedience in substantial acts equally with me. The orders which I have opposed were all personal and vindictive. I have no doubt that a different conduct will be observed with my successor; and of this I am certain, that the veriest stock with a human form, and a share of animation equal to the ordinary functions of life, will perform more service to the Company, with proper powers and confidence reposed in him, than I can do with neither.

In the resolutions in the Court of Directors concerning my transactions at Benares, what a dreadful lesson have they formed for their service! A subject of their sovereignty rebels against the representative of their authority, massacres 200 of his attendants, and attempts his life. It is not pretended, nor suspected that I had any motive for the provocation which drew on me so infamous a vengeance, but to relieve the Company's distresses. The Court of Directors,



who ought to have set the first example in punishing this first instance of revolt in their subjects, who ought to have considered it as a precedent which may hereafter operate to their own destruction,—they take the part of the murderer, complain that *I disgraced him in the eyes of his subjects and others, and that it may have a tendency to weaken the confidence which the “native princes” of India ought to have in the justice and moderation of our Government.*

Infinitely worse will the example prove, if their conduct should teach their vassals that the sure means of acquiring the protection of the Court of Directors, and to become princes of India, will be to throw off the authority of the Company and assassinate their servants; and if it should have a tendency to weaken the confidence which their servants in India ought to have in the justice, truth, and common policy of their rulers.

I could have guarded myself most effectually against their censures, by avoiding all responsibility, and covering myself with their orders in whatever I did. I could have kept their troops and treasure at home, when the Presidency of Bombay was engaged in schemes to which it was confessedly unequal. I could have suffered the disgrace of the unhappy affair of Worgaum to remain an indelible stain on the British name. It was no concern of mine. I could have suffered the Carnatic to fall an easy prey to Hyder, when Francis opposed the measures which I suggested for its preservation, and I could have justified it on the principle of self preservation; the prior care due to the first possessions of the Company; the want of authority from home; the season of the year, which would render it an act of madness to send their troops to perish by sea; and by a fair estimate of ways and means, which would prove that we had not assets for such an enterprise. I could have acquiesced in the violations of



faith, which the Government of Madras were guilty of towards Nizam Ally, and contented myself with protesting against it. I could have seen Chinnajee lay Bengal waste, for it was scarce in his power to avoid it, and nothing but my private aid prevented it.

I could have sat quietly down when our ordinary resources would yield no more supplies for the war, and ruin threatened. What business had I at Benares?

But if I had observed this discreet and safe conduct, let me ask, not you, my friend—but my most rancorous enemies, what would have been the state of the Company, or whether it is likely that it would at this time have existence?

In the mean time I could have provided an ample fortune for myself, by means which no one could have assumed to hurt or discredit me. Their salt manufacture, under a proper management, would have yielded me many lacs; and the Court of Directors, with their appointment of young Gregory to be chief of the Council of Patna, have declared that the Court ought not to monopolize the opium, that is, that it should be the free trade of those whose superior advantages of place and power could appropriate it. In this arrangement, I certainly could have had my share, and allowably. I have done neither. I originally converted these funds to the Company's use. When the Company's orders and General Clavering's mismanagement had reduced the first to a loss, I, against the will and judgment of all my colleagues, and at my own risk, restored and improved it.

It now yields a clear net income, by a process the most easy and simple, of Cs.Rs. 57,25,673 15 0

The opium, under all the
discouragements of war . 6,06,428 14 3

Both together . . 63,32,101 13 3



To these add the annual increase of the land revenue seventy lacs; the increase of the revenue of Benares and its security, which I rate at forty; the payments made by the Nabob Vizier; and upwards of thirty lacs of rupees designed for my own private use and converted to the relief of the Company's wants, and let the sum total speak what I have done for the Company by departing from the beaten tracks, and exploring the wilds of peril and reproach, and what I might have done for myself, had I quietly plodded in the former, as any other man possessing my place, and the same means, might and probably would have done.

A Mr. Dunkin tells me that at the time in which the most violent attacks were made upon me, and a number of candidates stood for my place, you made interest with Lord North to allow me to remain with the fullest support, while I chose it, and to make choice of Lord Macartney to succeed me. This I think is the substance of a long detail. If in any point I have misrepresented it, impute it to my inattention in combining the facts of which I have composed it. I credit the information, and perhaps the more readily as it affords me a fresh instance of your watchful regard for my reputation and interests; but it is right to undeceive you with respect to the man on whom you placed so uncommon a dependence; I mean Lord Macartney. Yielding implicitly to the warm and earnest recommendation of my first friends, viz., yourself, Mr. Pechell, whom I never remember but with an aching heart, and General Caillaud, I set aside all reserve; and began a correspondence with his Lordship on a footing of unbounded confidence. His Lordship confirmed me in this disposition, and invited me to continue in it.

Read in the enclosures the fruits of my candour, and



the evidence of his treachery and dishonour. His motive I cannot guess; for when my letters were written, and many months after, (for I did not return to Calcutta, nor concern myself in any acts of the Council, till the February following,) nothing had passed between us, that could have given him the most distant cause of offence; nothing in effect but professions and proofs on my part of a most cordial regard. He cannot even invent a ground of suspicion against me. Yet it appears that at this very time, when he professed himself my friend, and solicited my advice, he made use of my letters as criminal charges against me. What a man!

It is true that in giving my opinion concerning Tanjore, I gave him a liberty to avail himself of it; that is, to use it as authority to strengthen his own, if he meant to conform to it. Surely he will not say that this latitude extended to his applying it only as an instrument to injure me. I am ashamed of the Court of Directors for countenancing such a shameful departure from one of the first principles of society. How meanly did I think of them and of their censures, drawn from so miserable a source!

Adieu, my dear friend. This is the last long letter which I am likely to give you the trouble of reading from me; for I shall henceforth only look to my speedy release from this scene of discredit, and to the happiness of meeting you in England. May God grant it!

I subjoin a letter to Lord Macartney himself, having reference to the same subject. I cannot find that it led either to a satisfactory explanation of his Lordship's proceeding, or to a renewal of confidence and friendship between them.

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To the Right Honourable Lord MACARTNEY.

Fort William, 13th April, 1783.

My Lord,—I was greatly surprised to read in the late general letters from the Court of Directors, very severe expressions of their displeasure, grounded on my private and confidential letters to your Lordship. It is true that I gave you an express permission to avail yourself of my opinions in any manner that you pleased, but your Lordship will recollect the relation in which I had then the honour to stand to your Lordship. I was not writing to a man against whom I was to guard my words, and to prescribe the exact and precise use which I might allow him to make of them, but I submitted them unreservedly to his honour, faith, and generosity on such liberal grounds as the severest discretion might warrant. Our common friends, amongst whom were some whose faintest wishes were a law to me, had assured me that you desired my confidence and advice; that you sought to make the line of my conduct the rule of your own; and they enjoined me to begin a free and unreserved communication of sentiments with you; without waiting for any advances on your part to dispense with the usual cautions of a new acquaintance. I did so. I not only addressed your Lordship with the familiarity of an old friendship, but afforded a very early, and what I deemed a most substantial proof of my desire to cultivate a good understanding with your Lordship in the first letter which I wrote to you after my knowledge of your arrival at Madras, which was also my first knowledge of your appointment to the government of that presidency. I afterwards received, and felt a sincere pleasure in receiving, a letter from you which corresponded with the declarations of my friends. I have not the letter at hand, but I well remember the purport of it. It professed such sentiments as my own heart, already pre-



possessed in your Lordship's favour, received with pleasure. It professed a deference for my judgment and solicited my advice. This I freely gave, but as I gave it with the view of rendering it serviceable to your Lordship, and to the public, I told you that you might avail yourself of it publicly, and in any way that your Lordship pleased. In legal acceptation, such a licence might perhaps be construed into the allowance of converting the advice and opinions offered for your service to be instruments of my own ruin, if "you were pleased" to make that use of it. But I should have falsified my opinion both of your understanding and honour, if I could have descended to make such an exception. I meant it, and I knew that you would so understand it, as a permission to apply my advice to the construction of your public measures, if it was conformable to your own sentiments, and in that event to quote it as mine, and to lessen your own responsibility by the weight which the public, and perhaps the Court of Directors, might attribute to my experience. If you disapproved my advice, if my opinions appeared erroneous in your judgment of them, there could be no use in communicating them; and as the communication of them might injure me, it would have been an ill requital of confidence to make it without consideration of the consequences; it would have been criminal to make it in such a manner as might expose me to the resentment of my superiors; but if used for the purpose of drawing a criminal accusation from it, or of contrasting your own integrity with mine,—your Lordship will forgive me for supposing the possibility of such a case, and to your justice I refer the sentence due to the perpetration of the act which I have stated, and which I have only stated for the purpose of viewing the subject in every possible application of it.

I will frankly own that when I first met these pas-



sages of the general letters, I yielded to that natural impression which they would have made on your Lordship's mind in a similar case; but as it seemed, on a more temperate reflection, too severe to pronounce, on appearances which I was not able to reconcile to any justifiable grounds, a conclusion derogatory from the principles of honour, and as nothing had passed between your Lordship and myself at the time in which your letters to the Court of Directors were written which could have furnished the remotest plea for hostility, if any provocation can be pleaded for a breach of private confidence, I checked my first suspicion, and in the hope that what your Lordship had written, perhaps with other views, and with candid intentions, had been perverted by a false construction to a purpose unforeseen by your Lordship; I resolved to lay this full exposition of the subject, and my own feelings excited by it, before your view, that if you please you may afford me such an explanation of it as you may judge due to me for the apparent injury which I have suffered, and even to yourself, if you conceive the estimation of a man so inconsiderable as I am deserving of your attention. This satisfaction I leave entirely to your Lordship's option, myself neither claiming nor soliciting it. But you will allow me to claim as a right, that you will impart to me what you have written to the Court of Directors, on the ground of my letters; I mean the extract of your letters on the subject of the Northern Circars, and the Rajah of Tanjore, to which the 31st, 34th, and 35th paragraphs of their letter to your presidency, dated 12th July 1782, refer.

I need not inform your Lordship, that this letter is not intended as a private communication; nor, of course, that I shall deem myself exempt from every kind of reflection in the use which I may make of your reply.



CHAPTER III.

Progress of Affairs in the Carnatic—Death of Sir Eyre Coote—Letter to Lord Macartney—Peace with Tippoo—Letter to the Court of Directors.

WHILE the heads of the two governments were thus passing into a state of open hostility, the affairs of the subordinate province, so far from retrieving themselves, appeared from day to day to become only more complicated. There was no cordiality between the civil and the military authorities; there was no good understanding between the Nabob and the Governor. Indeed the very elements themselves seemed to war against the English; for a furious storm fell upon the coast, and almost all the vessels in which grain for the supply of the presidency had been kept, were driven from their moorings and destroyed. Meanwhile the death of Hyder, though communicated both to the Governor and the General, was permitted to pass unimproved. The former, to do him justice, urged an advance; the latter declared that the army was not in a condition to move; and he moved at last only to find, that the opportunity of striking a great blow had escaped him. In a word, the spirit of faction seemed to have taken entire possession of men's minds; insomuch that



at a moment when the horrors of famine were around them ; when the Carnatic was everywhere a desert, and Fort St. George itself was saved, only through the ignorance of the French and of Tippoo touching the helpless state into which it had fallen ; they whose duty it was to labour for the public good wasted their time in profitless disputes concerning questions of personal dignity and personal power.

Once more the master spirit of Warren Hastings devised and carried into execution plans for the preservation of India. Fresh supplies of men, of money, and of provisions were ordered to be transported to Madras ; fresh negotiations were opened with the Mahrattas and the Nizam for the invasion of Mysore. But the measure on which, more than on all the rest, the Governor-general depended, was the resumption, with dictatorial powers, of the general command of the troops by Sir Eyre Coote. Feeble as he was in body, and somewhat weakened in mind, that veteran officer still bore a name, which as both friends and foes had been taught to think highly of it in other days, so they were not now likely to treat it otherwise than with respect. At the same time Mr. Hastings well knew that the General was not in any respect what he once was. He therefore endeavoured, as much as possible, to screen him from the annoyance of angry discussions, and wrote, with this view, the fol-



lowing letter, to a member of Council at Fort St. George.

TO ALEXANDER DAVIDSON, Esq.

Fort William, 11th January, 1783.

Dear Sir,—I address myself to you upon a subject in which I am exceedingly interested, because you are the only person capable by situation of affording me the assistance which I require, and from whom I can at the same time confidently solicit it.

Sir Eyre Coote, notwithstanding his very broken constitution, has declared his resolution of returning to the coast, and will take his passage in the *Medea* frigate immediately after her arrival. In this determination he has been in a great measure influenced by his knowledge of the wishes of the members of this Government; and, I fear, much against those of his own family. I, for my own part, consider him as the only instrument capable of converting the present crisis to the security of the Carnatic, and the exclusion of our European enemies on the event of the dispersion or departure of the army of Mysore. This may prove the easy work of a few months if the General is allowed the full and undisturbed direction of all the military operations, and such aids as your Government can afford him. We shall renew our solicitations for that effect, and I have no doubt of your acquiescence in them. But I will own to you, that my fears for his success arise from another cause, which will not bear an ostensible discussion. I have read with infinite concern the letters which were addressed to him by the Select Committee in the course of the late campaign. The language of these, and more especially their implied sentiments, were often such as must have affected him severely, and the more so because of his inability, from the incessant calls of duty, and the de-



bility of his constitution, to enter into a train of discussion in reply to them.

His temper, which is naturally too subject to irritation, has acquired an increased sensibility from the distempers which oppress him; and if, under the weight of these, he will again adventure on so arduous and fatiguing a service, he merits at least the return of personal attention and tenderness. He cannot bear the provocations of official letters written in the spirit of reproach and hostility. I have studied him, and find him capable of the most connected and perfect exercise of his understanding when his spirits are composed. But if they are agitated, and a slight cause will agitate them, it weakens his recollection, and sometimes throws him into sudden and dangerous fits of sickness.

I cannot prescribe to you as a member of Government either the style or subjects of your public correspondence, because I must suppose that every letter, and every act of your government, is dictated by a sense of unimpassioned duty. Yet allow me, my dear Sir, to recommend and request without other explanation, that you will, as much as it may be in your power, prevent any correspondence of such a nature as that to which I have alluded, and be the conciliator between him and the committee. I know not how far you might consider it as incompatible with the obligations of personal connexion, but so far as you may, with consistency of character, I would wish to engage your support of the General in his operations. I am sure that, in expressing this wish, I desire nothing which the strictest principle of honour may not avow, and that it is conformable to what I have known of your general character, which I have ever believed to be mild, reasonable, and conciliating.

It is unnecessary to add my motive for the uncommon



solicitude which I show on this occasion. I might, perhaps with equal propriety and truth, declare that I have an interest in it equal at least to any private concern of my own; but I will assure you that I shall receive and remember your compliance with my wishes in the instances to which I have applied them as a personal obligation requiring from me an equal return.

I wish you to consider this as a confidential letter. That, however, must depend on your option. I have the honour to be, with a very sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and faithful servant.

The career of Sir Eyre Coote was on this occasion a brief one. He died, as is well known, four days after being carried ashore, and left behind him a name second only to that of Clive in the history of Indian warfare. Nevertheless the bare act of despatching him was not without its uses, in introducing a better spirit into the military councils of the province. There was no renewed cordiality, indeed, between Lord Macartney and Mr. Hastings; whose estrangement became, on the contrary, from day to day more complete. But his Lordship ceased to interfere so much as at one time he seemed anxious to do in the movements of the troops, and the army took the field in good order. I cannot say much of its successes. After destroying the fortifications at Wadewash and Carungoly, and throwing supplies into Vellore, from the siege of which Tippoo withdrew, General Stuart retired to Madras, where, till the end of April, he remained inactive, waiting for the arrival of Sir Edward



Hughes on the coast, that together they might attack Cuddalore.

I should go far beyond the proper limits of this work, if I were to describe the further progress of a war, in the conduct of which Mr. Hastings had no direct share, and which was often waged upon a plan of which he did not approve. My purpose will be sufficiently served when I state, that the French, having received large reinforcements, took up a fortified position in front of Cuddalore; while the fleet, mustering sixteen sail, kept open their communications by sea. Having waited till these lines were completed, General Stuart set out from Madras; and on the 13th of July a general assault was given. It was not successful; yet the enemy, distrusting their own capability of sustaining a second, withdrew in the night, and, shutting themselves up within the walls of the town, were immediately invested. Meanwhile the hostile fleets met, and a fierce encounter took place, more to the detriment of the French than the English; though the latter were so much crippled that Sir Edward Hughes found himself obliged to bear up for Madras roads that he might refit. But no decisive consequences followed. Souffrein indeed made good his point of communicating with the besieged, to whom he sent supplies both of men and material. Nevertheless, ere Bussy could turn his advantages to account, intelligence of peace



between Great Britain and France was received. As a matter of course hostilities ceased on the instant; while the French general sent off peremptory orders for the return of the detachment which accompanied Tippoo, and earnestly invited Tippoo himself to become a party to the proposed pacification.

Tippoo Saib now stood alone as the enemy of England; and had Mr. Hastings been absolute in India, the war against him would have been prosecuted to extermination. For the Nizam and the Mahrattas were both engaged to invade Mysore, and a single campaign rightly managed must have led to his total overthrow. But peace with Tippoo was Lord Macartney's favourite project, and he hastened, without pausing to consult the Supreme Government on the subject, to pave the way for its accomplishment. Lord Macartney had no grounds of justification in this proceeding. As the head of a subordinate presidency, it might be his duty to suggest,—but he had no right to act, except by explicit orders from Calcutta; while his mode of acting proved to be as impolitic as the assumption of powers which did not belong to him was offensive. Lord Macartney's treaty, when at length drawn up, took no notice of the Nabob, the principal in the war, nor made the slightest mention of the Mahrattas, without whose co-operation Tippoo never could have



been induced to listen to his proposals. Nor is this all. In his eagerness for peace, he went so far as to propose the surrender of certain districts near the ghauts, which would have been to Tippoo of extraordinary value, because more than ever opening for him a road, at any moment, into the heart of Carnatic. Mr. Hastings has the merit of having put a direct stop to so discreditable an arrangement. He forbade it at every hazard, justly declaring that such an acknowledgment of inferiority would be more injurious to the interests of Carnatic than a continuance of the war for any conceivable length of time. Neither did he permit the Nabob to be slighted, or the Mahrattas exasperated by a display of indifference to their interests. As will be shown by and bye, a proceeding which was charged against him as a crime, namely, his refusal to sign a treaty which the Supreme Council had ratified, and the substitution of a new one drawn up by his own hand, was in point of fact an act of justice, of which the inconveniences, whatever they might be, were attributable not to him, but to the over-weening self-conceit and prejudices of the Governor of Madras.

All this while Mr. Hastings had the twofold burthen to bear, of wanton and groundless censure cast upon him by his superiors at home, and a great deal of annoyance through the misconduct and timidity of the Company's servants abroad.



In Oude, affairs, so far from adjusting themselves, became day by day more entangled. Mr. Bristow blamed the Vizier and his minister, the Vizier and his minister threw the blame on Mr. Bristow, and they were not contradicted by the reports which Major Palmer communicated, while passing to and fro on his mission to Rohileund. Of the effect produced on his own mind by the Court's censure, I have in my selection from Mr. Hastings's private correspondence endeavoured to convey a correct idea. I do not think that the reader will blame me for inserting here, in illustration of the same, a single public document. It is his reply to the Court's letter, a powerful and well written paper, which, though more than once printed elsewhere by fragments, has never, as far as I know, been offered to general perusal, as a whole. I think it entirely overthrows the dotage of Cheyt Sing's right of sovereignty, and exculpates the Governor-general from all just blame for having dealt with him as with a traitor.

To the Honourable COURT of DIRECTORS of the Honourable UNITED EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Fort William, 20th March, 1783.

Honourable Sirs,—In your letter to the Governor-general and Council, dated 28th August, 1782, you have been pleased to enter into a large discussion of my proceedings at Benares, and to apprise the Board of certain resolutions comprehending your judgment upon them. These resolutions, as the immediate cause



and subject of my present address, I shall, to avoid the perplexity of frequent and remote reference, hereto subjoin.

“ That it appears to this Court, that on the death of Sujah Dowlah, 1775, a treaty was made with his successor, by which the zemindarry of Benares, with its dependencies, was ceded in perpetuity to the East India Company.

“ That it appears to this Court, that Rajah Cheyt Sing was confirmed by the Governor-general and Council of Bengal in the management of the said zemindarry (subject to the sovereignty of the Company) on his paying a certain tribute which was settled at Sicca rupees 22,66,180; and that the Bengal Government pledged itself that the free and uncontrolled possession of the zemindarry of Benares and its dependencies should be confirmed and guaranteed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever, subject to such tribute, and that no other demand should be made upon him nor any kind of authority or jurisdiction exercised within the dominions assigned him, so long as he adhered to the terms of his engagement.

“ That it appears to this Court, that the Governor-general and Council did, on the 5th July, 1775, recommend to Rajah Cheyt Sing, to keep up a body of 2,000 horse, but at the same time declared there should be no obligation on him to do it.

“ That it appears to this Court, that Rajah Cheyt Sing performed his engagements with the Company in the regular payment of his tribute of Sicca rupees 22,66,180.

“ That it appears to this Court, that the conduct of the Governor-general towards the Rajah, whilst he was at Benares, was improper, and the imprisonment of his person, thereby disgracing him in the eyes of his subjects and others, was unwarrantable and highly impolitic, and may tend to weaken the confidence



which the native princes of India ought to have in the justice and moderation of the Company's government."

I understand that these resolutions were either published or intended for publication. As they have proceeded from an authority so respectable, any reader of them will naturally, and without hesitation, believe, that the facts on which they necessarily and indispensably depend, have been fully established. And who are the readers? not the proprietors alone, whose interests is immediately concerned in them, and whose approbation I am impelled by every motive of pride and gratitude to solicit; but the whole body of the people of England, whose passions have been excited on the general subject of the conduct of their servants in India; and before them I am arraigned and prejudged of a violation of the national faith in acts of such complicated aggravation, that if they were true, no punishment short of death could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public had sustained in them.

I hope, therefore, I shall not be thought to give unnecessary trouble in calling your attention to a subject not wholly personal, nor to fail in the respect, in which I have never yet failed, to your honourable Court, in the mode of my vindication, which will not admit of the common delicacies of expression; for I cannot admit facts, however affirmed, which I know to have no existence, and by which my character has been blamed, nor will a simple denial or refutation of them be sufficient against such a charge, if I can at the same time appeal to your own knowledge, prove by the evidence of your own arguments, and to what your honourable Court possesses in candour, for my first justification and acquittal.

The facts affirmed, or expressed in terms equal to affirmation, in your resolutions are as follows:

1st. That the Bengal Government pledged itself



that the free and uncontrolled possession of the zemindarry of Benares and its dependencies should be confirmed and guaranteed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever.

2d. That it pledged itself that no other demand should be made upon him, nor any kind of authority or jurisdiction exercised within the dominions assigned him, so long as he adhered to the terms of his engagement.

3d. That the Governor-general required him to keep up a body of 2,000 horse, contrary to the declaration made to him by the Governor-general and Council on the 5th July, 1775, that there should be no obligation on him to do it.

4th. That Rajah Cheyt Sing was bound by no other engagements to the Company, than for the payment of his tribute of Sicca rupees 22,66,180.

5th. That Rajah Cheyt Sing was a native prince of India.

6th. The judgment passed on my conduct, as deducible from the facts, is, that it was "improper, unwarrantable, and highly impolitic, and may tend to weaken the confidence which the native princes of India ought to have in the justice and moderation of the Company's Government." I must crave leave to say, that the terms "improper, unwarrantable, and highly impolitic," are much too gentle as deductions from such premises, and as every reader of the latter will obviously feel as he reads the deductions which inevitably belong to them. I will add, that the strict performance of solemn engagements on one part followed by acts directly subversive of them, and by total dispossession on the other, stamps on the perpetrators of the latter the guilt of the greatest possible violation of faith and justice.

But this and every other conclusion from the facts



advanced in proof of them, will fail, if the facts themselves have no existence. I do, therefore, most positively and solemnly deny their existence.

I deny that the Bengal Government pledged itself that the free and uncontrolled possession of the zemindarry of Benares and its dependencies should be confirmed and guaranteed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever.

I deny that the Bengal Government pledged itself that no other demand should be made upon him, nor any kind of authority or jurisdiction exercised within the dominions assigned him, so long as he adhered to the terms of his engagement.

I deny that I ever required him to keep up a body of 2,000 horse contrary to the declaration made to him by the Governor-general and Council on the 5th July, 1775, that there should be no obligation on him to do it.

My demand (that is, the demand of the Board) was not that he should maintain any specific number of horse, but that the number which he did maintain should be employed for the defence of the general state.

I deny that Rajah Cheyt Sing was bound by no other engagement to the Company than for the payment of the tribute of Sicca rupees 22,66,180.

He was bound by the engagements of fealty, and absolute obedience to every order of the Government which he served. The various and repeated professions of his letters are proofs and acknowledgments of this construction of his vassalage; and his own cabuleeat, or instrument by which he engaged to perform the duties of his zemindarry, expresses it in the acknowledgment of the Company's sovereignty.

I deny that Rajah Cheyt Sing was a native prince of India.



Cheynt Sing is the son of a collector of the revenue of that province which his acts, and the misfortunes of his master enabled him to convert to a permanent and hereditary possession. This man, whom you have thus ranked among the princes of India, will be astonished when he hears it, at an elevation so unlooked for; nor less at the independent rights which your commands have assigned him; rights which are so foreign from his conceptions, that I doubt whether he will know in what language to assert them, unless the example which you have thought it consistent with justice, however opposite to policy, to show, of becoming his advocates against your own interests, should inspire any of your own servants to be his advisers and instructors.

I forbear to detail the proofs of these denials. In legal propriety I might perhaps claim a dispensation from it, and require the charges to be proved, not myself disprove. But I have already disproved them in my narrative of my proceedings at Benares which has been long since in your hands, and is, I hope, in the hands of the public. So that I think it sufficient to refer, and to point out the ninth and following pages of the copy which was printed in Calcutta, for a complete explanation, and I presume as complete a demonstration of the mutual relation of Rajah Cheyt Sing the vassal and subject of the Company, and of the Company his sovereign.

The subject to which I now proceed, and on which I rest my fullest acquittal, is too delicate to admit of my entering upon it without requesting your indulgence and pardon for whatever may appear offensive in it, and declaring that I should have submitted in silence to the severest expressions of censure which you could pass upon me, had they been no more than expressions and applied to real facts; but



when the censures are not applied to real facts, and are such as substantially affect my moral character, I should be myself an accomplice in the injury, if I suffered the slightest imputation to remain, which it was in my power wholly to efface.

A breach of faith necessarily implies antecedent and existing engagements, and can only be construed such by the express terms of those engagements. I have been guilty of this crime in my treatment of Cheyt Sing, or of none, and may be allowed to regret that while you stated such facts as implied it, you did not in terms declare it. There is an appearance of tenderness in this deviation from plain construction, of which, however meant, I have a right to complain, because it imposes on me the necessity of framing the terms of the accusation against myself, which you have only not made, but have stated the leading arguments so strongly, that no one who reads these can avoid making it, or not know to have been intended.

But permit me to ask: May I not presume that this deviation arose from something more than a tenderness for my character and feelings? that it was dictated by a consciousness that no such engagement existed? for if any such did exist, why were not the terms of the engagement produced in support of the charges.

But even the facts which are affirmed in the resolutions are such as must depend upon some evidences, for they cannot exist independently. If the Bengal Government "pledged itself," its pledge must be contained in the written instruments which were expressly formed and declared to define the reciprocal relation and obligation of the Rajah and the Company. The resolutions of your honourable Court, as they stand unconnected in their original state, must be accepted as the conclusions from certain and established evidence, and this evidence, I must presume, you



meant to produce in the long process of detailed argument, which precedes them in your general letter. This consists of pieced extracts from opinions delivered by me in the debates of Council, which not only preceded the settlement made with the Rajah Cheyt Sing, when his zemindarry became the property of the Company; but, strange as it will appear, which passed on an occasion wholly foreign from it, and at a time when the Company had not obtained the cession of the zemindarry. At the point of the settlement, your detail stops. Had it proceeded, it must have exhibited the conditions of the settlement, which would have contradicted every fact which you have asserted; and every man of candour will believe that this was the only reason why it did not proceed. For why are my speculative opinions on the claim made upon the Nabob Assof ul Dowlah for the cession of the zemindarry of Benares, which I thought an infringement of a treaty already subsisting with him, and upon the mode by which we should allow Rajah Cheyt Sing to exercise the management of his zemindarry when it had become the property of the Company, quoted in evidence against me; when the actual deeds which conveyed to Cheyt Sing his possession of the zemindarry, and all the conditions by which he had it, were the only criteria by which my conduct towards him could be tried? The debates from which my opinions are extracted are so voluminous, and my share in them bears so large a proportion, that it would take up much time and argument to prove, what I could prove, that in their collective and relative sense they are perfectly consistent, so far as they can apply at all, to my subsequent conduct; but were it otherwise, they are not to be made the rules of my conduct; and God forbid that every expression, dictated by the impulse of present emergency, and unpremeditatedly uttered in the



heat of party contention, should impose upon me the obligation of a fixed principle, and be applied to every variable occasion.

The wisdom of the legislature has declared that the whole collective body of the Governor-general and Council shall be bound by the opinions of the majority; but the doctrine implied in your quotation of my opinions is the reverse of that obligation, if my opinions were not conformable to those of a majority of the Board; and if they were, the acts of the Board, formed on such concurrent opinions, ought to be quoted as the rules of my conduct, not the opinions which only led to them.

Having solemnly pronounced that Rajah Cheyt Sing had performed his engagements with the Company, and that my conduct towards him was "improper and unwarrantable," you proceed to say that, "such further resolutions as you may think proper to come to on this very important subject will be communicated to us by a future conveyance." This I cannot otherwise understand than as an indication of your intention to order the restoration of Rajah Cheyt Sing to the zemindarry of Benares. It will be expected after the judgment which you have passed as an act of indispensable justice; and whenever this promissory declaration is made public, as it must be, if not already known, what may have been expected will be regarded as a certainty. If anything were wanting but the express notification of your intention to confirm it, the recall of Mr. Markham, who was known to be the public agent of my own nomination at Benares, and the reappointment of Mr. Francis Fowke by your order, contained in the same letter, would place it beyond a doubt. This order has been obeyed, and whenever you shall be pleased to order the restoration of Cheyt Sing, I will venture to promise the same



ready and exact submission in the members of your Council.

Of the consequence of such a policy I forbear to speak. Most happily the wretch whose hopes may be excited by the appearances in his favour is ill qualified to avail himself of them ; and the force which is stationed in the province of Benares is sufficient to suppress any symptoms of internal sedition ; but it cannot fail to create distrust and suspense in the minds both of the rulers and of the people ; and such a state is always productive of disorder.

But it is not in this particular consideration that I dread the effects of your commands. It is in your proclaimed indisposition against the first executive member of your first Government in India. It is as well known to the Indian world as to the Court of English proprietors, that the first declaratory instruments of the dissolution of my influence in the year 1774 were Mr. John Bristow and Mr. Francis Fowke. By your ancient and known constitution, the Governor has been ever held forth and understood to possess the ostensible powers of Government. All the correspondence with foreign ministers is conducted in his name : and every person resident with them for the management of your political concerns is understood to be more especially his representatives, and of his choice, and such ought to be the rule ; for how otherwise can they trust an agent nominated against the will of his principal ; or how, knowing him to act under the variable instructions of a temporary influence or the casual dictates of a majority, can they rely on the measures which he may propose, and which a sudden change of influence, always expected in a deviation from constitutional forms, may undo, and subject, in every instance of their connexion, to a continual fluctuation of affairs ?



When the state of this administration was such as seemed to admit of the appointment of Mr. Bristow to the residency of Lucknow without much diminution of my own influence, I gladly seized the occasion to show my readiness to submit to your commands. I proposed his nomination; he was nominated and declared to be the agent of my own choice. Even this effect of my caution is defeated by your absolute command for his reappointment, independent of me, and with the supposition that I should be adverse to it. I am now wholly deprived of my official powers, both in the province of Oude, and in the zemindarry of Benares.

Nor will the evil stop at these lines. My general influence, the effects of which have been happily manifested for the support of your interests, is now wholly lost, or what may remain of it sustained only by the prescription of long possession, and something perhaps of personal attachment, impressed by habits of frequent intercourse.

I almost shudder at the reflection of what might have happened had these denunciations against your own minister in favour of a man universally considered in this part of the world as justly attainted for his crimes, the murderer of your servants and soldiers, and the rebel of your authority, arrived two months earlier. You will learn by our common despatches what difficulties Mhadajee Scindia has had to surmount in reconciling the different members of the Mahratta state to the ratification, and even, when ratified, to the interchange of the treaty concluded by him in May last with this Government. I dare to appeal even to your judgment for the reply, and to ask, whether the ministers of the Peishwa, possessing the knowledge of such a circumstance, would not have availed themselves of it to withhold their consent to the treaty, either by



claiming to include Cheyt Sing as a party in it, or either overtly or secretly supporting his pretensions, with the view of multiplying our difficulties; or, which is most probable, waiting for the event of that change in the superior Government of Bengal, which such symptoms portended, before they precipitated their interests in a connexion with a declining influence, which they might obviously conclude would render this, with all its other acts, obnoxious to that which succeeded it.

Their counter part of the treaty is ratified, and in our actual possession; and such is the character of the man whom we have made our principal and guarantee of it, that it will ensure us against any change of sentiment which might arise from any cause in the breasts of his countrymen. I am happy in having been the sole instrument in the accomplishment of so happy an event. It originated in a scene of universal revolt, encompassing my own person; it began with the immediate separation of the first power of the Mahratta state from the general war, and was followed by the instant and general cessation of hostilities,—in effect by a permanent peace: for I have a right now to affirm this, having positively assured you that it would prove such while the formal confirmation of it remained so long in a state of suspense. In every progressive state of it, it has met with obstructions which might have discouraged even the most determined perseverance:—in the known indisposition of the presidency of Bombay; in the calamities of the Carnatic; in the alarming interference of the President and Select Committee of Fort St. George, by the exaggerated portrait of their affairs in a letter addressed to our minister, and sent in circulation through the midst of the Decan and Indostan, entreating him at all events, and with whatever sacrifices, to precipitate the con-



clusion of the treaty, and save them from destruction but above all, in the vehement exclamations for peace from men of every description in Great Britain.

To all those counteractions I have apposed the principles of firmness and defiance, and, aided by the peculiar talents and wariness of Mr. David Anderson, I have at length brought my wishes and yours to their destined point. Perhaps with a less able minister I might yet have failed; but even the merits of his services I claim as my own, for it was my choice which called his mind into action, and my confidence that gave it its best exertions. Pardon me, honourable Sirs, this digressive exultation. I cannot suppress the pride which I feel in this successful achievement of a measure so fortunate for your interests and the national honour; for that pride is the source of my zeal so frequently exerted in your support, and never more happily than in those instances in which I have departed from the prescribed and beaten path of action, and assumed a responsibility which has too frequently drawn on me the most pointed effects of your displeasure. But however I may yield to my private feelings in thus enlarging on the subject, my motive in introducing it was immediately connected with its context, and was to contrast the actual state of your political affairs, derived from a happier influence, with that which might have attended an earlier dissolution of it.

It is now a complete period of eleven years since I first received the first nominal charge of your affairs. In the course of it, I have invariably had to contend, not with the ordinary difficulties of office, but with such as most unnaturally arose from the opposition of those very powers, from which I primarily derived my authority, and which were required for the support of it. My exertions, though applied to an unvaried and consistent line of action, have been occasional and de-



sultory ; yet I please myself with the hope that in the annals of your dominion which shall be written after the extinction of recent prejudices, this term of its administration will appear not the least conducive to the interests of the Company, nor the least reflective of the honour of the British name ; and allow me to suggest the instructive reflection of what good might have been done, and what evil prevented, had due support been given to that administration which has performed such eminent and substantial services without it.

You, honourable Sirs, can attest the patience and temper with which I have submitted to all the indignities which have been heaped upon me in this long service. It was the duty of fidelity which I essentially owed to it. It was the return of gratitude which I owed, even with the sacrifice of life, had that been exacted, to the Company, my original masters, and most indulgent patrons. To these principles have I devoted every private feeling and persevered in the violent maintenance of my office ; because I was conscious that I possessed in my integrity, and in the advantages of local knowledge, those means of discharging the functions of it with credit to myself and with advantage to my employers, which might be wanting in more splendid talents ; and because I had always a ground of hope that my long sufferance would disarm the prejudices of my adversaries, or the rotation of time produce that concurrence in the crisis of your fortune with my own, which might place me in the situation to which I aspired. In the mean time there was nothing in any actual state of your affairs which could discourage me from the prosecution of this plan. There was, indeed, an interval, and that of some duration, in which my authority was wholly destroyed ; but another was substituted in its place, and



that, though irregular, was armed with the public belief of an influence invisibly upholding it, which gave it a vigour scarce less effectual than that of a constitutional power. Besides, your Government had no external dangers to agitate, and discover the looseness of its composition.

The case is now most widely different: while your existence was threatened by wars with the most formidable powers of Europe, added to your Indian enemies, and while you confessedly owed its preservation to the seasonable and vigorous exertions of this Government, you chose that season to annihilate its constitutional powers. You annihilated the influence of its executive member. You proclaimed its annihilation. You virtually called on his associates to withdraw their support from him; and they have withdrawn it; but you have substituted no other instrument of rule in his stead, unless you suppose it may exist, and can be effectually exercised, in the body of your Council at large, possessing no power of motion but an inert submission to the letter of your command, which, however necessary in the wise intention of the Legislature, has never yet been applied to the establishment of any original plan or system of measures, and seldom felt but in instances of personal favour or personal displeasure.

Under such a situation I feel myself impelled, by the same spirit which has hitherto animated me to retain my post against all the attempts made to extrude me from it, to adopt the contrary line. The season for contention is past, the present state of affairs is not able to bear it. I am morally certain that my successor in this Government, whoever he may be, will be allowed to possess and exercise the powers of his station, with the confidence and support of those who, by their choice of him, will be interested in his success.



I am become a burthen to the service, and would instantly relieve it from the incumbrance, were I not apprehensive of creating worse consequences by my abrupt removal from it. Such an act would probably be considered by Mhadajee Scindia as a desertion of him in the instant of his accomplishment of his treaty and defeat the purposes of it which yet remain to be effected by his agency. I am also persuaded that it would be attended with the loss of the Commander-in-Chief, in whose presence alone I look for the restoration of peace in the Carnatic, which he, perhaps, would think too hazardous an undertaking with no other support than a broken Government. I have no wish remaining, but to see the close of this calamitous scene, and for that I hope a few months will be sufficient. My services may afterwards be safely withdrawn; but will be still due, in my conception of what I owe to my first constituents, until they can be regularly superseded by those of my appointed successor, or until his succession shall have been made known, and the period of his arrival near at hand.

It therefore remains to perform the duty which I had assigned to myself as the final purpose of this letter, to declare, as I now most formally do, that it is my desire that you will be pleased to obtain the early nomination of a person to succeed me in the Government of Fort William; to declare, that it is my intention to resign your service as soon as I can do it without prejudice to your affairs, after the allowance of a competent time for your choice of a person to succeed me; and to declare, that if in the intermediate time you shall proceed to order the restoration of Cheyt Sing to the zemindarry from which, by the powers which I legally possessed, and conceive myself legally bound to assert against any subsequent authority to the contrary, derived from the same com-