



mon source, he was for crimes of the greatest enormity dispossessed, and your Council shall resolve to execute the order, I will instantly give up my station and the service.

To these declarations suffer me to add this reservation; that if in the mean time the acts of which I complain shall, on a mature revision of them, be revoked, and I shall find myself possessed of such a degree of your confidence as shall enable me to discharge the duties of my station, I will continue in it until the peace of all your possessions shall be restored, or it shall be your pleasure to allow me to resign it.—I have the honour to be, honourable Sirs, your most obedient and faithful servant.

P.S.—Upon a careful revisal of what I have written, I fear that an expression which I have used, respecting the probable conduct of the Board in the event of orders being received for the restoration of Cheyt Sing, may be construed as intimating a sense of dissatisfaction applied to transactions already passed. It is not my intention to complain of any one, but to vindicate my own character, and to state the difficulties of my situation. Neither do I mean, by excepting one person, to cast a censure on any others. Yet I feel in my esteem for Mr. Wheler, and in my solicitude to avoid even the imputation of reflecting unjustly on his conduct, a duty impelling me to declare, that in my experience of it since the time that we were first in the habits of mutual confidence, it has been fair and honourable to myself, and zealous to the public, equally free from profession and subterfuge, and his support given to me in every instance equal to whatever claim I might have to it.



CHAPTER IV.

State of Parties at Home—Overthrow of the Coalition—Unsatisfactory condition of things in India—Lord Macartney's Treaty with Hyder—Famine—Mrs. Hastings's illness and return to England—Letters on various subjects.

It will be necessary once more to advert to the state of parties at home, to which Mr. Hastings's good name, as well as the fate of the East India Company, continued to furnish ample ground of discussion. I alluded in a former chapter to the formation of a Cabinet, which, because of the incongruous materials out of which it was built up, has ever since been designated the Coalition. I spoke also of the abortive issues to the India debates which marked its first entrance upon office, and of the assurance of Mr. Fox that, early in the following session, a broad and sweeping measure would be brought forward, and the question settled for ever. With this promise on the part of the minister, and this expectation raised in the country, and among the proprietors of India stock, the houses of parliament separated, and for several months the public, at least, was relieved from the consideration of a subject which had begun in some measure to weary rather than to interest.

Meanwhile throughout the recess, events were



continually occurring, all of them more or less connected with the personal fortunes of the subject of this memoir. In the month of August, for example, the Fox packet arrived from Calcutta, bringing official intelligence of the peace with the Mahrattas. The triumph of Mr. Hastings's friends was, as might have been anticipated, extreme; for up to the latest moment a contrary persuasion had prevailed; and the majority in the Direction made no scruple both to act and to speak, as if in every point he had shown himself the dupe of Mahratta cunning. They were of course compelled, on such evidence, to alter their tone; yet in Lord Macartney's angry letters they found some salve to their mortification, and they hastened to deal out blame as usual, where they ought to have administered praise. They met, coldly expressed their pleasure that the war had come to an end, and instantly went on to censure the Governor-general, because he had made choice of Sindia as his agent in the negociation. Nor was this all; the subject of presents was again brought forward. Mr. Hastings was charged with rapacity in accepting them; and a resolution was passed, that the ten lacs furnished by the Vizier should be credited to his public account. Nothing could be more illiberal than all this, unless indeed it be another paragraph in that memorable despatch, which required the Governor-general to account for every gift received



by him since his first acceptance of office. For Mr. Hastings had repeatedly forestalled the Directors on this point, by first applying the sums advanced personally to himself to the public service, and then explaining to the Court how, and for what purpose, he had done so. But the majority were by this time furious with rage. They felt that they had placed themselves in a false position, and, like obstinate men who have gone far astray, they chose rather to flounder on, than by an honest effort of self-denial to acknowledge their mistake, and endeavour to make amends for it.

It was at this juncture, that Mr. Hastings's letters, announcing his intention on certain conditions to resign, arrived in London. No event could have occurred more satisfactory to the Government, which thus enjoyed the prospect of attaining without a struggle the great object of their ambition—the Indian patronage. So delighted indeed was Mr. Fox, that he spoke of Hastings as having removed from his shoulders an intolerable burthen; even while his hostility, and that of Mr. Burke, continued unabated. Mr. Hastings's best friends likewise congratulated themselves on the determination at which he had arrived, though for reasons widely different from those by which the Cabinet were swayed. They rejoiced, because so decisive an act on his part entirely refuted the calumnies of such as spoke of him in the light of one who could



not be removed from office except by violence. Yet there was one personage in the realm who made no concealment of his regret on the occasion. The King everywhere avowed his belief, that the retirement of Warren Hastings at such a juncture would be perilous in the extreme to the English interests in India; and the fact of his doing so had no tendency to conciliate for the Governor-general the good will of a Cabinet which their royal master was well known equally to distrust and dislike.

It was now the month of October, and the Court of Proprietors, where his merits were still liberally acknowledged, resolved to anticipate any censure which might be cast on Mr. Hastings, by voting him, ere the session of Parliament opened, their formal thanks for his long and invaluable services. The business was well managed by Major Scott, Mr. Sullivan, and others, if indeed the expression be allowable in a case where no management appears to have been necessary; for the body of the Proprietors were of themselves steadily his friends. Accordingly while men's minds were filled with anticipations of what might happen—for the India question, it was well known, would be one of the first brought on for discussion—the Court met, and proceeded to business. I cannot refuse to my reader the satisfaction of deriving from one who was personally present a knowledge of the prin-



cial events which occurred at this meeting. The following is Major Scott's report to Mr. Hastings.

London, Queen-square, 10th November, 1783.

Thank God, my dear Sir, I can now congratulate you most sincerely upon the completest triumph that ever man received, who, from his exalted station has been so much the object of admiration on the one hand, and of envy on the other; but I will regularly detail the business from the date of my last letter. In that I informed you we meant to call a General Court. After several meetings with our friends, and those of the other members of the Supreme Council, Mr. Macpherson and Mr. Stables, in order to settle the mode of our proceeding, it was Governor Johnstone's opinion that the thanks of the Court should only be given to you; but that if the friends of the other gentlemen wished a vote of thanks, it ought to be a separate motion. This however they would not consent to, and Lord Mansfield observed to me, that it was not a point worth splitting upon, adding, with a peculiar archness, "You know the story, I and Doctor Radcliffe cured the fever." We thought it right to defer the meeting of the General Court as long as it could be done previous to the opening of the session, that what I have invariably contended for might happen, namely, that the sense of the East India Company upon your conduct might be taken in the fullest and fairest manner—trick and chicane being necessary in the common intercourse of politicians with each other, but totally useless to Mr. Hastings, and unworthy the justice of his cause.

1 Our letter for calling the General Court was given in on Wednesday the 39th of October, and appointed for Friday the 7th instant. Not long after the Court was summoned, Lord Loughborough and a Mr. Anstruther (who so strenuously supported us last year)



paid a visit to Johnstone in order to persuade him to give up the business, and to permit you quietly to retire, as you wished to do. That after you had written for a successor, it was absurd to say anything more on the subject. His lordship added, that he heard we proposed voting you a continuation of Lord Clive's jaghire; and then he went into a long detail of the Mahratta war, insisting upon it that you were the author of it. "In a word (he added), you will be disgraced and defeated, and I advise you to give up the cause at once."

Johnstone made a very just and a very sarcastical reply: "As to giving away jaghires of £30,000 a year, I have hitherto invariably opposed such extravagant grants; however, when I alter my opinion upon that subject, I will apply to your lordship for assistance, who had so considerable a share in conferring that reward on Lord Clive. Whenever I propose a reward for Mr. Hastings, it shall be such a reward as is suited to the moderation of that gentleman's character, not to the greatness of his merits. As to our being disgraced, it is impossible, and I scarcely think it possible we should be defeated, but at all events I am determined to proceed, and I leave it to your friend Anstruther to instruct you on the subject of the Mahratta war. Last year, my lord, when you wished to distress Lord Shelburne, my support of Hastings was laudable, and would you really wish me to accommodate my conduct to your politics? Be assured I will not." Loughborough went away in despair of persuading Johnstone, but every engine was set at work to upset us. I received a note from Lord Mansfield last week, to tell me to be active, "as there were indefatigable machinations against us." I saw his lordship the next day at Caen Wood, who told me that if the ministers persisted in their absurdities as to India, they must



break to pieces; and added, that two days before, the first draft of the King's speech was produced to the Cabinet. In that his Majesty was to recommend the consideration of India affairs to Parliament, and to adopt all the nonsense of the select committee, as to our having lost the confidence of the natives, &c. &c. He told me Lord Stormont would do all he could, but that if he did not succeed, there would be a division amongst the ministers on the first day of the sessions. He much approved of our motion, and desired we would not relax a moment. We got all our friends together, and on Friday the Court was as full as at the important debates of the last year, and consisted of the most respectable characters in the kingdom. Amongst them was the Archbishop of York, General Oglethorpe (now ninety-six years of age), the honourable Mr. Greville, General Caillaud, Sir Francis Sykes, Mr. Barwell, &c. &c. In short, gentlemen of all parties,

The business was exceedingly well conducted, as the printed debate will show you, and your enemies were so confounded by the impression which the oratory of Johnstone and young Dallas had upon the Court, that they were afraid to divide, lest the opposition should appear most thoroughly contemptible, but a Mr. Edward Moore, the most stupid of men, brother of Peter Moore, was the single negative to the motion.

The Fox I hope will be delayed a few days, and then I shall be able to tell you what effect our meetings will have upon his Majesty's ministers. I hear, and from authority too, that they very much approve of the moderate language we adopted, both in the motion and in the debate. One circumstance I confess pleases me beyond expression—that although the members of the Supreme Council are thanked, the debate entirely turned, as it ought to do, on the merits of the Governor general.



The next morning early I called on Lord Mansfield, who was greatly pleased with the happy conclusion of a business in which so many of his Majesty's ministers opposed us, till they saw the torrent too strong to be resisted, and that the well earned popularity of your character would bear down every opposition.

The ideas of Mr. John Robinson differed materially from ours, and the motion he wanted us to bring forward, was of a most curious nature, being in fact a panegyric upon the two youngest members of the Supreme Council. It ran :—That Macpherson arrived at Madras in August, 1781, reconciled contending parties, and performed most essential services. That he came to Bengal, found all in confusion; was zealous and active in the public cause. That from the time of his arrival, such and such supplies were sent to Bombay and Madras; that at such a time Stables arrived, and from that period great things had also been done. We rejected this motion unanimously, and at last it was agreed, as I have before said, simply to include them in the vote of thanks, upon the principle of Lord Mansfield, "that I and Doctor Radcliffe cured the fever." If we may judge from present appearances, no man in England will dare in future to attack your public conduct, and volunteers daily and hourly start up.

I am so pleased with a pamphlet of the Earl of Stair's, (which I shall send you,) that I transcribe an extract from it in this part of my letter.

"Our title to our acquisitions in India has now got stability from long possession; and however much private vices, or private injustice may have stained the administration of the Company's servants, their system of government appears solid, and has on trial resisted and triumphed over all the attacks which Europe and Asia combined have made upon it. This being the



case, the frequent, trifling, partial, peevish interferences of Parliament in the Company's affairs, cannot but be hurtful to them, and are derogatory, in some sort, to the dignity of Parliament. Above all, the late attempts in Parliament to dismiss from his government with disgrace, the Company's great minister, the powerful Chatham of the East, who has shaded with laurels every dubious part of his former conduct, were proceedings of a most absurd ingratitude, for which no reason can be assigned but a detestable one, viz. his possessing what many men covet to possess. I never saw, probably never shall see, Mr. Hastings. What I write are the unbiassed effusions of impartial justice, charmed to find a fit subject for panegyric. I neither have, nor never had any connexion with him, or with the East India Company or their affairs; yet I think it strange to see all the force of reform bent towards that quarter of the globe, in which alone our affairs have been conducted with success."

You will observe, my dear Sir, notwithstanding the warm and glowing terms which my Lord Stair uses, that he talks of the dubious parts, and Johnstone, in his speech, admits, for the sake of argument, that such there may be: I have, however, provoked the attack, and it has been shrunk from. Upon this subject too I am sure you will admire the energetic and animated language of young Dallas. Lord Mansfield says our Court is the school of oratory, and that Dallas goes far beyond Mr. Dunning as a public speaker.

I never saw the effect of oratory more strikingly displayed! Baber thinks him beyond, and I think him equal to Mr. William Pitt.

I have now but this wish, that whenever the situation of public affairs and your own inclination lead you to return home, I may have the happiness to meet you and Mrs. Hastings in the most perfect health, with



your constitution recovered from the shock it received by that rascally fever last year.

11th November, 10 at night.—I have been in the House of Commons to-day to hear the debate upon the speech. It passed without a division, after some smart conversation between Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and Governor Johnstone. The King's speech recommends the notice of India to the House, in general terms. Lord Ossory, who moved, and Sir Francis Bassett who seconded the address of thanks, said that, as India was our great stake, it became a subject of the utmost importance. Mr. Pitt agreed with them, but hoped that ministers would bring forward their plan fully and completely, and that it would be fairly and impartially considered. Fox gave notice that this day week he would make a motion on India business; but he spoke with the utmost mildness and caution. No personal reflections; no illiberal abuse as heretofore: no declaration that the proprietors had acted illegally or indecently, in opposing the wishes of Parliament. All he said was, that he would propose his plan, and leave it to the wisdom of the House to adopt or to reject it.

Johnstone complimented Fox upon his moderation, but confessed he was disappointed not to hear a syllable uttered in praise of Mr. Hastings, when India was the subject under the discussion of the House. Did not the members know, he added, what great things Mr. Hastings had done—that he had concluded the Mahratta peace, had saved Madras, and conquered Bednore and Mangalore?

Mr. T. Pitt said he should wait till Mr. Fox brought forward his plan; that however he expected to see the whole at once, and not that the ministers should bring it forward scrap by scrap. Mr. Burke did not venture to speak a syllable, and thus this day's business went off.



From what Lord Mansfield told me, I should suppose their plan is so exceedingly absurd, that it will be thrown out. But at all events, my dear sir, your business is now fully accomplished, and whatever they do, it will tend to set your character in a fairer point of view, if possible, than it now is, in the opinion of every honest man in this nation.

I dare say I shall write again before the ship goes; but I close this to prevent accidents.

I am ever, my dear Sir, most faithfully and gratefully yours.

The following brief account of the results of Mr. Fox's India Bill, and the breaking up of the Coalition cabinet, is full of interest. I give it, because it connects these events with the personal history of Mr. Hastings.

From Major Scott.

London, Queen-square, 20th December, 1783.

My dear Sir,—I have written to you several times, both overland and by the ships that have sailed since the 11th of November, which is the date of the last letter that I have had time to take a copy of. The events since that period to the present day are wonderful indeed; and I may say, as Lord Mansfield said of your proceedings at Benares, that this month contains changes and chances of importance enough to make the history of an age.

Agreeably to Mr. Fox's notice the first day of the Sessions, he brought in his motion for the India Bill on the 19th of November, which was prefaced by a very long speech, on which, as it has been printed, and as my answer to it has also been printed, I shall here make no remarks. The Bill was read for the first time two days after; and on the second reading, the 1st of



December, in spite of the very sound arguments offered against it, it was carried for commitment by a majority of two to one. It was again debated most powerfully at the third reading, but carried, the numbers being 208 to 106. Thus this important Bill, founded on injustice and supported by the most glaring falsities, passed one branch of the legislature. The East India Company made every possible stand, and no efforts were untried to turn the tide in the House of Commons; but unfortunately the very arguments we offered to avert the mischief were the arguments which carried the Bill through, namely, that it was in the first place a violation of every thing we should hold sacred in this country, and in the next place that it would extend the power of the minister and increase his patronage beyond all reasonable bounds by giving him entire possession of the East India Company. Our next resource was the House of Lords, and here we hoped to make a firm stand. Lord Thurlow sent for me the day before the Bill had finally passed the Commons; he took very great pains to obtain complete information on the subject, and he lamented very sincerely that I had been so long in England at so critical a period without obtaining a seat in the House of Commons, where such bold and infamous assertions had passed uncontradicted, merely for want of some person to speak to matters of fact. I had the pleasure to meet Lord Thurlow and Lord Temple several times before the business came on in the House of Peers. They both expressed the highest regard for you, and the firmest conviction of the importance of your services to the public. Lord Temple, in particular, made use of the following remarkable expressions:—"You must know, Major Scott, perfectly well, that if the present Bill should be lost in our House, we shall turn out the Ministry; in that case we wish most cordially to support



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Mr. Hastings, and I hope to God he will not think of quitting Bengal. I have taken great pains to make myself acquainted with the transactions in Bengal during his administration, and I find the deeper I go the more reason I have to admire the conduct of Mr. Hastings."

On the 9th instant the Bill was read for the first time in the House of Peers, when Lord Thurlow made one of the finest speeches ever uttered in Parliament, to which I have attempted, though in vain, to do justice in the printed account of debates which will accompany this letter. I sent the speeches to the press, as they were so miserably given in the newspapers. The King was certainly very much alarmed when he thoroughly understood the drift of Mr. Fox in bringing in his Bill. Lord Temple had a conference with His Majesty on the 11th, and the consequences which have resulted from it are most important. All those noblemen who are denominated the friends of the constitution, and who have strenuously defended the King's prerogative, came up to town, and when the Bill was read a second time on the 15th, the House of Lords was fuller than it has been known during the present reign. Our counsel opened the business with wonderful ability, and defended the Company with great success. The Minister lost the question that night at twelve o'clock by a majority of eight. The counsel went on the next day, and young Dallas made one of the finest speeches ever pronounced at that bar. It will be printed immediately. No part was more approved of than that in which he mentioned your services and the treatment you had met with. The debate was put off for that night by consent, and the next day, the 17th, it came on. Lord Loughborough was afraid to rise, and the Bill was very feebly supported, indeed, by Lords Carlisle, Sandwich, and Derby; and their arguments com-



pletely refuted by Lords Gower, Walsingham, Coventry, Rawdon, Camden, and the Duke of Richmond. Many others meant to have taken a part for us, and amongst the rest Lords Mansfield and Stormont; but the opposition was so contemptible that neither they, nor Lord Thurlow, spoke. At eleven at night the House divided, and the Bill was rejected by a majority of nineteen. Thus fell this famous Bill, and with it the Coalition. Lord Mansfield stopped and talked to me for ten minutes as he went into the body of the House of Lords. I was at the bar. "Well, Major," said his Lordship, as he shook me by the hand, "it is all over; the Bill is lost. This is an important victory for Hastings, and another proof of the wonderful ascendancy of his fortune; it will make a dreadful confusion, but you are neither of you responsible for that. It is the fault of the man who would bring in such a Bill." Lords Mansfield and Stormont voted against the Bill. That night it was known the Ministry would be changed, and the next day the King sent a message to Lord North and Mr. Fox, requiring them to surrender the seals as Secretaries of State. The public papers will tell you the confusion that is likely to ensue upon this great change. Parliament will be dissolved in two or three days, and both Lord Thurlow, now Chancellor, and Lord Temple, one of the Secretaries, say *I must come in*, as they want information exceedingly in the House of Commons upon India business. I shall write to you more fully upon the subject hereafter. I dined yesterday with Lord Mansfield, who had just parted with Lord Gower, the new Lord President, who declared that he did not intend ever again to become a public man; but the same principle which would take from the Company their charter, might have deprived him of his estate; it therefore behoved him to stand forth in support both of the King and the



people. He added, this Mr. Hastings is a most extraordinary man, for it is he who has turned out the Ministry. Lord Mansfield said he had declared to some of them long ago, that if they attempted to crush Hastings they would suffer for it.

I am sure, my dear Sir, it will give you infinite pleasure to hear that the warm and animated expressions of Lords Thurlow and Walsingham (when you was the subject of their praise) were received by the House of Peers with the utmost attention and pleasure, and that no one Peer, not even Lord Loughborough, attempted to cast the smallest censure upon you. On the contrary, though he misrepresented the acts of your government, he most earnestly entreated the House to put Mr. Hastings entirely out of the question ; that it was the system he wished to correct, and no man had blamed the system more than Mr. Hastings.

But the conduct of Mr. Fox throughout this business is surely the most extraordinary of any other. Before he brought in his Bill, he waited upon Lord Mansfield, who told him that he disliked the measure exceedingly, but if Mr. Fox wished to carry it, he would advise him by all means not to say a syllable about Mr. Hastings ; for that his character was so high, and his friends so active, he would involve himself in very great difficulties if he attempted anything against him. Mr. Fox promised he would not, and he sent his friend Sheridan to Halhed to bespeak our neutrality the very day he moved for leave to bring in the Bill. Sheridan wished to see me, but I refused to meet him. After this I was very much astonished, indeed, to find that Mr. Fox went fully into all the scandalous stories related in those execrable libels (as Lord Temple calls them), the Ninth and Eleventh Reports of the Select Committee, and at the close of his speech to hear him declare that he meant not to be personal against Mr. Hastings. I



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believe, indeed, he now most heartily repents his conduct.

I have persuaded Mr. Sullivan to push the departure of the *Surprise* as much as possible, and I hope she will be despatched early in the week. Enclosed is a letter from Lord Mansfield to Sir Thomas Mills. His Lordship desires you to be prepared for every thing. If the new Parliament is against the Ministry, there will be another change in six months; if not, we may hope to see a stable administration, which will support you most heartily. Lord Thurlow and Lord Temple are much alarmed lest you should quit Bengal, but I hope there is not the smallest reason to apprehend that; though I wish they would send you a proper successor who may take possession whenever you have an inclination to come away.

The opinion expressed by Lord Mansfield, that the overthrow of the administration was in great measure the work of Mr. Hastings, was nowhere more warmly taken up than among the ex-ministers themselves. If, therefore, they had previously regarded him with disfavour, disfavour degenerated henceforth into rancorous hatred, which nothing could appease except the total ruin of the man, to whose firmness they attributed their own political overthrow. On the other hand, the new ministers, Mr. Pitt, Lord Temple, and Lord Thurlow, spoke of him in terms of the highest admiration, and every where avowed their design of supporting him to the uttermost. In the Court of Directors, likewise, a somewhat flexible body, a marked change in his favour took place; while the Proprietors



more and more found cause to congratulate themselves on the part which they had played throughout. Still Mr. Pitt's government was as yet weak. It had, indeed, the support of the King and of the country; and in spite of Lord Temple's unexpected resignation, the rest determined to stand their ground. But a majority in the House of Commons was against them, and matters were not, as was believed, ripe for a dissolution. Accordingly, the same letters which conveyed to Hastings accounts of his growing triumphs, and of the estimation in which he was held in high quarters, warned him to be prepared for a sudden reverse, and urgently pressed upon him the necessity of attending more than he had heretofore done to his private fortunes. The following is a curious and an important document:—

From the same.

London, Queen-square, 11th January, 1784.

My dear Sir,—I sent you copies of all my late letters by the Valentine Indiaman, and an account of our political situation, at the close of the year. I will bring up my relation of our late transactions, although there is no immediate prospect of despatching this letter, except by the post over land.

I have already informed you of the interviews I had been honoured with by the Lord Chancellor; since the date of my last I have seen him every day. He is very firmly and sincerely attached to you, and every one of his Majesty's present ministers profess the utmost esteem and respect for you. The ministry is completely



fixed, and if they will not desert the King (of which I trust there is no danger), I am sure the King will not desert them. Mr. Pitt, our present minister, has communicated to the Court of Proprietors the propositions he means to move in Parliament, and they have been approved of by a majority of five to one. What will be their fate to-morrow we cannot say, or whether the ministers will be able to conduct any business with the present House of Commons. I must refer you, my dear Sir, to the newspapers, and the daily publications which I will send to you, for an account of the great and extraordinary violences to which our enemies have been driven, by the virtue of the House of Lords, in throwing out that abominable India Bill, and, in consequence, breaking up the Coalition ministry. You will hardly believe that the brother of your amiable and worthy deceased friend, Elliot, should now be one of your avowed enemies; or the Lord Advocate Dundas, your steady friend and supporter, yet both these facts are strictly true.

I was at Court on the day the House of Commons presented their bold address to the King, and Sir Gilbert then told me that, had the India Bill passed, it was the intention to have removed you immediately on the charge of peculation, contained in the eleventh Report of the Select Committee. I hear also, from undoubted authority, that in the event of your removal, Lord Macartney, or Mr. Eden, Sir Gilbert Elliot's brother in law, would have been Governor-general, and Smith Commander-in-Chief. Thank God so rascally an arrangement is for ever defeated. I told Sir Gilbert my opinion very plainly of the conduct of your persecutors; but it is strange indeed, my dear Sir, that the very circumstance which tends of all others to display your character as a disinterested man, in the fairest point of view, should, in spite of all we can say, have



been used as the strongest ground of crimination against you—I mean your bringing to the credit of the East India Company so large a sum as 200,000*l.*, which every other man almost would have appropriated to his own use. Even Lord Thurlow condemns you here; not that he has a shadow of doubt of your being able completely to explain every circumstance to his perfect satisfaction; but he says, you are to blame in not having considered the wretches you have to deal with here, and that if, by the utmost stretch of human ingenuity, it is possible to misrepresent any act of yours, Mr. Burke and his committee will take the advantage of every thing. You ought, says Lord Thurlow, to have been aware of this, and to have explained every part of a transaction (which he is convinced will redound to your honour) in such a manner, as to have confounded the malice of your enemies.

Mr. Dundas and I are now on the best of terms. The first time I met him was at Lord Thurlow's, when he told me that I must do him the justice to say he had never doubted the honour, the integrity, or the abilities of Mr. Hastings, though he had differed from him as to some of his political opinions; that these differences were at an end, for the Mahratta war was at an end, and every part of your conduct of late years appeared to him highly meritorious. Dundas is now Treasurer of the Navy, and will be one of the principal managers of the House of Commons on the side of administration. He is absolutely to come forward in your support, against Burke, and I am now furnishing him with materials to make use of in your defence. His argument is, "I never doubted the honour or integrity of Mr. Hastings; I blamed his politics of 1778; I thought he could not make peace with the Mahrattas, but I have been mistaken. His relief and support of the Carnatic, his improvement of the revenues of Bengal, his spirit and activity, claim every degree of



praise that I can bestow upon him, and every support that his Majesty's ministers can afford him." This, my dear Sir, is Mr. Dundas's present language; and if the ministry stand (of which I have no doubt), and carry the present bill through, you will be appointed *His Majesty's Governor-general of Bengal*. Lord Thurlow does not entirely approve of the intended bill, by which the Governor-general and Commander-in-Chief are to be appointed by the King, and the other two by the Company. He sent me yesterday to put the following question to Mr. Dundas:—"If the bill should pass, his Majesty means to appoint Mr. Hastings the Governor-general of Bengal: suppose the House of Commons should then be mad enough to address the King to remove him, what is to be done?" Mr. Dundas answered, "The King will appoint Mr. Hastings Governor-general of Bengal: most assuredly, if such an address should be proposed, we shall resist it: should it be carried against us, we must dissolve the Parliament, so that you need be under no apprehensions: if we have strength enough to carry the bill, be assured we shall have strength enough, and more than enough, to preserve Hastings." Thus we stand, my dear Sir, with ministers. The King speaks of you in the warmest terms, and a prodigious majority through the kingdom espouse your cause and execrate your opponents.

In my last letter I told you that Lord Bathurst had interested himself exceedingly to procure me a seat in Parliament, and that every thing was settled for my coming in for West Looe, in the room of Sir William James. Lord Mansfield thought I should be better out of the House; but the Lord Chancellor was exceedingly anxious for my coming in, and pushed it all he could. However, as party has run very high, Mr. Pitt was afraid that Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke would represent it in an invidious light; and though he and his



friends wished most earnestly that I should be in the House, they rather were inclined to defer my appearance for the first week, and Mr. Buller is to quit for me at any time. The Chancellor is exceedingly displeased at this, and says they will live to repent their timidity, and that he would be answerable that neither Mr. Fox nor Mr. Burke should browbeat me. I am sure, my dear Sir, you will highly approve of my being entirely guided by the Chancellor in this affair, and therefore I shall keep myself prepared to be elected whenever he thinks the time proper, or rather, when he can persuade others to think so, for he says, they will live to repent my not being at this moment in Parliament. He argues thus:—"I have seen the greatest orators in the House of Commons struck dumb by a fact. The boldest assertions are hazarded there, because there is no one who has knowledge or resolution enough to contradict Mr. Fox; you would do it; and I am sure when the bill was depending, you would have turned the House, by stating to them what you have done off hand to me in conversation." Mr. Dundas told me yesterday that there was nothing they wished more anxiously than to have me in the House of Commons, but that it had been thought more prudent to bring in Mr. Buller for a few days, till the first tumult had subsided.

Before this letter is concluded, I shall be able to tell you much more of the real state of our affairs. In my last I told you that Lord Gower calls this, "Hastings's administration;" and many of the party give me the credit of having contributed more than any one amongst them to overturn the late ministry. Addresses to the King are preparing from all parts of the kingdom, urging his Majesty to preserve the constitution inviolate, and promising to support him. The faction on the other side is composed of bold, needy, and desperate men; but as the City of London and the king-



dom in general place implicit confidence in young Pitt, one of the wonders of this age, I think Lord North and Mr. Fox will be completely defeated. The former is infinitely a more base and contemptible character than the latter. What a wonderful public life is yours, my dear Sir, both in England and in India! Almost every man despaired in July, 1782, when the death of the Marquis of Rockingham kept you in Bengal and saved India. Again, in October, when ministers and a majority of Directors had determined upon your removal, your constituents at that time preserved you. Whatever Lord Shelburne's private opinion may be, a bill was brought into Parliament in his administration, or ready to be brought, which had for one object your removal, though perhaps upon more honourable terms than that wretch Mr. Burke approved of. Shelburne's overthrow changed the face of affairs, and Lord Stormont's opposition prevented the Coalition from doing anything the last session; but, at the commencement of the present, Mr. Fox came forward with a vengeance, and your cause was forgotten for the time, in attempts to preserve the constitution and the Company. Fox failed in his attempt, and failing, fell with all his connexions.

We have had two conferences with Mr. Pitt, which gave us great satisfaction. His propositions, I think, are very fair, considering the madness and the prejudices of men in general with respect to India. Lord Thurlow thinks Mr. Pitt has taken too much; that all appointments whatsoever ought to be in the Company, subject to his Majesty's approval, and that the Crown should have a control as strong as possible at home. However, we readily acquiesced in Mr. Pitt's schemes, in order to show our sense of the services he had rendered the Company, by opposing a man who grasped at all we possessed.

James Macpherson has acted very steadily with us



throughout this business; and I assure you, my dear Sir, I am at a loss for words sufficiently forcible to do justice to the merit, application, and constancy of Governor Johnstone, both towards you and the East India Company. I trust we shall elect him a Director on Wednesday next in the room of that traitor, Sir Henry Fletcher.

You will excuse me, my dear Sir, if many important events have passed unnoticed in my late letters to you. Twenty times have I sat down to write to you in the last ten days, and as often been called away on material business. Lord Thurlow asked me the other day if I ever eat or slept? Thank God, I have enjoyed an uninterrupted share of health, and, having a good cause, did not despond even when our affairs wore the most gloomy aspect. The Chancellor is a firm, intrepid man, so is Dundas, but I wish the other ministers possessed as much courage as they do honour and industry. I am only afraid of their timidity, though they certainly acquire more and more courage every day.

We have now a decided majority in the Court of Directors, and I am upon the most friendly terms of communication with our present Chairman, Mr. Nathaniel Smith.

You will receive, as I understand, a paragraph of disapprobation, couched, however, in decent language, for having arraigned the conduct of the Directors, and you will, with this, receive their warmest thanks for the wonderful exertions by which you have saved India and improved the revenues of Bengal.

17th January. I sent a copy of this over land last night: I shall now close it and begin another tomorrow. I am ever, my dear Sir, most faithfully and gratefully yours,

JOHN SCOTT.



All this while Mr. Hastings, to whom these changes in his favour could not for many long months be communicated, was labouring under the effects of the ill-judged and unjust censures, which both the House of Commons and the Court of Directors had passed upon him. His colleagues in the Supreme Council, from being lukewarm supporters of his policy, became, in consequence of these censures, positively hostile. With Lord Macartney his disputes assumed, day by day, a more bitter tone; while both Oude and Benares, for the right management of which he had rendered himself in a marked degree responsible, fell, in the hands of Messrs. Fowke and Bristow, into terrible confusion. The latter of these gentlemen, indeed, seems, like the Governor of Madras, to have aimed at nothing less than the total annihilation of the Nabob Vizier's authority. Of this, as was natural, the Nabob Vizier complained, while, at the same time, he made it appear that so long as the system of oppression and interference continued, it was impossible that he should be in a condition to discharge with punctuality his debts to the Company. Moreover, as if fate had determined to vex Mr. Hastings with all its storms, a failure in the periodical rains threatened to produce a famine; while Mrs. Hastings's health, which had long been declining, laid him under the stern necessity of sending her to England. Now



Mr. Hastings was to a remarkable degree devoted to the wife of his bosom. She was his friend, his confidant, his solace, his supreme delight; and the prospect of a separation from her, as it would have been at any moment grievous, so it seems to have affected him, at this juncture, with positive anguish. Mr. Hastings, however, was not the sort of man to make any unbecoming display, either of mortified ambition or of lacerated feelings. He did not scruple, indeed, as has been shown elsewhere, to cast back on his accusers their unmerited rebukes, while his private communications to those to whom he believed he could unburthen himself are all tinged, both now and afterwards, with a deep shade of melancholy. Nevertheless his energies forsook him not. "I will resign this thankless office," said he, "on the first favourable opportunity; but I will not be driven from it, either by the folly of my subordinates, or the injustice of my superiors. I have saved India in spite of them all from foreign conquest, neither will I quit my post until the internal affairs of this great country shall have been restored to something like order." Accordingly, with a marvellous command of temper, he applied the energies of his mind to the ungracious task of retrenchment and reform, endeavouring to persuade where he felt that he ought to have had authority to command, and yielding many a point



to the weakness of others, which his own better judgment disapproved.

The external relations of British India were at this time satisfactory enough. With France and Holland there was peace; and if at the outset some soreness continued, especially on the side of the former nation, even of this the good sense of the Governor-general got rid. He set at nought the punctilious obstinacy of the Governor of Madras; and, taking more account of the substance than of the shadow of things, gave up at once, and with a good grace, what must have been given up with a bad grace in the end. With the Mahrattas again, the best understanding prevailed. They were now the allies of the English, and, engaging themselves as such to put an end, either by negotiation or force of arms, to the war with Tippoo Saib, they extricated Mr. Hastings out of what he felt to be an embarrassing dilemma. For it was consonant to his general policy, that in a war affecting the Carnatic, the English should appear in the light of allies, or subsidiaries only. Carnatic was the realm not of the East India Company, but of the Nabob of Arcot. It was against Carnatic that the sovereign of Mysore had carried on hostilities, and if on that field the English happened to oppose him, they did so, ostensibly at least, because they were bound by treaty to defend and support



a prince with whom the King of England was in alliance. In a word, Mr. Hastings knew that among the native powers there was a rooted jealousy of the encroachments of the English, not unnatural to men who beheld principality after principality first taken into alliance, and then absorbed by these strangers; and he was exceedingly anxious, just at that moment, to show, that the English were not wholly regardless of the faith of treaties, nor bent on aggrandising themselves at the expense of violated engagements and outraged decency.

It was Mr. Hastings's anxious wish, that the Mahrattas should stand forward as mediators between the hostile powers of Mysore and Carnatic. This, however, he could bring about only by recognizing the Nabob as the principal in the quarrel, and his views being eagerly embraced both by the Nizam and the Mahratta chiefs, Mr. Hastings conceived that nothing remained for him, or for the presidency of Madras, except to carry on hostilities boldly, and with vigour, till it should be announced to them that the rival princes were in treaty. Lord Macartney took in this, as he did in all the rest of his dealing with the Nabob, a view diametrically opposed to that of the Governor-general. Having seized the Nabob's revenues in order to maintain the war, and deprived him of all authority over his own subjects, he could not see the smallest



necessity for consulting him in the management of a peace; to purchase which, indeed, his Lordship was prepared to give up a portion of territory, over which he could claim no other right of sovereignty than that of the sword. Accordingly Commissioners were by him appointed who repaired to Tippoo's camp, and there negotiated a treaty into which the name of the Nabob was not so much as introduced, nor any notice taken either of the Nizam or the Mahrattas. Mr. Hastings was justly indignant at this proceeding. He could not, indeed, interfere to stop the negotiation, because peace, on almost any terms, the Company were eager to obtain; and had the accomplishment of that wish been deferred for a single season, to his ambition, not to his sense of right, the circumstance would have been attributed. But he did his best to lessen the appearance of wrong in the eyes of the powers whom the Madras Government was insulting, and to repair the injury which had been heaped upon them. For this, prejudiced historians have blamed him, but it is not the only act of his with which prejudiced historians have dealt unfairly.

There is no carrying on war in any country of the world without a heavy expenditure of money; and in India the costs of keeping armies in the field are fearful. Throughout six years, the Bengal states had been called upon to maintain, at dif-



ferent points in the theatre of operations, not fewer than 70,000 fighting men: besides supplying the wants both of Madras and Bombay out of their own resources. The inevitable consequences were the accumulation of a debt, to provide means for the payment of which—I do not say in its capital, but in its interest—sorely perplexed those at the heads of departments. It was vain to speak of reducing their establishments, and so acquiring, by degrees, the funds of which they stood in need. Not a sepoy could be discharged with six months pay due to him; while the idea of paying up the disbanded troops, while the claims of those with arms in their hands remained unsatisfied, was not to be entertained for a moment. Besides, you cannot borrow in India, as you can in England or France, upon public credit, and trust to the management of future years for the means of wiping out the loan. Neither might the local government venture to draw upon the home authorities to such an amount as could in any material degree assist them in their difficulties. There remained, therefore, but one resource. The payments from Oude and Benares were to a large extent in arrear; while the rulers of both countries importuned the Governor-general to take the management of their respective affairs into his own hands. I have had occasion, in a previous chapter, to show that with the proceedings of the residents at both



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durbars Mr. Hastings had long been dissatisfied. He now, therefore, brought the subject formally before the Supreme Council, and after a good deal of argument, prevailed upon a majority to commit the arrangement of the business to his care.

The following long letter will best explain both the nature of the difficulties under which he laboured, and the measures which he proposed to adopt for the purpose of surmounting them. I have read it myself with great interest, and cannot therefore doubt that it will be read with interest by others.

To Major SCOTT.

Fort William, 15th October, 1783.

My dear Scott,—The principal occasion of these despatches is to convey to the Court of Directors an early information of the state of their affairs at Lucknow, and I have made an appeal to them of greater length than any that I ever wrote in my contest with General Clavering and his party.

The sum of the story is this: As Mr. Middleton pleaded the opposition of the Nabob Vizier for the non-performance of the arrangements formed between us, at his own solicitation, when we were at Chunar, and represented the Nabob as reduced to a state of extreme affliction and despondency by my repeated and strong instances concerning them, the inconsistency seemed to me so strange and unnatural, and I was so solicitous of undeceiving the Nabob, that I resolved to depute Major Palmer to him for the purposes of convincing him that in what I had required I had never exceeded the points of his own most urgent solicitation; of in-



quiring into the causes of the dissatisfaction which he was said to have conceived at my acts ; and to assure him that I never would interfere in his affairs but at his own request, nor make any demand upon him but for the sums which he owed to the Company.

Major Palmer went off with this message, and found Mr. Richard Johnson in actual possession of the powers of the residency, which Mr. Middleton quitted soon after to escort his wife to the borders of Bengal. Johnson abused his trust, or was charged with it, and kept the Board and myself in total ignorance of his acts, though unauthorized, and of the state of the country, which was in universal revolt. For this he was recalled ; and soon after, Mr. Middleton, for his neglects ; and Mr. Bristow appointed in his stead ; but not till I had made him write to the Nabob for his consent, and had obtained it. I thought that I had secured Bristow's fidelity by his gratitude, and Mr. Macpherson pledged himself to me for his good behaviour. I never give great trust without confidence, nor confidence by halves. I gave Bristow instructions on every possible case that I could suppose, or he require them ; and spoke my sentiments very freely of Hyder Beg, the minister, whom I suspected of a collusion with Middleton and Johnson, and blamed equally with them for acts which I have since had reason to believe were imposed on him by their ascendant over him. On this ground, and on no better, Mr. Bristow, after an ineffectual attempt to draw Hyder Beg into a confederacy with him to usurp all the powers of the Government, proceeded to an open assumption of them to himself. Major Palmer, who had been deputed to Fyzoolla Cawn, found matters on his return in this train ; and, at the solicitation of the Nabob and his minister, transmitted their complaints of it to me. I laid them before the Board, first in a private, and



next in a public manner. After many shifts and delays, they were sent to Mr. Bristow for his reply to them. After longer delays, he replied. The Board acquitted him of every charge without any evidence but his denial of them; and I have adjudged him guilty of every one, even on the same evidence of his own defence. And I have appealed from their sentence to the Court of Directors. My letter of appeal, my minute containing the examination of Bristow's defence, and all the papers of reference, have been copied in their order, and will be sent to you with this. It is my earnest desire that they may be published, if the Court of Directors hesitate to punish the authors of these oppressions, and to relieve the Nabob of Oude. It is not Mr. Bristow nor Mr. Cowper against whom I complain, but the members of the Board, and Mr. Macpherson especially, whose instruments they are, and the puppets of his direction. These have dared to affirm that they have acted by my instructions; than which nothing can be more false, nor more opposite to my principles or to my nature. As a bad cause requires extraneous helps, I expect that this will be defended by recrimination. Major Palmer, having been on intimacy with Cowper, wrote to him some familiar notes, which contained an allusion to the dissensions at Lucknow, and he having obtained Palmer's permission to show them to Bristow, they both took copies of them, and sent them to Calcutta, where they were artfully shown to two or three men who were known to have a quick feeling for my interests, and by them reported to me as containing some indiscreet avowals of Major Palmer, which would hurt him and me. I apprised Palmer of it, and have got the copies from him, he himself having been obliged to apply to Cowper for them. These I will send you, because I suspect that they will be surreptitiously sent home for the same de-



famatory purpose. To prevent this, I formally made a demand of Messrs. Stables and Macpherson, that they would produce the papers on record if they had them, and thought them of consequence. They refused it, and Mr. Macpherson on a principle of honour *most dishonourable*; for he says that those who have them ought not to publish them without the consent of the parties, though they have been already produced by one of the parties to vilify the other; and I have protested against the refusal as a denial of common justice. I refer you to the correspondence and my own marginal notes for those passages of which I suspect an advantage will be taken; and if you hear of this correspondence in England, publish it with the rest of this general subject, or make such other use of it as will best refute the calumnies that may be built upon it. You will find it a specimen of the candour of Palmer's mind, and the unsuspecting honesty and generosity of his heart.

There is not living a man of more candour; and had he, a witness of acts which reflected infamy on my character, remained a tacit spectator of them, he would have been the basest of all men. He has knowingly sacrificed all his hopes by the part which he has acted; and they whose villainies have been brought to light through his means have nothing left but to brand him with the names of incendiary and informer, and so they might a man who should awaken me when an assassin had a dagger at my throat and I sleeping.

You will wonder that all my Council should oppose me. So do I. But the fact is this: Macpherson and Stables have intimidated Wheler, whom they hate, and he them most cordially. Macpherson, who is himself all sweetness, attaches himself everlastingly to Stables, blows him up into a continual tumour, which he takes care to prevent from subsiding; and Stables, from no



other cause that I know, opposes me with a rancour so uncommon, that it extends even to his own friends, if my wishes chance to precede his own in any proposal to serve them. In Council he sits sulky and silent, waiting to declare his opinion when mine is recorded; or if he speaks, it is to ask questions of cavil, or to contradict, in language not very guarded, and with a tone of insolence which I should ill bear from an equal, and which often throws me off the guard of my prudence; for, my dear Scott, I have not that collected firmness of mind which I once possessed, and which gave me such a superiority in my contests with Clavering and his associates. My last year's sickness has left a debility upon my constitution which I cannot remove, nor shall till I try a colder climate. One thing let me add to close the subject: I early remonstrated with Stables on his conduct, and asked him if, in my personal behaviour to him, I had given him any cause of offence. He declared that I had not, but treated him with an attention and confidence which had always given him the greatest pleasure, or words to that effect; but talked of his situation, Company's orders, and expenses.

The preceding will be a preface or clue to the subject of my minute on Bristow's defence, which I desire you to read with attention, and oblige my good old friend to read it. It is of too great length for Lord Mansfield; yet I value his good opinion so much that I wish he could see it. I have written it with a view to make it complete in itself, and not to depend on its relative materials for the comprehension of it; so that it is probable most readers will content themselves with that and Bristow's defence, which is a curious production.

I expect an answer from Macpherson when the packet is closed; but it shall not for that reason fail of a reply. I shall deal with him as I have ever done



with others, openly and fairly. He will aim his most weighty strokes at me through the medium of his letters to England. Be sure to avail yourself of this intimation, and claim the right of discrediting every information so insidiously offered, whether to the public, to the Company, or to higher powers.

The next subject of importance is the business of the Nabob Walla Jah's assignment. In this, as in the last, Mr. Wheeler's conduct has made me ashamed of him. He readily entered into the treaty of the 2nd of April, 1781, with the Nabob, which has thrown the Nabob into the merciless hands of Lord Macartney. He equally condemns Lord Macartney's conduct, and affects an equal pity for the Nabob with myself; and I have told him, with all the delicacy that I could, that, as a gentleman, independently of public considerations, he ought to support and redress the Nabob. The Lord Macartney and his Committee refused to part with the assignment, and I urged the members of the Board to suspend them for it. I urged it in conversation, not officially. They agreed, against my advice, to write again to the Committee, and to write also to the Council to command the restitution of the assignment in more peremptory terms. I did not like, as I said in the words of my old and wise friend Dupré, to show my teeth without the power of biting; but, not choosing to break upon such a subject, and glad to gain the second point, if the first was unattainable, I submitted. The letters were written, and met the reception they deserved. I summoned a meeting of the Board *specially* to read the letter; but I could not get them to decide upon it. Stables, as usual, was inflexibly silent, and Macpherson talked, but said nothing. When I found that nothing could be done, either for or against, I said that I would take the letter home, and propose my own opinion upon it. You shall have



a copy of it, with my opinion delivered on the first refusal.

It will be curious to observe the similarity in style and substance of the letters of the Nabob Walla Jah and the Nabob Assof o' Dowla. They both suffer the same deprivation and personal insults; and both feeling alike, have expressed the same feelings, not only in the same words, but almost in the same turn of sentiment.

Many friends and many foes will ask alike, what interest have I in the concerns of the Nabob Walla Jah? I answer, none. I am not a creditor of the Nabob, nor connected with any. I never received from him any pecuniary bounty, except a thousand rupees, or pagodas (I forget which), which he gave to each member of the Council when I was one at Madras, on some public occasion, for a ring; and if he had offered me crores, laes, or less gratuities, I should have rejected them, not less from a scruple of honour which would render it a crime deserving of infamy to receive gifts from those who have appeals to my justice, faith, or integrity, than because I should deem it equally infamous to plunder a plundered man. He knew me too well even to suggest the remotest proposal of the kind; nor, poor man! has he for some years past had either present means or credit to raise them. Possibly the emissaries of the Rajah of Tanjore will have insinuated the reverse, and therefore I furnish you with an answer to them. But for the late support which I have given to the Nabob, I have the following inducements:—

1st. The faith of a public treaty binding me publicly as the head of the Government which made it.

2nd. The faith and honour of a gentleman, who made the treaty.

3rd. The conviction with which I am impressed that



the public credit of our faith is necessary to our future existence ; and that we have shown such a contempt of it in so many other instances, that, with this crowning the whole, nobody will trust us.

4th. That this defect of our political character was the cause of the late confederacy against us, and the consequent invasion of the Carnatic.

5th. The authority and dignity of this Government, which required present reparation for the restoration of both.

6th. That the defects of our alliance with the Nabob of the Carnatic may be forced on the notice of the public, and defined by specific declarations or engagements.

7th. The indignation which, as a man, I feel against acts of tyranny and insolence.

What reception my minute will meet you will know before the close of this letter. I suspect it will be a rejection in terms, a proposal to wait the Company's orders, and perhaps a protest.

The President and Select Committee of Fort St. George have repeatedly called on us for powers and instructions to treat with Tippoo. We have peremptorily refused to do either, affirming that we had no claim on Tippoo but to his acceptance of the article of the treaty with the Peishwa which included him, and which required no other written engagement ; that for this the Mahrattas were accountable, and had engaged to compel him by force of arms, if he refused ; that the Mahrattas had an interest to fulfil this part of the engagement, and that we forfeited our right to it by engaging with him in a separate and direct treaty.

But Lord Macartney wishes to yield portions of the Carnatic to Tippoo, which he says are of no note, but lie *convenient* for Tippoo, and *therefore* we have objected to it. He has also demanded our consent to



demand from Tippoo the reimbursement of all the sums which we have expended in the war, and a compensation for all the losses and devastations of the Carnatic, reproaching us for having neglected them in our treaty with the Peishwa—an example of folly, impudence, and inconsistency to which we have scarce made a reply, but have referred the proposition to the Court of Directors, with a copy of the letter which Lord Macartney and his Committee wrote to Mr. Anderson and circulated through the Courts of Hyderabad and Poona in its route to him, petitioning him, for mercy's sake, to conclude the treaty at all events, and instantly, though with the sacrifice of every ally that we had, and save Fort St. George from a ruin inevitably impending without it.

I have the pleasure to add, that I have a letter from David Anderson, advising me that letters have been received both by the Peishwa and Mahdajee Sindia from Tippoo, declaring his acquiescence in the article of the treaty which includes him. Yet I think that his Lordship will, if he can, still prevent the effect of this declaration; and if he does, he will quote the orders of the Company for his authority.

We are here under great apprehensions of a famine. The solstitial rains have failed in all the western parts of Hindostan, from beyond Lahore to the Carrumnassa. It has raged most violently in the countries most remote; our province of Bahar has suffered greatly by the failure of the last harvest, and by the artificial want caused by the apprehensions of greater. The complaints and fears of it have already extended to Bengal, where we have great plenty. I have recommended the appointment of a committee to provide against the growing evil, and the other members have agreed to the plan. It remains to appoint the members, who, I fear, will not be of my choice.



Soon after Nedjif Cawn's death, I, at the pressing instance of the King and Vizier, deputed Major Browne to Delhi with private instructions, approved by Wheler and Macpherson, the only members of the Council. He was detained by Mirza Sheffy Cawn, who succeeded Nedjif Cawn in the command of the army; and the King again pressingly requiring his presence, and writing to me to assist him, I recommended to the Board to assist him, a very small force being sufficient to give or take the lead in his administration, and more likely to prove a defence to the Nabob Vizier's northern dominions than our scattered regiments quartered over them against his will. The two members of the Board have opposed it, and Mr. Stables moved for Major Browne's recall.

But this is of little moment. Many other matters I pass which would be of consequence in an ordinary train of affairs, but are lost in the magnitude of those which mark the total imbecility of this Government or reflect infamy on our national character.

I regret that I never gave you a detailed explanation of our salt department; I believe I left it to S. Sullivan to write it to his father, and I know that he did write it. But he has other cares; I find at least that it is unnoticed, and in a printed report of a Committee of the Proprietors, I read it with astonishment stated as a mere transfer of the profits of the land revenue to the salt. The fact is, that it now yields a clear net income of more than fifty lacs, unincumbered with official charges, unexposed to invasion, a rich dominion without garrisons or a military establishment, and all of my own creation; for you will remember that I extorted the Board's consent to the first trial of it on my own responsibility, every member of the Board opposing it, and even my friend Mr. Barwell not daring to take his share in the hazard of it. Yet no



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sooner was it found to answer, than a scramble was made for the patronage of the salt agencies; of which I ought not to complain since the first comptroller was left to my choice, and he has amply repaid my confidence. My dear Scott, do not suffer this acquisition to be overlooked, when I am charged with profusion of expense. The charge is wickedly false, but were it true, what are the most exaggerated excesses of our disbursements, compared to such an accumulation of revenue, as fifty lacs in a single article? I will send you the account. That of the two first years, abridged, is as follows:—

	Rupees.
Net produce of 1187 or 1780-1 . . .	25,83,129 7 8
Net produce of 1188 or 1781-2, from the }	
account closed 30th April, 1783 . . }	50,00,105 3 9
Estimate of ditto, 1189 or 1782-3 . . .	50,96,883 2 0

The produce of the last year can only be estimated. The two first sums are actually realized, and Rs. 47,77,086 2 1 of the latter. The rest is certain.

I shall leave this letter open for new matter to the last. In the mean time, I inform you of an event likely to happen in my own family, to which I already look, though yet distant, with anguish. Had affairs gone on but indifferently, it was my resolution to leave India in January next. But as my presence may be a kind of check on Macpherson, who I am convinced would observe no bounds with the Nabob Vizier, were I out of the way, I cannot in honour depart till I receive either an answer to my letter of March last, or till my successor is nominated, and either arrived, or so near that my departure, if pressed by the season, may produce no intermediate ill consequence: that is to say, I will wait, if necessary, till the next season, which is at least one year longer. In the mean time, as Mrs.



Hastings's constitution visibly declines, though not subject to the severe attacks which she used to experience, she will depart at the time which I had fixed for mine with her, and I shall do all that I can at this early period to make the resolution irrevocable. I stay most reluctantly on every account, for my hands are as effectually bound as they were in the year 1775, but with this difference, that there is no lead substituted to mine: and my constitution is, I fear, broken beyond the power of any aid in this climate to repair it. I have held a court of conscience in my own breast, which has determined the duration of my service, and beyond that no consideration upon earth shall induce or compel me to act longer with such associates.

"These wicked creatures yet do look well favored
When others are more wicked: not being worse
Stands in some rank of praise."

I in my heart forgive General Clavering for all the injuries he did me. He was my avowed enemy. These are my dear friends, whom Mr. Sullivan pronounced incapable of being moved from me by any consideration on earth. I thought so too, though a ray of inspiration very early flitted across my imagination more than once, and showed me the naked character of Macpherson, with his borrowed robes lying by him; but I either treated the warning as an illusion; or it escaped me while some more pressing object called off my attention; or I chose rather to be deceived than to yield to doubtful suspicion.

Have you seen what the Court of Directors have written about the ten lacs, and the Begums of Fyzabad?

The first subject is contained in the 54th and 55th paragraphs of their general letter dated the 15th January, 1783—the last in the ten first paragraphs of the letter of the 14th of February.



The first is written in harsh, and almost rude language. The last is insolent, for they ascribe to the Begums of Fyzabad a motive for their conduct which they themselves never thought of, and suggest that they armed themselves for defence against my oppressions, suspecting that I should treat them as I had treated Cheyt Sing. Are these men the rulers of India?

These paragraphs have furnished the malevolence of Stables, with a plea for proposing a new inquiry into their conduct; but his friend has ill-supported him; and as he loves the crooked better than the straight path, he has confined himself to the apparently gentle proposition of informing the Begums, that the Court of Directors have ordered our Government to prevent their suffering oppression from the Nabob, and to allow "*those ladies an asylum* (the words of the general letter) in our own provinces." The fact is, that the Nabob and his mother are at this time on very good terms, and in my heart I believe that this motion is made to set them again at variance, as they are at present confederates against Mr. Bristow. I have opposed both, and both questions remain yet undetermined. I fancy they will drop.

I am more hurt by the manner in which you tell me Lord North professes his kindness to me, than I should be were he to declare himself against me; and I conclude from it, more than from every other symptom, that it is full time for me to quit, and that I ought to have given place a twelvemonth ago; for what credit can I gain, how indeed can I avoid losing credit, when I am barely suffered, and the man whose power and dignity of character had equally drawn my hopes of support towards him above all others, says, he will befriend me, but expresses his impatience at my stay? I want not such friendship, nor shall I



thank him for it. I thank those only who support me because they think me fit for my office. If I am not fit, let his Lordship give his friendship to a fitter; but that I see is not the merit for which my successor is to be elected. However, let him be who he will, if he has but common honesty, and something even less than common sense, he may do more good than I can, because he will be supported, and I hope he will have the powers of his station. This Government may yet subsist for a few years of peace on the resources of its own constitution, but every year of vicious or neglected administration will accelerate its ruin, and you and I, Scott, will both live to see it, if it is not totally reformed in its principles.

I am glad that I gave up the ten lacs. My subsequent letters, and the accounts accompanying them, will have informed you, as I have informed the Court of Directors, that I have provided altogether by private means, intended for my own use, but appropriated wholly to the Company's, twenty-eight lacs instead of ten; and had it not been for Mr. Richard Johnson's ingratitude, I should have increased the sum to forty lacs. The whole of this sum might have been mine; and what a lesson have the Directors preached to others, by telling me that I had no right to do otherwise than I have done! You say that you have no doubt that the proprietors will allow me the interest of the first sum for life. I hope rather that no more notice will be taken of it; for if I have but 100*l.* a year to live on, I will not accept it. I have many reasons for this resolution, but I cannot assign them all in writing; but if it should be ever proposed, my dear Scott, in my name forbid, and if done, reject it. I will have no annuity from the Company, not even for a double life, and were it not that I cannot bear to see Mrs. Hastings reduced to a state of poverty, I would not



solicit even the principal; for I could with ease accommodate myself to a very little more than nothing. I am happier in my reputation, if that remains, and it must, unsullied, and in the hopes of being received with friendship by the most virtuous and respectable characters of my country, than I should be with the enjoyment of crores without them.

20th October. The Commissioners for regulating the price and distribution of grain were sworn in this day. I will send you a copy of the plan. I am confident of its effect. The members are T. Graham, George Cuming, Thoms Law, and George Templer. To prevent a subject of such importance from becoming a point of contention, I drew up the rough sketch of the plan privately with Auriol, and made him carry it to Macpherson and Stables, proposing it as an act of the Board, not as a suggestion of mine. With some little difficulties it was agreed to, and they left me the choice of the members, who are all well inclined to each other. It had the instant effect of opening the Galas in Calcutta, where an artificial want had already prevailed. I shall see their daily proceedings, and you may swear in my name that the famine of India shall not invade the provinces of our dominion. I hope it will draw the emigrants of other countries into our own, and be the means of establishing a scheme which I have laboured to bring to pass these eleven years, a chain of granaries on the banks of the two great rivers, built of solid masonry, to be filled in times of superabundance, which always hurts our revenue, with a provision of three months and closed. I have begun such a provision in the fort, where we have *bottled up* 70,000 maunds, and I do not intend to *uncork it* till it has stood twenty years. The plan is simple. It consists of an arched building of six feet in thickness of an indefinite length, with partitions, an opening left



over each; which, when the partitions are filled, is closed with masonry, so that the external air is totally excluded. I have made a fair trial of the design, and found it to answer, in so much that I am certain the grain would remain in a sound state for fifty years so deposited. Grain purchased when it is in such plenty that the raiats want a sale for it will aid the revenue. In effect it will cost nothing but the first cost of the buildings.

I have written a long letter to Mr. Darell, which I wish you to see, and to urge him to make public use of it. It relates wholly to augmentations made by me to the revenue, and particularly in the salt, of which I have given him a history. It ought not to be lost.

Mr. Macpherson publicly takes to himself the merit of having abstained from all exercise of his right of patronage. He unluckily assumed the same modest merit one day to me; and I reminded him of the following, which were all instances in direct contradiction to it:—

1. Colonel Morgan, appointed to the command in chief of the army at Surat, given to make room for

2. Lieutenant-colonel Allan Macpherson, quartermaster-general.

3. Lieutenant-colonel A. Macpherson, contractor of the cantonments of Barrackpoor.

4. Mr. Bristow, resident at Lucknow.

5. Sir John Cuming commands a detachment at Fattay Ghur, and Colonel Muir, an officer of the first merit, depressed to make room for him.

6. Colonel McLeod to the command of the resident's body guard at Lucknow, done when I was sick; a breach of treaty.

7. Mr. Wordsworth, custom-master at Buxar.

8. Francis Muir, a very recent appointment, secretary to the committee of grain.



9. Mr. J. Hanney, a commissioner of customs.

10. Mr. Farquharson, paymaster to the 3d brigade. I omit other little ones, of which I have not a correct remembrance. But these include the command of almost the whole service.

Mr. Stables made a claim for a provision for two relations, or dependants of his, before he had been a month here—Messrs. Dent and Addison, two obscure men whose faces I yet scarcely know. I am not sure that I have seen the former. Mr. Dent has one of the salt agencies, and Mr. Addison is commissioner for the sale of opium. These are two of the most lucrative offices at the presidency, and I was compelled to accommodate a prior engagement to poor Belli to make room for Mr. Dent. Belli, however, has an office with which he is satisfied, though much inferior to the other. Now I hear that Mr. Stables complains that a young man in his own family holds a place more lucrative than his own, which he quotes as a proof of the shameful dissipation of the Company's money; and he is constantly ready to oppose every appointment proposed by me on that ground. Even two that were gratuitous he opposed.

I. The Nuddea collections had fallen very much in decline, and the Rajah was overwhelmed with debts contracted to pay it. I desired Harry Vansittart to undertake the reformation of it, without any salary or other emolument; for there were numbers of competitors soliciting it as a collectorship, and I wished to save the last (one more excepted) of the old zemindarry families from annihilation. He cheerfully accepted the trust. I proposed it to the Board, and Mr. Stables objected, because he was already provided for; and there were other servants out of employment, and without salaries. Vansittart has restored the Jumma, and put the revenues on a footing that will prove as



advantageous as it has ever been to the Company, and retrieve the Rajah from insolvency.

2. The revenue of Bahar had fallen thirteen lacs in balance, and was otherwise in a state of great disorder. The committee, at my instigation, proposed to send Shore, the acting chief, to make the new settlement, recover the arrears, and correct the defect of the administration. Mr. Stables objected, because Mr. Shore's *abilities* were wanted in the committee, and because there were other men of *equal abilities* out of employment; as if the reformation of a province was to be provided for by appointment in routine.

What I have said on this subject, I do not wish to be made public, unless those gentlemen shall, by publicly contrasting their moderation with my profusion, render it necessary, merely in my defence.

I desired the Board, when our differences respecting Mr. Bristow first broke out, to take up the *Britannia* for an express upon that subject and the affairs of Madras. Mr. Stables objected to the expense, but the other members agreed. I added to the proposal, as an alleviation of the expense, to give her 400 tons of fine goods. I soon after heard that it was industriously published that I was attempting the ruin of the shipping interest at home; and Mr. Dacres and his council (though he and I had together adjusted the assortment of her cargo) wrote a formal letter, desiring that we would rescind the resolution on that ground. Unable to contend with my own colleagues, and with the Board of Trade, who could prevent her despatch, I gave her up. Indeed another objection presented itself, which was, that she did not arrive in time, and that of course she would make too long a passage. She in consequence went on another account to Madras, where she arrived on the 18th October, in three days and one night from her quitting the pilot, an instance



of expedition unknown at any time of the year. If she had gone on her first destination, she would in all probability have reached England in February.

I close my letter. My last minute of the 1st November remains unanswered, and I have little inclination, and less ability for a reply, if they should answer it.

I referred Governor Johnstone, Mr. Bensley, and Mr. Darell to you particularly for the sight of my papers in your possession. My other friends will see them of course. Among these *desire* Mr. G. Vansittart to read them. Governor Johnstone, if he desires it, I wish you to allow an early perusal of them. You and Halhed must study them. The rest I leave to you. This letter must be communicated with some caution, for I know not what I have written, and it may not be fit in all the parts of it for the perusal of more than yourself.

I desire you to present my kind compliments, with Mrs. Hastings's, to Mrs. Scott, and our love to Lizzy, who must not forget us. Mrs. Hastings will be offended with me if I do not mention her especial good wishes for yourself. Adieu, my dear Scott, yours ever most affectionately.

P.S.—I have written to Mr. Johnstone that he cannot defend me without the sacrifice of his friend Mr. Macpherson, and therefore desired him only to be silent. *Quamquam* O! I do not willingly resign my claim to his eloquence. I also depend on Baber, because the defection, not to say baseness, of his kinsman, will irritate him to a greater exertion of his zeal rather than diminish it.

All the measures alluded to here were pressed forward to their accomplishment. Mrs. Hastings quitted her home, and left her husband desolate.



Mr. Hastings vigorously exerted himself to avert from Bengal the famine with which it was threatened; and, laying an embargo on all the ships in the river, prevented the exportation to other ports of the grain which speculators had collected. Meanwhile the business of the Lucknow expedition was brought to a point; and opened out the way for new calls upon the discretion and firmness of the Governor-general. But why should I go on? Let Mr. Hastings speak for himself.

To Major Scott.

Saugur Roads, 10th January, 1784.

My dear Scott,—I have thus far attended Mrs. Hastings, and shall see her embarked this evening in the *Atlas*, which is a little distance from us. I shall write to no one, and have written to no one but yourself, and no one will be so unreasonable as to be offended at it. I had begun a letter to the Court of Directors, but it contained too much of myself, and I dislike the subject. What I should have written you may say, if you see occasion for it,—not else.

In my letter to the Court of Directors by the *Surprise*, I told them that it was my fixed determination to resign the service as soon as a reasonable time should have elapsed from their receipt of that notice, to admit of their nomination of my successor, and to expect his near approach, and I accordingly entreated them to make the nomination. I at the same time laid my plan in my own mind to leave Bengal in one of the ships of this season; for I had good grounds to expect that the *Surprise*, which left her pilot the 7th of April, would arrive in England at farthest by the end of August, and afford time for the new appointment to take place



by the end of March. In the meantime the charge, though temporary, would be as safely lodged in the hands of Mr. Wheler as my own; for he has talents for business, and lacks only a confidence in himself, which the next in succession, wanting his talents, possesses most abundantly. But a short interval compelled me to relinquish my purpose. Mr. Bristow's conduct, and the consequent distraction which I saw gathering in Oude, left that country and its government without a resource, but in my exertions to retrieve it, and my departure would have rendered the Nabob and his minister desperate. While I remained, I knew that they would place a reliance on me even for more than I could effect for their relief; and I foresaw, or thought I foresaw, in the timid and indecisive opposition of my colleagues, and in the frantic perseverance of Mr. Bristow, a growing remedy in the very evils which he himself created, and which his own folly would lead him to exaggerate. I felt, too, for the wretched Nabob Walla Jah, who seemed to catch at me, for he had not a straw left besides, as his last resource; and for his preservation I myself had some, though but a faint dependence on my colleagues, whose inclinations tended the same way with mine, though they were cautious of proceeding to extremities.

On these combined inducements I resolved to wait the arrival of my successor, or to allow another year to the possible indecision of my superiors. I can expect no thanks for this sacrifice, for there are few who will comprehend the degree of it, but I have yielded to a sense of duty, of honour, and consistency; and in the reflection of having fulfilled the part allotted to me by each of these obligations, I shall seek my consolation.

Mrs. Hastings's declining health required her instant departure. She was not afflicted with any severe attack of sickness in the last rainy season, but I was



alarmed with daily symptoms, and could only attribute her escape to the weakness, not to the strength of her constitution. I was told too, that another season might prove fatal to her. I consented to part from her, nay, I urged her departure, nor even in the painful hour of trial do I repent it. I will follow her within the present year, nor shall any consideration detain me beyond it. Indeed, my own constitution is much impaired, and I shall expect another attack in the next rains, though I shall be as much as possible upon my guard against it.

Possibly there may be among those who have laboured to work my removal, some whose disappointment may construe the change of my resolution into a breach of engagement, and impute my former declaration to deception: or they may charge me with the presumption of attempting to intimidate. My friends will require no justification, for they will not be able to devise any other motives for my present plan than those which I have assigned. I shall suffer materially in my fortune by it, and lose by it every domestic comfort, besides something of my public influence in the too well established belief that my affection will not suffer me to remain in the long endurance of a state of separation.

I dwell too long on the subject of my private feelings; but you will pick out of this display of them what may be requisite for the satisfaction of my friends, the information of the public, should the public require it, and the refutation of false suggestions. I now proceed to matters of more importance.

In the packet which I have delivered to the care of Mrs. Hastings, you will find the sequel of our proceedings on the subject of the affairs of Oude, continued in a series of numbers, beginning where I left off in my despatches.



The sum of these is, that, after a long state of indecision, Mr. Wheler's return to the presidency afforded me an occasion to force the business to a crisis. Mr. Wheler was not pleased at Bristow's conduct; he was in a party with men whom he did not like, nor they him. Many of Mr. Bristow's letters lay before the Board unanswered, all filled with invectives against Hyder Beg Cawn, the avowed detail of acts of authority done by himself, and complaints that nobody would obey him. It appeared evident that, though he was absolute at the capital, nobody regarded him at a distance from it, where all seemed prepared to scramble for themselves. I stated the consequence of this state of affairs at a meeting of the Board on the 16th of last month, at which Mr. Bristow's letters were read; I stated the necessity of going further, if they meant to support Mr. Bristow, or of restoring the Nabob Vizier's authority, since the present state was anarchy, and declared them solely responsible for the consequences, since they would neither enforce my instructions, nor give Mr. Bristow others. But why need I detail it? The other members were greatly alarmed, and held many consultations together, desirous of an accommodation, but unable to determine on the mode of it. I was desired to state in writing the points which I required (not a public but confidential communication) that, knowing my sentiments, they might propose what I was not likely to reject. This was Mr. Macpherson's proposition in a conversation which I had with him on the subject, and I accordingly wrote and gave to Mr. Wheler a paper containing in substance the requisitions offered as an alternative, viz., that Mr. Bristow and Mr. Cowper should be recalled, and the resident's office withdrawn, and the Nabob Vizier restored to his authority, or that new instructions should be given to Mr. Bristow by the



other members of the Board, prescribing his conduct, and that I myself should be freed from any longer responsibility.

This produced, after a discussion of twelve days, their joint minute of the 28th of December, to which I on the instant replied, and, as they ought to have expected, rejected the offer. I had the satisfaction to find one of their body, Mr. Wheler, ashamed of it. They met again, composed another minute, explanatory of the last. We assembled on the 31st to read it. I acquiesced, and orders have been actually despatched to Mr. Bristow to depart from Lucknow as soon as Mr. Wombwell, the accomptant of the residency, whose office alone remains, shall have received from the Vizier the written securities or shroffs of credit for the Company's arrears and growing debt: and for this act I have agreed to take upon myself the responsibility; if that is a charge which I can exclusively take, or they yield. Thus this affair at present rests. I have indeed conquered, but I feel little inclination to triumph in my victory; for my hands are yet fettered; and such is the wretched state of the Vizier's affairs, that nothing can be more discouraging than the prospect before me. If the Nabob Vizier shall desire me to come to his assistance, I shall offer it to the Board, and shall be better pleased if they refuse than if they assent to it. Yet I will do what I can to gain their assent. You will observe that my minute of the 31st December, accepting of the proffer of the other members, is not among the papers which I send you. Get it if you can. The numbers forty and forty-two are for private inspection only. The latter might alarm if it were made public.

Mr. Macpherson is going to sea for his health, and Mr. Stables to Mongheer. I hope that with Mr. Wheler's help I shall make a good use of their absence



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in bringing up all the arrears of business, in which we are dreadfully tardy. Adieu, my dear friend, yours ever most affectionately.

P. S.—I have received your overland advices to the 1st of August, and was made most happy by them.

To the same.

Fort William, 18th January, 1784.

My dear Scott,—I left the *Atlas* under sail on the morning of the 10th, and may God prosper her on her voyage!

Nothing remarkable has since happened. Mr. Macpherson sailed on the same day a passenger in the *Belmont* for Ganjam, for the recovery of his health. Mr. Stables is preparing to make an excursion to Mongheer. I have written a minute, of which I will send you a copy, tendering my services to go to Lucknow. Mr. Wheler wishes it, but he is of too feeble a mind to join with his friends against the opposition of his enemies, even to the accomplishment of his own wishes; and Mr. Stables, whom he has in vain attempted to influence to assent to the measure, has, as I understand, positively refused it, although they all three, when they resigned to me the separate charge of the concerns in Oude, promised me their support, and Mr. Macpherson himself dictated the clause of my last minute of the 31st, in which I have expressed my reliance on that assurance. Nevertheless I shall make the proposition, and let it take its course. Possibly Mr. Stables will suffer it to lie after his fashion, and go away without making a reply to it. If he does, I will avail myself of my own casting voice, and trust to their irresolution for the confirmation of the measure after it has taken place. I can hardly say what is my motive for precipitating myself into such a scene of difficulty. I know that I can do much more if I am



myself the immediate agent, than I can by distant influence and a delegated authority; but I may fail, for most wretched is the state of the Vizier's dominions, and I may lose my reputation in the consequences of it. On the other hand, I may be the instrument of retrieving it and of paying the debt which is due from the Nabob to the Company; and if I do, I shall close my service with glory and leave a lasting good name behind me, whatever reproaches the inventive malice of my countrymen may cast upon me for having saved the national interests and honour from the ruin which, but for my exertions, would have fallen on both.

By late intelligence from Madras, I find that Lord Macartney's conduct has been disapproved in England, and that our Government has been even censured for its forbearance. I am told that Mr. James Macpherson has expressed much displeasure on this account, and that Lord North has said that the only relief can proceed from us, and that we shall be culpable if we withhold it. Let me not be involved in this reproach, for I have laboured with all my might, both in public remonstrances and in private conferences, to persuade my colleagues to take a decided part. They are sufficiently severe in their judgment, but cannot be brought to pass sentence, and thus the affair rests. Lord Macartney treats our opinions and orders with equal contempt, exercises his vengeance on the Nabob, who lies at his mercy without hope, and our decision waits for the next Company's despatches. You are long since in possession of the materials which will justify me in this business, and I trust to your vigilance and admirable recollection for their production in my vindication, whenever this shall require it.

My object in pointing these references to you at this time is to show that I have not been wanting in my endeavours to incite my own Board to do justice to the



Nabob. It is true that I did not in direct terms propose the suspension of Lord Macartney for his violation of one engagement and contempt of our orders; but it will evidently appear that I judged it necessary. While I saw in the members of the Board a disposition to support the Nabob, and that withheld from its effect but by the fear of the consequences arising from Lord Macartney's supposed interest at home, and the manifest determination of the people in power in England to condemn every act of this Government which could be attributed in a more especial manner to me than to my colleagues in office, I was unwilling to propose the point directly, or to enter protests against their resolutions, and by a decided separation from them provoke them to an opposition by which the Nabob might eventually lose even the little support which he derived from their ineffective opinions. Yet I omitted no argument that could apply to their judgments or make them individually feel for the consequences of suffering an injustice which reverted on them in the first instance for permitting it, and I particularly alluded to the claim which the Nabob had on Mr. Wheler as a gentleman and a man of honour, to relieve him from a state of distress brought on him by an act, in the formation of which Mr. Wheler was personally concerned, and with me exclusively. My sentiments were well known to Lord Macartney, however communicated, and were, I believe, as publicly known here, though I am myself very reserved on all points of a political nature. To the members of the Board in verbal conversations, both separately and collectively, I have from the beginning urged every argument and inducement to bring them to a determination, and have often declared that, though I should forbear it as long as I could with propriety, I would finally stand single in the avowal of my own opinion. To have done it



earlier would have answered no real end, nor any purpose but that of grounding a separate credit, if any was to be gained, by a specious but ineffectual motion. When at last I did make it, I was careful to strengthen it by every argument which could justify it, without making it offensive to them; and I am told that they have privately expressed their approbation of it, and they have only suspended their decision upon it, not absolutely rejected it. In short, my own opinion is, and to you, Scott, I can confidentially mention it as a certain fact, that the members of the Board see less danger in doing nothing than in acting, and seeing a standing Committee of the House of Commons on the watch for matter of crimination against us all, and determined, right or wrong, to condemn whatever is done; a powerful party covetous of our places; a weak administration courting support from all quarters, and this government affording a wide field of profitable patronage; they do not choose to add to the number of their enemies the connexions of Lord Macartney, or give them fresh and strong ground of attack. This Mr. Wheler has confessed. As to the other two, they received an early hint from their friends not to attach themselves to a fallen interest, and they took the first occasion to prove that, if I was to be removed, their removal was not to follow as a necessary consequence of their connexion with me, by opposing me on every occasion on the most popular ground, on the plea of economy and obedience of orders, which they apply indiscriminately to every measure which I recommend;—and Mr. Stables with a spirit of rancour which nothing can equal but his ignorance. His friend, with the most imposing talents, and an elegant and unceasing flow of words, knows as little of business as he does, and Mr. Wheler is really a man of business. Yet I cannot convince him of it, nor persuade him to trust to his own



superiority. He hates them, and is implicitly guided by them, and so he will always be by those who command him, and possess, at the same time, a majority of voices. But to return: if Lord Macartney's conduct at home is approved, let my opposition to it be known and condemned; if otherwise, let it be publicly known that I did all that I could do to check and punish it.

Attend particularly to the minute of the 20th March, the close of my long minute of the 11th July, my minute of the 31st of the same month, and the whole of that of the 13th of October. These contain the strongest vouchers of my intentions, and the last in express terms. Let not this pass unnoticed.

My minute upon the proposed visit to Lucknow was delivered yesterday, the 20th. I have written a note to Mr. Wheler, entreating him to give his opinion upon it to the secretary. As to Stables, his may wait, as usual. Mr. Macpherson is gone to Ganjam for his health. You shall know Mr. Wheler's answer in the close of this. I have used every argument and incentive to gain his assent. I have talked with him myself, and thought that I had fixed him; I have used the mediation of a common friend. I have also employed private means to prevail on Mr. Stables, though with little expectation of effect. In short, I have laboured with as much perseverance, and employed as many instruments, to carry this point as if I had it at heart; but in my heart I shall rejoice if I am defeated, for if I am committed in it, it will be the most desperate service I ever undertook, and may ruin my reputation by its failure of success; and here I leave it.

25th January.—I am now enabled to close my letter with the issue of the depending question. Mr. Stables has refused his assent to it, urging as his ground of it that the Governor cannot legally quit the Presidency, and that we are in expectation of new arrangements,



that is, that I am soon to be dismissed from my office. The first objection is founded on no point of law, and contradicted by the practice of all my predecessors, and my own, known and approved by the Directors themselves; for though they have reprobated my measures, they have never intimated even the remotest doubt of the legality or propriety of my leaving either Calcutta or their own provinces. Mr. Wheler, indeed, has told me that his friends have blamed him for giving me full powers, and thereby abandoning his own; but if I could only have acted by separate powers given to me, on every occasion, and must have waited the tedious effect of repeated references to Calcutta when I was at such a distance, the design of my commission would have been defeated, and I might as well have staid where I was; besides that, such powers were ever given to my predecessors whenever they went on such deputations, and even the creature Bristow has effectually possessed them and exercised them with a vengeance, abetted and justified by the members of the present Board, and no doubt he will find advocates even among the Directors at home. His last plea (I mean Stables's), viz., the expectation of a new arrangement, is a wicked pretext, because it is calculated to destroy my influence by exciting distrust and presumption at a time and on an occasion requiring every support that could be given me. He may shelter himself under the specious covering of the constitutional secrecy of the department in which his minute was recorded; but that is no preservative against the notoriety to which all our measures are liable when the members of the Government are divided; for our actions and discussions, and the points on which we differ, are as well known and as early to the public as to ourselves, and sometimes before they are recorded; nor are my colleagues themselves very delicate in the publication of their sen-



timents concerning me, for I am assured that Mr. Stables offered to lay a wager at table (I believe his own), and in a large company, that I was actually dismissed. I have not time now, but I believe I shall address the Court of Directors by the next despatch for the purpose of stating this species of counteraction, and I may thank them for it.

Mr. Wheler's minute is sensible, and, what all his compositions are, sufficient to the purpose, and not too much. One passage only is a little exceptionable; but I had provided against it, and perhaps it was necessary for him. He kindly showed me the minute before he delivered it, and candidly offered it for my correction of whatever I might disapprove in it; but I was satisfied with it as it was. I am now making my preparations for the journey, and have fixed on the 15th of next month for beginning it. I hope to receive an answer in the mean time to my despatches by the Surprise. If my destined successor is likely to be cordial towards me, I will stay above and prosecute my plans till they are in a train for their accomplishment; if hostile, I will either return and take my departure for England, or stay, as the circumstances of affairs, combined with the advices from England, shall direct. I hazard much by this undertaking; but I am convinced that if the disorders in Oude are to be retrieved, I am most likely to retrieve them. Cashmeeramull, the banker, is come to Calcutta, and yesterday made me his first visit. He is a sensible and well-informed man. He painted the distracted condition of Oude in the same colours that they appear in from every representation of them, and urged the necessity of my proceeding thither in person. I told him that the Council had left the affairs of Oude wholly to my separate management, and that I should invest Major Palmer, whom the Nabob and his ministers considered the prime instrument of their deliver-



ance, with all my authority; and I asked him whether that would not be sufficient. He said it would not. Major Palmer, he added, might effect much, and for the Nabob and his Court he would be competent to act; but that my own presence, and nothing else, could quiet the minds of the people, or give confidence to the acts done by my instructions; and he believed that I should find matters easy to be settled, though so large a collection could not be made this year as formerly, because of the late distractions and the effects of the late drought.

Your brother Jonathan shall be one of my few and chosen companions, and will be of great use to me. Adieu; remember that Sir E. Impey is to see all my despatches. Yours, most affectionately.

P.S. I had forgot to tell you that the detachment under Colonel Charles Morgan was at Handia, fifteen coss from Hoosingabad, on the 17th of December, and was expected to reach Elaya by an unnecessary length of route on the 1st of February. On the 19th we passed an order for the reduction of six regiments of sepoys, and the detachment itself to be reduced, and the parts of it posted with the brigades. I have a promise of bills for the arrears due to Colonel Pearse's detachment, and shall propose a fresh requisition for its return, the Europeans by sea, and the sepoys by land; the gross amount of the arrears to be paid at Mussulipatam and in Calcutta.

The following, to Sir Elijah Impey, whom the violence of party spirit had by this time recalled, seems too valuable to be omitted. If it contain several repetitions of matters in detail, it exhibits also in a new light the affectionate tone of the writer's mind.



150 MEMOIRS OF WARREN HASTINGS.

To Sir ELLIAH IMPEY.

Fort William, 25th January, 1784.

My dear Friend,—I am obliged to write with a divided attention, but I shall not have much to say, having already written to Major Scott all that you may wish to know of my public situation, and he will show you of course my despatches. This letter therefore will be little more than a chapter of heads. On the 16th of last month I called on the Board to take decidedly the charge and responsibility of the affairs of Oude into their own hands, or leave both to me. This produced a series of committee meetings, which at length produced a joint offer, with a number of provisions and reservations of the whole charge, if I would be answerable for the discharge of the Company's debt, (I mean the Nabob's,) which was above fifty lacs, in three months, and the regular discharge of the current demands in the fixed monthly payments. I refused: They explained away their former requisition; agreed to let me have the exclusive charge, and to recal Mr. Bristow and his office on the delivery of the engagement to pay the balance and current demands without any specification of time, and the security of good bankers for the performance of it; and my responsibility was limited to the "propriety" of the measure. I agreed, and Wombwell set off post (a little too fat for an express) with letters to the Nabob Vizier and Bristow on the sixth of this month. This accommodation passed on the 31st.

As they had promised me their fullest support, and Mr. Macpherson dictated my expression of my reliance on that promise in my minute of acceptance, as the ground of the latter; and as I received many successive letters, stating the absolute necessity of my presence at Lucknow, to restore the quiet and order of that country, and to give confidence to the Nabob and his



people, I tendered an offer of my services for that purpose. This was done on the 20th instant. Mr. Wheler has promised his consent to be given when the Nabob's requisition shall arrive, and Mr. Stables, in his usual coarse and surly style, has objected. He has wickedly insinuated that I shall be dismissed from my office, in the expression of the expectation of new arrangements from home. I shall however avail myself of this decision to depart, and have fixed on the 15th of next month, but not absolutely, for it. I shall go post to Patna, and take but a small attendance with me. I am not afraid of my colleagues when I am gone. They want courage and decision to counteract me with any effect; and my authority and influence, with the command of the army, and I shall not go without it, will be proof against all their teazings. I only fear the suspension of business at the presidency, and orders from home tending to the further reduction of my authority. I will at least do all I can to put my plan in train, and will assuredly leave affairs better than I found them.

We have no new alarms of the drought, and I have been inflexible to every argument and artifice used for making exceptions to the embargo. I verily believe it will have saved the lives of thousands.

We have ordered a reduction of six regiments of sepoy on Morgan's return, expected by the 1st of next month, and I hope to get back Colonel Pearse's very shortly, having made a provision for the arrears of pay.

Mrs. Hastings left the river in the Atlas on the morning of the 10th. In parting from her, I made a sacrifice of my own judgment, my ease, and possibly the comfort and happiness of my whole life, to the opinions of others. God grant that the event may prove it otherwise. I have a resource in the continual succession of occupations, which prevent my feeling so severe



a sense of my loss as I should otherwise do ; but it is never absent from my mind. She has no resource. I expect daily to receive accounts of the arrival of the Surprise, and some answers from Major Scott to my despatches by her. Whatever they are, my resolution is unalterable, though every voice in England were to cry out to break it.

I beg you will present my affectionate compliments to Lady Impey. I sincerely hope that you will have had a pleasant voyage, and landed your family in perfect health in England, and received unmixed pleasure in meeting with that part of it which you left there. You are a happy man ! God keep you so ! I am ever, my dear Sir Elijah, your affectionate and truly faithful friend.

To Major Scott.

Fort William, 8th February, 1784.

My dear Scott,—On the 31st of December it was agreed, after a length of debate, to recal Mr. Bristow and his office, and to leave to my separate charge our concerns in Oude, provided that the Nabob Vizier would give the security of creditable bankers for payment of the Company's arrears and current demands. In the mean time, on successive advices of the disorderly state of that government, and repeated assurances of the desire of the Nabob, and the general expectation of my presence, to assist in retrieving it, I represented this to the Board, and offered to go, but desired their early determination. It was agreed by Mr. Wheeler conditionally that the Nabob should write that he desired it. The Nabob and his minister have furnished the securities, but Mr. Bristow demurs, on pretence that they may not be such as the Board may require. The Nabob was on a hunting party 110 coss distant, but expected to return on the 31st ult. This will cause some delay in his reply to my public letter, but I ex-



pect to receive it in two days more, and to leave Calcutta not later than the 20th. I dread the loss of time. The Company, exhausted of its wealth, and actually suffering the first effects of an impending famine; the government weakened by a twelvemonth's distraction; the revenue dissipated; the Siecs approaching with a numerous army, and threatening an invasion; our council divided, and the majority of its members hostile to me; rumours, and worse than rumours, of an impending change in this government; my own knowledge of the strong grounds which I have furnished for it by the Surprise—the possibility of its coming to pass before I have begun to act, and the certainty of new assaults in every general letter, with probably repeated orders to my colleagues to oppose me: these are the evils which I have to encounter, and they require despatch, lest I should be compelled to end before I have well begun. Add the approaching hot weather, and my constitution unable to cope with the sun. On the other hand, I know that I can do more good, if I have time allowed me, and it is my ambition to close my government with the redemption of a great government, family, and nation from ruin, and however I am defeated in the extent of my design, I am confident that I shall leave affairs at least not worse than I found them. I depend much on the dependence of the Nabob and his ministers, who have no resource if they forfeit my friendship, and on the public opinion. This will greatly facilitate my measures, though in the result it may hurt my credit, as I shall certainly disappoint it, do what I may. In a word, it is the boldest enterprise of my public life, but I confidently hazard the consequences. Colonel Morgan, with the Bombay detachment, is by this time returned to the Jumna, and the detachment will be instantly reduced, and six regiments disbanded, to make room



for them. This will be a great saving, and we have made and shall make others. We will begin to pay off our interest bonds in December next.

The Mahrattas press the renewal of hostilities against Tippoo, which they have already begun, and the government of Madras is prepared for war, having heard nothing from the commissioners for seventeen days. Yet I scarce think that Tippoo, savage and wild of judgment as he is, will hazard it.

Our apprehensions of a famine daily abate, though the drought has prevailed universally, and without relief. The upper provinces have had rain, which will be of service to the harvests of wheat. Mr. Macpherson is sick at Ganjam. Yours, &c.



CHAPTER V.

Hastings's care of Science and Literature.

ARDUOUS as Mr. Hastings's public duties were, and indefatigable as he was in his attention to them, it is not to be supposed that he was indifferent all this while to the more ennobling demands upon his fostering care of general science and the literature of the country. If not the founder of the Asiatic Society, he was one of its earliest and most zealous promoters; and he made way for Sir William Jones in the President's chair, simply because he felt that there was not at his command leisure sufficient to do justice to the office. Of his eagerness to push, whenever an opportunity offered, geographical inquiries into unknown regions, a specimen was given in the account which I judged it expedient to introduce of Mr. James Bogle's journey to the court of Teshoo Lama. But this was not the only, nor perhaps the most important voyage of discovery which Mr. Hastings sent forth. He caused the harbours and rivers of Cochin China to be surveyed; directed Mr. Chapman to penetrate as far as he could into the interior; and received from that gentleman a report which was afterwards published, and added



greatly to the stock of geographical knowledge previously possessed by Europeans. In like manner he examined the shores of the Red Sea, with the view, ultimately effected, of opening by that line more direct means of communication between England and India. Neither did the kingdom of Ava escape his notice, as well on its inland frontier, as along its coasts. He collected, in reference both to it and to the districts adjacent, almost all the useful information which was in our possession, not only during the administration of the most illustrious of his successors, but up to the commencement of the late war, in 1827.

I have noticed elsewhere the eagerness with which he promoted the compilation of Mr. Halhed's valuable Digest of Hindoo Laws. His zeal, however, in laying open to European inspection the stores of wisdom which were hidden in the languages of Asia, by no means exhausted itself in this. He encouraged bodies of learned pundits to settle in Calcutta, and supported them while they translated out of the Sanscrit into more accessible dialects, the poems and mythological and moral treatises of their native land. He founded colleges for the instruction of native youths in the laws and usages of their own country. He held out inducements to the study by the natives of English literature and English science. He laboured, in short, to promote not only the poli-



tical, but the moral and rational improvement of the provinces. The following letters, which refer to these matters, seem to me to demand insertion, and I therefore transcribe them without further comment.

To the Honourable Court of DIRECTORS.

On the River Ganges, 21st February, 1784.

Honourable Sirs,—Having had occasion to disburse from my own cash many sums for services which, though required to enable me to execute the duties of my station, I have hitherto omitted to enter in my public accounts; and my own fortune being unequal to so heavy a charge, I have resolved to reimburse myself in a mode the most suitable to the situation of your affairs, by charging the same in my Durbar accounts of the present year, and crediting them by a sum privately received and appropriated to your service, in the same manner with other sums received on account of the Honourable Company, and already carried to their account.

The particulars of these disbursements are contained in the enclosed accounts, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, of which No. 5 is the abstract.

I shall subjoin a brief explanation of each.

The sum of the account No. 1 is the difference between the allowance of 300 rupees a month, which was the customary pay of the Governor's military secretary, and that which I allowed to Lieutenant-Colonel Ironside during the time that he acted in that capacity, on account of his superior rank. It was referred to your Honourable Court in one of the general letters of the year 1773 or 1774, but I presume that it was overlooked in the pressure of other more important matters which at that time occupied your attention.



Nos. 2 and 3 are explained in the accounts themselves.

No. 4 consists of three several kinds of charges, which I confess to have been unauthorized, but which I humbly conceive neither to be of a private nature, nor unworthy subjects of the bounty of a great and rising state. The first is inconsiderable, consisting chiefly in the subsistence of the Pundits who were assembled in Calcutta, and employed during two years in compiling the code of Hindoo laws for your use. The sum allotted to them was, as I recollect, one rupee to each per diem. A larger recompense was offered, but refused; nor would they receive this but for their daily support. They had, indeed, the promise of some public endowments for their colleges, which yet remain unperformed. The second is the amount of sundry monthly salaries paid to some of the most learned professors of the Mahomedan law, for translating from the Arabic into the Persian tongue, a compendium of their law, called the Hedaya, which is held in high estimation, and part of a more voluminous work, which I could not prosecute. Your Honourable Court is in possession of a part of the English version of the Hedaya, made by Mr. James Anderson, and the subsequent part of the same work has been lately translated by Mr. Hamilton. These gentlemen are both engaged in the completion of it, and are both eminently qualified for it. It would exceed the due bounds of this letter to expatiate on the utility of this work; yet I may be allowed to vindicate the expense of it by one summary argument, which is, that while the Mahomedan law is allowed to be the standard of the criminal jurisprudence of your dominion, under the control and inspection of your English servants, it seems indispensably necessary that the judges of the courts should have a more familiar guide for their



proceedings than the books of the Arabic tongue, of which few have opportunities of attaining a competent knowledge; and as necessary that your servants should possess the means of consulting the principles on which those judgments are founded, which in their ultimate resort, and in extraordinary cases, may fall within their immediate cognizance, and of the laws of which they are the protectors.

The third charge is that of an academy instituted for the study of the different branches of the sciences taught in the Mahomedan schools. After a trial of about two years, finding that it was likely to answer the end of its institution, I recommended to the Board, and obtained their consent, to pass the subsequent expense of the establishment to the account of the Company, and to erect a building for the purpose, at my own immediate cost, but for a Company's interest note granted me for the reimbursement of it. It is almost the only complete establishment of the kind now existing in India, although they were once in universal use, and the decayed remains of these schools are yet to be seen in every capital, town, and city of Hindostan and Deccan. It has contributed to extend the credit of the Company's name, and to soften the prejudices excited by the rapid growth of the British dominions; and it is a seminary of the most useful members of society.

I humbly submit the propriety of carrying these expenses to your account by the consideration that it was not possible for me to have been influenced in incurring them by any purpose of my own interest. Something perhaps may be attributed to the impulse of pride in the share which I might hope to derive of a public benefaction, but certainly not to vanity or ostentation, since I believe it to be generally conceived that the whole expense, of which the greatest part is



yet my own, has been already defrayed from the treasury of the Company.

I will candidly confess that, when I first engaged both in this and the preceding expense, I had no intention of carrying it to the account of the Company. Improvident for myself, zealous for the honour of my country, and the credit and interest of my employers, I seldom permitted my prospects of futurity to enter into the view of my private concerns. In the undisturbed exercise of the faculties which appertained to the active season of my life, I confined all my regards to my public character, and reckoned on a fund of years to come for its duration. The infirmities of life have since succeeded, and I have lately received more than one severe warning to retire from a scene to which my bodily strength is no longer equal, and am threatened with a corresponding decay in whatever powers of mind I once possessed to discharge the laborious duties and hard vicissitudes of my station. With this change in my condition, I am compelled to depart from that liberal plan which I originally adopted, and to claim from your justice—for you have forbid me to appeal to your generosity—the discharge of a debt which I can with the most scrupulous integrity aver to be justly my due, and which I cannot sustain.

If it should be objected that the allowance of these demands would furnish a precedent for others of the like kind, I have to remark, that in their whole amount they are but the aggregate of a contingent account of twelve years; and if it were to become the practice of those who have passed their prime of life in your service, and filled, so long as I have filled it, the first office of your dominion, to glean from their past accounts all the little articles of expense which their inaccuracy or indifference hath overlooked, your interests would suffer infinitely less by the precedent



than by a single example of a life spent in the accumulation of crores for your benefit, and doomed in its close to suffer the extremity of private want, and sink in obscurity.

I have thought it proper to complete the present subject by the addition of a charge which I intended to have submitted regularly to the Board, but which, if divided at this time from the others, might have admitted an unfair construction. It is in the account No. 6, and consists of charges incurred for boats and budgerows, provided by me for my own use, on such public occasions as required my departure from the presidency on extraordinary services.

My predecessors have always had an establishment of this kind provided for them, and my successor will have a provision devolve to him superior in convenience and in elegance to any that I have yet seen, and furnished with a cost which would not be credited by those who have seen the subjects of it. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, honourable Sirs, your most obedient and most faithful servant.

To Lord MANSFIELD.

The Province of Benares, 10th March, 1784.

My Lord,—I received so much satisfaction from the perusal of the enclosed papers, that it has tempted me to send them for your Lordship's perusal, in the assurance that they will afford you equal entertainment. They are a part of a report made by Lieutenant Turner, a young kinsman of mine (and I have a pleasure in acknowledging the relation, because his conduct has done credit to my choice of him for the service to which it relates), who was deputed, about the middle of last year, to visit the Lama of Tibet. I believe I may, without much licence, term it a physical curiosity, since it is perhaps the first example which was ever produced to the Western world of the



effect of education on an infant mind, for such it surely is, as it is impossible to attribute the same effect to any other cause, without adopting the superstition which gave it birth. I will be your Lordship's pledge for the veracity of the narrator, whom I know to be incapable of uttering a falsehood, or enlarging the truth, for any consideration even of interest, and in this instance he had no inducement; besides that I should have the means of detection in my communication with other persons who were either present at the interview which Mr. Turner had with the Lama, or had other opportunities of seeing the same phenomenon.

I am very delicate in my intrusion on your Lordship's attention, but I consider this a tribute due to your eminent taste, and therefore not inconsistent when offered under such an impression, with a respect which I feel for your Lordship, exceeding that which I bear for all the rest of mankind. I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

Of the preceding letters, the two last were written while Mr. Hastings was prosecuting his journey to Lucknow. It was an expedition replete with interesting results both to himself and to the parties for whose sake it had been undertaken; yet I will not for the present enter upon that part of my subject, because the occurrences which kept pace with it elsewhere, in point of time, at least, make large demands upon our notice, and to these I feel that it will be proper, in the first instance, to direct the reader's attention.



CHAPTER VI.

Transactions in England.

NOTHING could be more bright, nothing more satisfactory or full of promise, than the aspect which Mr. Hastings's fortunes appeared to have assumed at home during the earlier portion of the year 1784. The King's councils were then directed by men who owed, and made no secret of owing, their elevation to office mainly to him. Of the members of that administration some were among his most ardent admirers, and all, Mr. Dundas himself not excepted, avowed themselves his friends. In the Court of Directors, likewise, a great change of opinion seemed to have taken place; while the proprietors were now, as they had ever been, his steady supporters. No doubt the faction in the House of Commons, which had sought his ruin with so much eagerness in other years, abated not a jot of their hostility; but though powerful in point of numbers, they were weak in influence as well as in character, and both to the King and to the mass of the people they had become peculiarly distasteful. No man's prospects, therefore, could appear more bright or more full of promise than those of Mr. Hastings at the opening of 1784; nor were his correspondents backward in assuring



him that the day would answer to the dawn, and that an abundant recompense for all the mortifications which he had suffered would, without fail, attend him.

The first decided proof afforded of a change of sentiment among the Directors was their repeal of an order formerly issued to reinstate Cheyt Sing in the Rajahship of Benares. In performing this act of justice, they did not, indeed, pass all at once into a strain of encomium on the Governor-general. That would have made them ridiculous in their own eyes and in the eyes of the whole nation; but they cancelled instructions which in a moment of irritation had been drawn up, whether with a view even then of having them carried into effect may be doubted. Again, the feelings of the majority were all in favour of Mr. Hastings in reference to his quarrel with the Madras Government. So decidedly, indeed, was this the case, that the Surprise packet, after clearing at the Custom-house, was detained three whole days in order that she might carry out orders such as should enable him to settle in his own way the points in dispute between Lord Macartney and the Nabob of Arcot. By Mr. Hastings's correspondents I find all this attributed mainly to the influence of Lord Thurlow, Mr. Pitt's new Chancellor. Probably these gentlemen were right, for of the many distinguished men who befriended Mr. Hastings, through good report



and through evil, Lord Thurlow was at once the most consistent and the most able. But however this may be, the effects of the arrangement were to hold out to him, for a brief space, the promises of power at the close of his administration, which, had they been afforded a few years earlier, would have saved him much personal annoyance, and the Company many severe losses. On the other hand, the friends of Lord Macartney, and they were both numerous and active, ceased not to inveigh against Mr. Hastings in all quarters. They charged him with having kept up a secret correspondence with General Stuart. They alleged that the latter had by him been encouraged in every act of contumacy towards his immediate superiors, of which he had been guilty, and they justified the General's supersession and arrest on the ground that he waited only for Mr. Hastings's direct command in order to supersede Lord Macartney and send him home a prisoner. Nor did their inventive malice end there. They circulated a report that Mr. Hastings had thrown off the English yoke, and was reigning in Calcutta as an independent prince; neither were there wanting those, even among his best friends, who declared, that, considering the amount of provocation which he had received, the proceeding, supposing it to be real, would be very little to be wondered at.

Such was the state of public feeling in England,



when the ship *Nerbudda* arrived from Calcutta, bringing intelligence of the Nabob Vizier's dissatisfaction with Mr. Bristow's administration, and of the applications which he had made to the Governor-general for redress of wrongs already received and protection for the future. The perusal of these despatches gave great joy to Mr. Hastings's friends, because they found in them ample confirmation of the opinions which they had uniformly expressed, namely, that the Governor's policy in reference to Oude was both just and humane throughout, and that the Nabob reposed in him unlimited confidence. When, therefore, Mr. Hastings's project for the withdrawal of a resident from Lucknow came to be discussed, they easily carried the question in the affirmative, and he was formally empowered to act in the matter according to the dictates of his own judgment. In like manner Lord Macartney's conduct, especially in the arrest of General Stuart, was severely censured, and the whole tenor of his policy, as opposed to that of the Governor-general, condemned. Yet the tide which appeared to flow so strongly in Mr. Hastings's favour had even then reached its height, and, for reasons not in every instance palpable, yet scarcely such as to be hidden from the careful inquirer, Mr. Hastings was destined once again to become the object of ungenerous suspicion and unlooked for hostility.



On the 6th of July, Mr. Pitt, who on the preceding January had sustained a defeat, and in the following March, after a stout contest, had dissolved the refractory Parliament, introduced into the House of Commons his great measure for the better management of the affairs of India. It was largely assisted in its progress through both Houses by the friends and admirers of Mr. Hastings, and early in the succeeding month received the royal assent. Nevertheless, the expectations which the supporters of the measure had cherished,—whether they looked to its probable effects upon the Company's affairs at home and abroad, or limited their views to the actual condition and future prospects of the Governor-general,—were not destined to be fulfilled. In the former case, the antagonist powers of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors were found not to work, at least at the outset, in harmony. In the latter, Mr. Hastings's claims on the gratitude of the Minister appeared to fade away so soon as Mr. Hastings himself ceased to be useful as an engine wherewith to effect a particular purpose; nor were there wanting those who accounted for Mr. Pitt's coldness on grounds scarcely less questionable, though far more contemptible. The King was well known to hold Mr. Hastings's talents in the highest esteem. The people asserted that it was Mr. Hastings's influence which kept Mr. Pitt in power; and the great attention which was



shown at St. James's to Mrs. Hastings, who arrived about this time in London, was not calculated to destroy the illusion. Now if Mr. Pitt was, as his enemies represent him to have been, peculiarly open to the movements of political jealousy, it is by no means impossible that in the instance now before us, the feeling, quite unworthy of his position and talents, may have been brought into play; at all events, it is past dispute that the opinion obtained extensive credit not only among those who envied, and therefore hated the minister, but among his own personal adherents. Let me, however, adhere to the rule which has guided me throughout, as often as I have been called upon to criticise the motives or behaviour of those among the leading politicians of the day at whose hands Mr. Hastings suffered wrong. The following letters throw a strong light upon the state of feeling in the Cabinet at the time, and are in other respects of too much value to be overlooked:—

From Major SCOTT.

London, Queen-square, 15th August, 1784.

My dear Sir,—I despatched a packet to you overland on the 14th of last month, and another on the 3rd of this month; the last to convey to you the happy intelligence of Mrs. Hastings's arrival in England. This goes by Captain Rayne, who carries out the government despatches overland, and by the Fox and Cygnet.

Our India bill has now passed both houses, and received the royal assent on Friday. The Chancellor supported it, though he does not entirely approve of



every part; and Sir Elijah Impey thinks there are parts which you will not like. He wished, so did we all, that the Governor-general should have a negative; but Mr. Pitt was afraid to propose so strong a measure, and therefore he determined to reduce the Supreme Council to four, by which means your casting vote would operate.

In debating this clause of the bill, I had an opportunity of stating that many of our misfortunes, indeed all, were owing to decided parties being formed against you in the Council; and I had two or three fair slaps at Francis upon this occasion; but the printed accounts will show you the whole. The Lord Chancellor spoke admirably in the House of Lords. There is a clause in the bill which directs that every person returning from India after the 1st of January, 1787, shall deliver in the amount of the fortune he acquired in India. Lord Carlisle insinuated that this distant period was fixed upon, in order to give some persons an opportunity of returning with larger fortunes in security, and glanced, as the Chancellor understood, at you.

His Lordship replied, with infinite force and spirit, "If the noble Lord means to insinuate that the great and respectable character who has presided so many years in India will have an objection to declare the amount of the fortune he has acquired in three-and-thirty years, I will venture to assert that that gentleman will be ready at any time to make such a declaration; and the only risk he will run, my Lords, from such a discovery, will be that of being thought in this instance a weak and foolish man; for I am sure it will be found that, in the course of his long and important services, he has not acquired a third of the fortune which many obscure men have accumulated in three or four years."

You will see in the printed debates how very un-



fairly Francis stated the business of presents, and that I had a good opportunity of clearing up that too. Sir Elijah thinks you will be chagrined at that clause; but the Chancellor declares that there is not the most distant idea of a reflection upon you meant by it, but that, on the contrary, his Majesty's ministers most warmly applaud every part of your conduct relative to presents, and that they highly approve of our making the application for the ten lacs, upon the plea of your having paid into the Company's treasury above three hundred thousand pounds which you might have appropriated to your own use.

In a bill of regulation it was thought better that the practice of receiving presents should be universally abolished; but this, without intending anything like a reflection upon you.

You will see also, my dear Sir, that I had a fair opportunity of clearing away all the slanders that had been thrown upon you, and of triumphing most completely over that reptile Mr. Burke. But we were most miserably disappointed indeed in one particular. The opposition Lords had assembled their whole force in order to debate the India Bill at the third reading on Monday last. I had been with the Chancellor every day previous to that time in order to give him full information, and I am convinced he would have pronounced the finest speech ever made in Parliament, in justification of everything you have done, and that he would also have given Mr. Francis a precious trimming; but when the hour arrived, the opposition Lords were afraid to meet us, and they suffered the bill to pass without saying a single syllable. This was a bitter disappointment indeed, and only made up, in a very small part, by a speech of the Chancellor, in passing our Dividend and Relief Bill; but he then challenged any man to come forward and debate what



they might have debated on the third reading of the India Bill, and declared that the state of India was most prosperous; that you had concluded peace with all our enemies; had preserved all our possessions, and greatly improved our revenues. The speech goes inclosed, though not so well given as he pronounced it.

The Lord Chancellor has all along said that the ministry ought to give you a peerage and a red ribbon; I spoke to him two days ago upon the subject, and he took it up instantly with warmth. He said, "I do not know a man who cuts so great a figure upon the stage of the world as Hastings: to his other extraordinary actions must be added, that of giving a ministry to Great Britain, for whether we may choose generally to confess it or not, the fact is, that this is Hastings's administration, and that he put an end to the late ministry as completely as if he had taken a pistol and shot them through the head one after another. It would therefore be base and dishonourable in ministers not to advise his Majesty to confer some mark of his royal favour upon a man who, to his other great and important services, can boast of performing this meritorious action also."

His Lordship said he would speak that day to the two Secretaries of State, and sent me away instantly to Mr. Pitt. As he was not in town, I wrote to him, and went to the House of Lords, where I saw the Lord President, Lord Gower, who said it must be done immediately, and added:—"I always admired Mr. Hastings, but the late events in India and in England are of such a nature as to raise him in my opinion above all praise."

The Chancellor spoke to Lord Sydney and the Marquis of Carmarthen, the two Secretaries of State, and instantly obtained their concurrence, as also Lord



CSL

Weymouth's, so that it now only remains to get Mr. Pitt's consent, which, I trust, I shall communicate before I close this letter.

It is the desire of the Chancellor that you should be created an English peer, but if that cannot be accomplished, he says he will condescend to accept an Irish title just now, though so greatly inferior to your merits. You cannot, he says, be created Lord Hastings, because that barony is in Lord Huntingdon. I mentioned your taking the title from Daylesford, the place which was so many years the seat of your family, and he thinks it would be better than any other. I shall not be at ease, my dear Sir, till this business is accomplished. I assure you, I want words to convey to you an adequate idea of the Chancellor's warmth of friendship for you, and the admiration he expresses for your character. He is the first man in the kingdom, I think, for firmness and independence of spirit.

Burke has never made his appearance in the House since the day he moved for your instructions relative to Almas Alli Cawn, and the conclusion of that business has rendered him completely ridiculous, and indeed thrown great ridicule upon the whole party; for, from Burke's mode of opening the affair, they thought something might be made of it; but when I seconded his motion, and afterwards, in his absence, moved that the instructions should be printed, they saw what scrapes so wild a man would lead them into. Great expectations, too, were formed from Francis. He also is rendered as ridiculous as Burke, first, by his gloomy representations, and next by stating that there was no prospect of peace with Tippoo. Not the smallest attention will be paid to his predictions in future, even if he should attempt to speak, which, I believe, he hardly will. In short, my dear Sir, we have fully and effectually confounded all your enemies, not by the



common mode of carrying points, by a dead majority in the House of Commons, but by reason and argument.

Mrs. Hastings returns from General Caillaud's today, and is to be presented on Thursday to their Majesties, by Lady Weymouth.

As the ships will not go till next week, I shall write again then, and remain, with every sentiment of respect, gratitude, and affection, my dear Sir, your much obliged and faithful humble servant.

From the same.

London, Queen-square, 4th September, 1784.

My dear Sir,—My packet overland with the pleasing intelligence of Mrs. Hastings's safe arrival, and covering a letter from her to you, has, I hope, reached Constantinople by this time.

I have given the strictest injunctions for its being forwarded, without the loss of a moment. I have since despatched another packet overland, with an account of the very honourable and gracious reception she received from their Majesties.

We were again at court on the 2d instant, according to the etiquette, and Mrs. Hastings was received with still greater marks of attention, if possible. The Chancellor had taken me aside to speak to me, while the Queen was talking to Mrs. Hastings, and when her Majesty spoke to me afterwards, she said, "I am very glad to observe that Mrs. Hastings is so much recovered; she looks infinitely better than when I saw her a fortnight ago, and I hope this country will soon restore her to perfect health."

These are precisely the Queen's words, I assure you, and they convey the most pleasing and pointed mark of attention that it was possible for her to show. Since my last letter the Directors have made several arrange-



ments. The ministers wished exceedingly to remove Macartney, but when it came to the point, they were afraid of the Bute interest. The King highly disapproves of his conduct, and it is generally expected that the full and complete power given by the new Bill to you will effectually keep him in order in future, and orders will go from hence relative to the assignment.

In my last letter I informed you, my dear Sir, how the peerage stood. I cannot sufficiently express to you the kindness and friendship of the Chancellor on this occasion. He told me he would make a point of it, and peremptorily enjoined me to leave it to him. When I was with Mrs. Hastings at the drawing room on Thursday, Mr. Pitt came up to me and spoke exactly as follows: "I am really ashamed, Major Scott, that I have never yet entered upon the business you wrote to me about; but as I have always found you free and open, I will candidly and honestly give you my sentiments. I look upon Mr. Hastings to be a very great, and indeed a wonderful man. He has done very essential services to the state, and has a claim upon us for everything he can ask. My only difficulty, and I confess it appears to me to be a material one, is, the resolutions of the House of Commons, standing upon our journals: for though I admit that the charges against Mr. Hastings were ridiculous and absurd, and were, as I really think, fully refuted, yet until the sting of those resolutions is done away by a vote of thanks for Mr. Hastings's great services, I do not see how I can with propriety advise his Majesty to confer an honour upon Mr. Hastings. On the other hand, there are many powerful reasons to be assigned for our not waiting till we meet again."

I observed to Mr. Pitt that your situation was a cruel one indeed, if resolutions so totally unfounded, and carried in so shameful a manner, were to prevent



you from receiving a mark of the sovereign's favour; and I desired Mr. Pitt to consider that the very same House of Commons which had voted resolutions against Mr. Hastings had also voted resolutions against Mr. Pitt, and that it was deservedly punished by a premature dissolution. Pitt told me then that he was undetermined, but I should hear further.

I saw the Chancellor the next day, and related this conversation to him. He told me he had laboured to carry the point now, and still had one hope left. "I mean (says his Lordship) to desire Mr. Pitt will permit me to take the responsibility of the measure upon myself, since he is afraid of the House of Commons, and I will ask the King to create Hastings a peer; I am sure he will not refuse me."

Thus the matter stands at present, my dear Sir, and I trust it will be done, because a vote of thanks may follow with the greatest propriety.

Mr. Pitt had manifestly taken his line. He praised Mr. Hastings both in public and in private; he spoke of him as the fittest of living men to control the destinies of British India; yet he positively refused to confer upon him any especial mark of royal favour. It seems idle to suppose that the motive assigned by him for this reluctance could be the true one. Mr. Pitt had influence enough in his own House of Commons to obtain the repeal of the vote of censure had he desired it, or if not, I cannot see how such a vote passed by a defunct Parliament ought to have operated as a bar to the advancement of him who was the object of it. For either Mr. Hastings de-



served the censure, in which case he deserved much more, or the censure was unmerited, and therefore in itself a dead letter. Nevertheless, Mr. Pitt could not be moved. Moreover, the dissensions between the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, which almost immediately began, were not without their effect in obstructing Hastings's career of honour. I find for example, that the Directors, while they took part with Mr. Hastings against Lord Macartney, inserted in their despatch a clause, to the effect, that, within a year from its receipt, Mr. Hastings should resign his government. The Board of Control, on the other hand, though compelled by the Bute influence to cast their shield before the Governor of Madras, erased the paragraph relating to Mr. Hastings, and left him free to choose his own period of retirement. These may be regarded as trivial matters by an indifferent person. To Mr. Hastings they were big with important results, and the following letter will show that by more than Mr. Hastings they were regarded as important.

From the same.

London, 6th November, 1784.

My dear Sir,—I despatched a letter to you overland on Tuesday last, and a copy of it goes by this ship. There was a letter to you from Mrs. Hastings by the same despatch, so that I am doubly anxious for its safe and speedy arrival.

Two days ago I dined alone with the Lord Chan-



cellor, and we had a very long conversation upon India affairs. He does not perfectly understand what his brother ministers mean, but matters he assures me cannot long remain upon their present footing.

The dissent of the Board of Control to the Directors' resolution for your quitting at the end of one year after the appointment of a successor, he approves, though he did not construe that resolution into an ungentlemanlike dismissal from the service at the end of the year, which was the light in which many of your friends had viewed it. He thinks too that there is a more powerful leaning towards Macartney than he expected there would have been, at the same time that they substantially adopt your system, and blame and censure his lordship for those breaches of a solemn treaty which you have so justly condemned.

The Chancellor has promised he will make himself master of this subject completely, and I have put all the papers into his hands. Finding there was so great a backwardness in Mr. Pitt to do you justice, by elevating you to a British peerage, the Chancellor was determined to enter fully into the business, and I shall now copy for you, my dear Sir, as faithfully as my memory will permit, what passed between them.

I went, said his Lordship, to Mr. Pitt at Putney, and I told him that it was absolutely necessary we should do something decisive relative to Hastings, for though I had always declared, and was always ready to declare, that Hastings had made me a minister, and made Mr. Pitt one too, yet if there was anything in the character or conduct of Mr. Hastings which would not bear a scrutiny, or if he had been unprincipled, corrupt, or inefficient in his great office, I was just as ready to crush him as Mr. Pitt could be; for though he had made me a minister, and though I had declared so in the House of Peers, Mr. Pitt should never find me an



advocate for, or a protector of, a delinquent. I saw Pitt was rather distressed to be so pushed; but he told me that although in many instances, and those important ones too, he allowed Mr. Hastings great merit, yet there were charges against him which, till explained, he conceived would render it dangerous for his Majesty's ministers to grant him a peerage, as it would excite the popular clamour to a very great degree.

I then desired Mr. Pitt would tell me what were the objections against Hastings, and he said there were four.

First, he had attempted to extend the British dominion in India, a system Pitt highly disapproved. Secondly, he had by his conduct forfeited the confidence of the native princes of India. Thirdly, he had, in various instances, disobeyed the orders of the Court of Directors; and fourthly, he had fixed enormous salaries to offices in Bengal, and wasted the public money to gratify the servants of the Company who were attached to him.

I told Mr. Pitt we were now nearly coming to a point, and all I wished further was to have him specify any instances under these general heads, to which I would engage to reply so as to satisfy his mind. Pitt seemed staggered a little, and I said to him, Come, Mr. Pitt, I see you know as little of the matter as I do, but let us talk this business over as friends, or if you please, as statesmen. Do not look upon me as the advocate of Hastings. You will see Mr. Dundas in half an hour, and perhaps he may point out some instances under each head of accusation. Perhaps he may not, for I suspect Dundas to know as little of India affairs as you and I do; but I'll tell you what I will do. You shall employ Dundas to employ any man or set of men he pleases, to point out the instances in which Hastings has profusely lavished the public



money, disobeyed orders, forfeited the confidence of the native princes, or attempted to extend the British empire in India: and if I do not produce a full and satisfactory answer to each charge, why, then I not only will consent to sacrifice Hastings, but I will insist upon his being sacrificed to national justice. At present it appears to me that you are afraid to support Hastings, and yet afraid to recall him, but it is impossible that this miserable system can go on. His merits are great and splendid: you allow them to be so. His influence also is great, but it does not arise from corruption or wealth. It arises from the high opinion men entertain of his integrity and extraordinary abilities. If you can prove that he wants the first, or is deficient in the last, he will sink in the public opinion, and you may reduce him in a moment to the situation of a private man. Every friend of Hastings with whom I have conversed will gladly consent that he shall rise or fall by his merits.

This, my dear Sir, is the substance of what passed between Pitt and the Lord Chancellor. When Dundas returns from Scotland, his Lordship assures me there will be some decision, and he said, if it shall appear that Hastings has in some instances given larger salaries than they approve (for all the other charges are nonsense), why the devil don't they order them to be lessened? but I hope they will, at the same time, give Hastings credit for creating an immense revenue at his own responsibility and for the improvement of the land revenues of Bengal.

The Chancellor told Mr. Pitt that what information he had, he drew from me; that knowing my connexion with Mr. Hastings, and the enthusiasm of my temper, he did not entirely depend upon me. He observed, however, that Lord Walsingham was as strong an enthusiast as I was. What he therefore wanted was,