



that those who thought unfavourably of Mr. Hastings, that his avowed enemies should state every thing they could against him; that the Chancellor should be permitted to call upon me for an answer to each head of accusation, and then he would willingly leave it to Mr. Pitt to determine.

I hope, my dear Sir, something of this kind will be done, but you now see the little pitiful manner in which you are attacked.

Upon all the great points you have completely defeated your opponents, and they are now attempting to whisper away your reputation. In this, however, by the manly part our friend the Chancellor takes, we shall effectually disappoint them. This mode of attack proceeds from the private letters of two of your colleagues in Bengal, who have been perpetually asserting, that contracts, salaries, and agencies have been given away at an extravagant rate. When we can once bring them to specify the instances, we shall soon refute them.

10th of November. — I was two hours yesterday with our friend Lord Walsingham, and related to him, by the Chancellor's desire, what had passed between him and Mr. Pitt.

Lord Walsingham said that the three first charges were nonsense; that the Board gave you credit for holding high the British character in the East, and that the charge of disobedience of orders was contemptible, but that on the last head you would certainly be pushed when the subject came forward, in consequence of the minutes and private representations of Stables to John Robinson. It is impossible, my dear Sir, they can push you without condescending to specify the particular instances of larger salaries, &c.; and when once they will do that, I have not a doubt of explaining your conduct satisfactorily; but the Chancellor says,



admitting the fact to be so, that their ideas of what are handsome salaries shall be more confined than yours, they have only to order them to be lessened in future.

What the Board and the Directors want, is to bring the civil expenses within thirty lacs a year, and whether they will order you to do this, or go into the detail is uncertain yet, but I believe the latter.

As the Fox is still to stay some days, I may be able to tell you further in another letter. I am ever, my dear Sir, most faithfully and gratefully yours.





## CHAPTER VII.

Journey to Lucknow—Communication with the Prince of Delhi—Preparations to return Home—Letters to Mr. Hastings.

WHILE parties were thus confounding themselves, and losing sight in their bickerings, not unfrequently of what was due to justice, almost always of what they owed to sound policy and common sense, Mr. Hastings was putting forth his strength so that the affairs of the province might as speedily as possible be reduced to order, and himself left free to indulge his own wishes by departing for England. His journey to Lucknow went forward, as has elsewhere been explained, without the occurrence of any adventure of which it is necessary to give an account. In its results, however, it proved eminently advantageous, both to the Company and the Nabob, for the former received on the instant a considerable portion of the sums that were due; while the latter was placed in such a situation as to afford good hope of his being able thenceforth to support his own dignity. Yet greater things still would have questionless followed, had Mr. Hastings been, as his friends at home believed him to be, absolute in British India. Mr. Hastings found at Lucknow an illustrious



exile, the eldest son of the fallen Mogul; who escaping from Delhi had come to implore the assistance of the English, in restoring to his father some portion of the power of which his enemies had deprived him. The project, bold as it was, seems to have been readily, I had almost said eagerly, embraced by Mr. Hastings. It agreed well with the expansive nature of his genius, which delighted to consider rather the ultimate results of things, than the inconvenience which might attend the effort to attain them; and he was the more disposed to assist the prince, that he believed the moral influence of the Company of sufficient weight to bear down all opposition. But his colleagues, to whom he referred the matter, shrank from it with dismay, and it fell of course to the ground. The following, which contains a summary of his proceedings in this and in other matters, will, I think be read with great interest.

To Major Scott.

Lucknow, 12th June, 1784.

My dear Scott,—On the 15th and 17th ultimo, I sent despatches to Mr. Bodham to be forwarded to England by the way of Bussora, containing duplicate letters to the Court of Directors, and two to you, with one in each for Mrs. Hastings. I can neither detail what I have done, nor send you materials. I have furnished the Council with bills for five lacs at a reduced exchange of three and a half per cent. instead of sixteen and twenty. I have paid up all the arrears of the different corps, the Surat included, of these pro-





vinces. I have just got bills for five lacs, also with a reduced exchange of four per cent. from Bombay, where they are in the last degree of want. I had realized above forty-six lacs when my accounts in those despatches were closed. The season of collection closed with them; but something, I do not exactly know what, has been received since. I have adjusted all the disputed accounts between the Nabob Vizier and the Company, and formed the mode of monthly adjustment with the joint signatures and interchange of the minister and our accomptant, which will preclude all future differences, the past being the accumulation of years. The minister has formed all his plans for the ensuing settlement, for the retrenchment of expenses, and the establishment of new and necessary offices; and promises that all will be in complete execution within a month from this time. He desires me to remain a little longer to give them effect in the first operation, and I have fixed the day of my departure. The settlement will be generally fixed for five years, and if the rains set in well, there will be a sufficiency to pay all the debt of the Company considerably within the next year, *i. e.* from 1st September to 1st September, and provide for a new military establishment to replace Sir John Cummings, which I shall withdraw. I have had few occasions to apply to the Board, but on these I have constantly received flat and ungracious refusals, after having been made to wait a length of time for answers on subjects stated to require instant decision; I wrote them a long letter representing the management of Benares, and offering to correct the abuses. They made me wait a month, and then asked for my plan. I have given them one, and they refuse to accept it; I shall have exposed the names of individuals to personal vengeance, and done no good to the country. If they accept it, I have pledged my credit for the prosperity



and safety of the country and its revenue. If they do not, I will return by the river Gagra under pretext of a visit to the Begums at Fyzabad, that I may not pass Benares, for I underwent the persecution of mobs of complainants from Boxar to Joosee in my way hither, and there is now a little mob parading even at my gate.

I have desired powers to relieve the King, declaring that I believed I could do it without hostility or expense, provided I had the power of the former, and that I would undertake nothing without a moral certainty of avoiding both. They have "exhorted me to avoid most sedulously and cautiously in my correspondence with the different princes of India whatever may commit, or be strained into an interpretation of committing the Company, either as to their arms or treasure." These are their words, and they are fulsomely loud in their applause of the "*wisdom and sound policy*" of the Company's orders against our interference "in the objects of dispute between the country powers." Yet they "hope that I shall be enabled to effect the return of the Shazada to his father with safety and credit to the prince." As if I could negotiate with my hands tied. I have, however, stated the necessity of my having powers so strongly, that I think they will be perplexed to justify their refusal. Yet I know they will refuse, and sincerely hope they will; for though I have urged this point with all the vehemence of a man whose heart is devoted to the point which he pursues, I have opposed my own interest, ease, and inclinations in it. Some good I will yet do, and may draw the means of it from the overshoot caution with which the instructions of the Board are guarded. But I am led unawares into a subject which I meant to have left entirely to your brother; to whom I now leave what remains of it.

You will hear enough of the treaty concluded with





Tippoo Sultan. Our Board have ratified it, and sent a copy to me for a second ratification of it with my signature. I have assigned my reasons why I ought not to sign it. Indeed there is an absurdity in the very form of it, for it expresses that the Governor-general and Council have signed it on such a date in Fort William when I am at the distance of 800 miles from it. I have drawn out another, in which I rendered that part of the ratification more accurate, and accompanied it with a declaration on the part of the Governor-general and Council that we have acceded, to the treaty under the construction of the Nabob Walla Jah being understood and included in it wherever the Carnatic is mentioned; and I have signed both the copy which the Board sent to me, my amended copy, and the declaration, that they may make their choice of them without loss of time. They have approved the two latter, and intend to depute a person to see that they are delivered. Upon this occasion I have again condemned their forbearance, and urged their dismissing Lord Macartney and the committee for breach of orders. For they have studiously excluded the Nabob Walla Jah, though the principal in the treaty, and the Mahrattas, though it was concluded in virtue of the treaty made with them. I wish to send you copies of my protest and letters on this subject; but I want hands and time. I gave early information to Mahdajee Sindia, taking blame for the neglect of our treaty with him, and acknowledging that it was to his good offices and the Peishwa's interposition that we were indebted for the peace, such as it was. This has prevented him from taking offence at it, and he is gratified by the personal merit which I have assigned to him in the business. It might have created a breach between us. What a man is this Lord Macartney! The wit of man could not devise such effectual instruments of a



nation's ruin, as this black eagle portends to every land and state over which he casts the shadow of his wings, not like the fabulous eagle of the Arabians, whose shadow confers crowns, victory, and prosperity to those over whom it passes. I yet believe that, in spite of peace, he will effect the loss of the Carnatic.

I must not forget that Mr. Wheeler has behaved well. He is overruled, and has contended with the ungracious spirit of his colleagues as strenuously as could be expected from his disposition. I cannot expect more. I hear that Mr. Stables has taken Mr. Cowper into his family, and I will write to Calcutta that it may be ascertained, and you will know from thence the truth of it; his conduct is indecent beyond all bounds. My dear Scott, yours ever most affectionately.

To this I subjoin a letter to Mr. Wheeler, in which the reasons that swayed Mr. Hastings to the adoption of his own peculiar views are set forth. Whatever we may think of this document as a piece of practical reasoning, it describes a mind deeply imbued with the principles of justice and magnanimity, and the loftiest order of ambition.

TO MR. WHEELER.

Lucknow, 9th June, 1784.

My dear Sir,—You must not be offended at the distant and peremptory style of my secret letter. It bears your formal address, but is substantially less yours than theirs to whom I have desired you to impart it. By the unhandsome reception of my former letters I judge of the effect of this. I have simply done my duty, and am careless whether I am permitted to go further or not; because though I do most ardently





wish to close my service with some act that will reflect a credit on my nation, with little cost or trouble, and feel an interest in the cause for which I am an advocate, proportioned to my actual proximity to it, and am not apt to enter coldly into any political measures,—yet I have numberless reasons to wish, could I oppose my private to my public feelings, that I may fail in my present application; and therefore I do not choose to solicit where I do not choose to be obliged.

I have used many arguments, and those, I think, of much weight, to induce the Board to afford such a degree and mode of assistance to the King as may prove effectual to his relief, and not implicate the Company in wars or expenses, so far as these, or either of these, consequences may be avoided. But I have omitted many other reasons applicable only to the present occasion, because I did not chose to overload the subject, having without them made my letter more than sufficiently long. I will endeavour to recollect them, and if you think them deserving your own notice in the consideration of the question which I have proposed for the Board's decision, it will be highly gratifying to me if you will make them in any way that you please your own. It is possible that they may not so obviously occur to you, as you are at too great a distance to receive that impression from the general subject, which a nearer view, and a daily intercourse with those who are interested in it, naturally force on me.

1. The daily indignities which have been imposed upon the King since he chose to abandon our protection have so much debased the credit and respect of his house, that unless some powerful effort is made to relieve it, it will very shortly be extinct; and there is no power but ours that can relieve it.

2. Its extinction will probably be followed by that



of the miserable influence which at this time oppresses it ; for Affrasi ab Cawn himself possesses neither ability, spirit, nor birth to support the power which he has assumed, without the sanction of the royal name ; and it is by no means improbable that, in the confusion which will ensue, some new adventurer may start up from the general mass who will constitute a new dominion, and join to it all the powers and prerogatives of the past. I would almost venture to foretel that such will, in the case which I have supposed, be the event of it ; and whenever this happens, our dominion, which subsists but loosely on the weakness of our neighbours, and on the illusion of popular opinion, at least as much as on our military strength, will be exposed to greater dangers than any which it has yet had to encounter, though it has been many times near the brink of destruction.

3. There never yet was an instance of the flight of a prince of the house of Timur from the presence, that did not produce some great event ; and such is expected from the late extraordinary effort of the Prince Mirza Iowan Bukht, for he is the eldest of the King's sons ; supposed to be greatly superior to any of the family in ability ; the declared heir of the throne ; and regent, whenever the King himself is absent. It has already produced one event, by the imprisonment of the King's confidential servant, Mudged o'Dowla, which, if no exertion is made in favour of the King, may complete his debasement ; but might prove the reverse by the universal dissatisfaction which it has occasioned, were an immediate advantage taken of it, while the minds of the ruling party are wavering, and their authority undetermined. If no other consequences follow such portentous movements, the veil which has hitherto concealed the nakedness of the royal authority will fall off, and it will lose even the little respect which it has hitherto retained.





4. The present reduced state of the royal authority may be principally ascribed to the indolence and passive spirit of the King. His son seems to be of a different character, and has given proofs both of his courage and attachment on some pressing exigencies. Indeed on such occasions his father has always had recourse to him as his principal dependance; but his services have been constantly forgotten as soon as the danger that called them forth was past. It is probable that, if the prince can be instrumental to his deliverance at this time, the magnitude of the service, and the unquestionable evidence which it will afford of his attachment, added to the confidence which the King will (or ought to) repose in the honour of our nation, which will be a security against the perfidy which is too often practised even by sons against their parents in the course of Asiatic intrigues, will attach the King to him, and induce him to invest him with that share of the executive administration which he has hitherto suffered to be usurped and exercised by the meanest and most unworthy men. I state this as a probability; but I own, I do not dwell with great reliance on it; for there is no answering for a spirit so weak as the King's, and so much under the dominion of whisperers and incendiaries.

5. Hitherto, when any calamity has befallen the King, it has passed at such a distance from the observation of our Government, that the occasion has seemed to have produced its own remedy before it was well known to us. It was known that we had work enough of our own upon our hands; and the distance between us (to recur to the first argument) has served for an excuse to our indifference. It at least prevented the appearance of a direct refusal. The case is now widely different. The proximity of the person who is supposed to possess the executive powers of our Government; his residence and intimate communication with the first servant of the Crown; the superior



claim which the King has on me, derived from his deprivation of the tribute, which was my own personal act: the professions continually made by our Government through me from the time of that act, which includes a period of almost eleven years; the hopes excited by my arrival here, which were the declared and undoubted motive for the prince's flight; his flight attempted and effected with great personal hazard; that followed by the recent outrage which has been offered to the royal authority, of which I myself, though innocent of it, have furnished the original ground; the King's interests, cause, and inclinations, united by this event, if not always the same, with his son's; his application for our aid, and the pathetic expostulation with which he has since repeated it; the great advantages which the presence and influence of the prince would give to any plan undertaken for the King's benefit, and the weakness of those who might oppose it; and lastly (for I pass other points of less note, and many of equal may have escaped my recollection), our relaxation from every other external concern: these are all of such public notoriety (except one only, which will soon become as well known as the rest), that they may be said to constitute the crisis of the fortunes and destiny of the house of Timur; and it will most probably (I am almost impelled to say, assuredly) terminate in the utter subversion or the temporary relevation of its dignity. Of one or other of these events we shall be the instruments. I am not sure; but I believe, that we shall be applauded at home, if we take the generous side of the question; but I am quite sure that we shall be loudly reproached both by our own countrymen, and by all mankind, if we suffer so illustrious a family to perish, being able to prevent it, and having been the instruments of the causes which led to it.





6. I have said nothing of the King's absolute rights, having sufficiently discussed them in my secret letter. But I must add the right of gratitude, for he has asserted it. He pleads that when the French and Hyder earnestly solicited his grants of the Carnatic, and offered large sums to obtain them, he constantly and steadily refused them. We know by undoubted evidence that this is true; and though we have ever treated the King's sunnuds and firmauns as waste paper, and they were certainly no better, yet our enemies held them in high estimation, and his merit was proportionably great in disappointing their expectations.

7. If we meant to withhold all interference from the concerns of the King, we ought not to have appointed a public minister at his court. The Board appointed Major Browne for the express purpose of tendering our assistance. It was an act of the most complete authority; for it passed when the members of the Board were in entire confidence and good humour with each other, and all their judgments were concerned in it. It was a proclamation to the world that we acknowledged the King's right to our assistance, and a pledge equally public for the substantial performance of that acknowledgment. The member of the Board who was not present, nor his appointment known, at the time when this measure was adopted, may complain of it, as I have heard him; and may propose that it be reversed, if he considers no act of Government valid which he had no hand in. But it will be difficult for you, Mr. Macpherson, or myself, to find a reason to justify us in undoing it, or in making new declarations which are the reverse of those made and understood by so authentic a publication. Yet, if it shall be resolved to leave the King absolutely to his destiny, I shall not, of my own authority, send back



Major Browne, nor advise the Board to continue his commission.

After this long discussion (which I fear will tire you), I find it necessary to recur once more to the object of it. I do not want to send armies into the field, nor to disturb the repose which our Government enjoys and requires after the fatigues and bruises which it has sustained from a long and accumulated warfare. I want no more than the power to dictate, and I am persuaded that I shall have no need to enforce it: neither is it my wish or intention to stay beyond the term of my original commission, though all the wealth of Akbar should be offered to tempt me. I do not expect that the Board will approve of my recommendation, and I secretly wish, in spite of myself, that they may not; but I do sincerely hope that your sentiments will concur with mine, because I am convinced that you will gain credit by it, though we may be both overruled.

I think it proper to mention, though you will of course so understand it, that I mean this letter for your own perusal only, but with a latitude to apply it as you think proper. I am, my dear Sir, your faithful and affectionate friend.

The Board would not sanction the adoption of a policy so bold, perhaps so perilous, as is advocated in this letter, but they did not object to his taking the prince under his protection; and placed at his disposal resources enough, both in men and money, to secure for the young man a safe return to his father's capital. This was ultimately effected; but in the meanwhile Mr. Hastings had other business to conduct, and it pretty well engrossed both





his time and attention. Through this, however, I cannot venture to follow him, because I am unwilling to embark upon a complication of details, every effort to unravel which would serve but to weary, without at all exciting my own interests or those of my reader. I, therefore, content myself with stating, that by his dealings with the Vizier, he delivered that prince entirely from the pressure of the resident's domination, and that having found for him ministers, both able and willing to manage his affairs, he left him in their hands, and never had cause to repent the arrangement. In the province of Benares, likewise, he affected great and important reforms. The city appears, indeed, to have flourished under the management of Mohammed Reza Cawn, a native of whose integrity and talents Mr. Hastings entertained the highest opinion, and whose portrait hangs, or did hang when I was last there, in what used to be Mr. Hastings's library at Daylesford. But into the rural districts Mr. Fowke had contrived to introduce the most exquisite confusion; and these it became the Governor's duty to remodel. He was not so immediately successful in this case as in the regeneration of Oude, partly because things were politically more confused, partly because over Benares the famine had spread with fearful violence. Nevertheless he constructed a machinery for the future working of the state,



and in due time the state reaped ample benefit from it. After this he set out on his return to the Presidency, his progress towards which, as well as his final preparations for quitting India, I shall leave him to describe for himself.

The following letters, addressed to Mrs. Hastings, seem to me to be full of interest. They certainly do not describe the Begums as harbouring any vindictive remembrance of injuries sustained, though they make a good deal of mention of these ladies and of the feelings which they cherished towards both the writer himself and his interesting correspondent, though now far removed from them:—

Benares, 24th September, 1784.

My dearest Marian,—My last letter was closed the 27th of last month, the day on which I left Lucknow. I had a very unpleasant and tedious journey, though but of fifty miles, to Doondea-kéry where my boats lay; for it began to rain as soon as I began my march, and continued almost without remission to the 2d of this month. The plains were overflowed, and every hollow way became an impassable river; insomuch that many people, and some of my own, were drowned in attempting to pass the depths, which but a fortnight before were dry ground. I myself was obliged to cross one new born river on a raft which sunk below the surface with my single weight, and a few hours after wrecked my buggy, which is yet lying in the channel where it fell. The horse, with my two other favourites, were swum over, and safely landed in my own presence. The Nabob was with great difficulty





persuaded to return to Lucknow, on the 2d, having resolved to accompany me, not from affection, to Benares. We parted in great good humour, and I do verily believe that his feelings and sentiments do justice to the kindness which I have shown him. Yet he is in vile hands, and it was to carry a paltry point for his unworthy favourites that he was so earnest to go with me, beyond the personal influence of his ministers. These men have urged him to some alarming acts since his return, but without consequence; nor have I much apprehension for his future behaviour. He well knows that if he loses my support he will be a ruined man, and I have left Major Palmer, on whom I can securely depend, to remind him occasionally both of his obligations and engagements; and I shall stay at this place one month, partly for the purpose of guarding against any mischief that may be practised; and, if necessary, which God forbid, to return to Lucknow for the last resource; I can be there in a journey of two days, but I do not suspect that it will be necessary. The Nabob solemnly promised that he would not break a single thread of my arrangements, and these, if undisturbed, will discharge all his debts to the Company in the course of a year, and leave him a free and independent man. His uncle, his mother, and grandmother, the most respected of his family, are all in my interest, and look upon me as the guardian of their house; nor do I believe that I have left an enemy in all the Nabob's dominions, except among the most worthless, whose influence I have been the means of repressing. But to return to my travels: in these the prince accompanied me, or to speak with more propriety, I attended him. On the 3d, we reached the Ganges, and on the 5th, in an evil hour, put off, or rather attempted it, against a strong wind, beating us on a lee shore. My beautiful budgerow became almost



in an instant a complete ruin. I reluctantly detail the particulars. The rudder had been broken on the way, which the sarang concealed from my knowledge, and instead of repairing the damage, had loosely patched and covered it from view. The budgerow was of course unmanageable; she was driving fast towards the bank, the Daudes being unable either to keep her off, or turn her, and a rapid stream hurrying her down at a most furious rate. I ran up to the poop to see what was the matter, and no sooner was my back turned, than the frosh opened every window which I had left fastened on the left side, which was presented to the shore, which the blockhead had no sooner accomplished than the stump of a tree, which my evil genius had planted for the purpose, shaved them all from their hinges in less than ten seconds, with a crash that I am sure you must have felt, and will remember, if you can remember where you were, and what were your thoughts, at the time, which answers to two o'clock in the afternoon of the 5th of September, in the longitude of Doondea-kéry. At the same instant I saw the rudder gone, and the old sarang in a state of stupefaction. It was a long time before he recovered his senses enough to tell me that it was impossible to move without a new rudder. I could not wait for so tedious an operation, nor bear to look at the destruction around me; and having given vent for a reasonable length of time, to a something too intemperate anger, I began coolly to reflect that I had been attended with a long train of fortunate events; that it was the lot of humanity to receive a mixture of good and evil in the cup of life; and that it was well that my portion of the bitter had been administered to me in a substance which could only give a temporary affliction. The damage of a budgerow was not a subject of internal or lasting grief; and I said it was well if it were no worse. To avoid worse, I resolved to fly from the spot to which





my ill fortune had attached itself, and leave it to complete the mischief which was yet in store for me. Accordingly, having given the necessary orders for the care of the budgerow, I took to the feelchehra, Mr. Sullivan and Major Toone, who with Sir Thomas Mills chanced to be with me, accompanying me. Sir Thomas was sick and stayed. I called upon the prince, made my excuses to him for leaving him, telling him my melancholy story, and took my leave. The next afternoon at three o'clock, we arrived at Mirsepoor, landed and found Mr. John Scott there, and at dinner. We stayed that night with him, and renewing our voyage the next morning by daylight, we reached Chunar before eight. We were accommodated by Colonel Achmuty in the new house built by Colonel Blair in the fort, and continued his guests till our companions joined us. In the mean time I was alarmed with the report of a fresh calamity. The pinnaw, which your sarang (for I have not yet turned him away) had stuck upon every sand between Calcutta and Allahabad, was not arrived when I left Doondea-kéry; and two gentlemen assured me that they had passed it near Maniempoor (see the chart) upon a shoal where, as the water had fallen considerably, she was likely to lie till the next rains. I had no remedy but patience, and never bore misfortune with so much philosophy. If you have ever seen me otherwise, it was because you had a share in my vexations, and because I feel more for yours than for my own. In the mean time I indulged in a long interval of repose and comfort, and had arrived in time to intercept a packet filled with all my letters from England by the Surprise. These would probably have passed me, had no accident obliged me to deviate from the quiet track of my voyage; and from these I learnt the complete overthrow of the men who had been aiming so much mischief through me at the Company, and the establishment as complete of my



own reputation. On the 11th I had the pleasure to see my pinnaw arrive in safety, and the prince, who had met with some accidents with his own, in possession of it. I conducted him that evening in great parade to the fort, where a small mistake was committed in letting him see Mrs. Achmuty and Mrs. Showers. It was her fault, and I was not on my guard. I privately apologized for it, desiring him not to form his idea of English beauty from these models, assuring him that we had better. I carried him the next morning in the feelchehra to your gaut, and from thence conducted him in safety to Mahdewdass's garden, where I left him as happy as a prince ought to be proverbially. I am quartered partly at Markham's house on the plain of Schrowl, where I pass the day, and partly at a bungalow of Fowke's in which I sleep. Thus ends this chapter of my travels, which may be properly named the chapter of accidents. I should tell you that the budgerow is now at Chunar, and I have the promise of seeing her again very shortly in a state of complete repair.

It will be of consequence to you to know that, though I have been much exposed to both extremities of heat and wet, I have not suffered from either, having invariably preserved my health in every occasion of exertion, and never complaining but when I have been at rest. My complaints, such as they are, evidently proceed from the weather, and are languor, lassitude, and inactivity. I eat sparingly: I never sup, and am generally a-bed by ten. I breakfast at six. I bathe with cold water daily, and while I was at Lucknow twice a-day, using sooreys cooled with ice. Though my mind has laboured under a constant and severe load, yet the business which has occupied it has been light, with no variety to draw my attention different ways, and with little vexation. To these may be added, that unless every body was in a conspiracy to deceive





me, all ranks of people were pleased, not because I did good, but that I did no ill. With such advantages I ought perhaps to be better. I am indeed infinitely better than I was at this season the last year, for then I was miserably bad : but the best health that I gain or can hope to gain in India, is but a palliative acquired with continual sacrifices and unmanly attentions. I want a multitude of aids to cure me thoroughly, all which may be included in two comprehensive but comfortable terms, a hard frost and my own fireside.

I cannot ascertain the time that I may remain here ; the business of this place need not detain me ten days. But I must wait a little longer to watch the course of the business which I have lately quitted ; and I must allow a longer time to dispose of the illustrious youth who has in so extraordinary a manner thrown his fortunes into my hands. I cannot abandon a person of such eminence who, on the credit of my will and ability to serve him, has voluntarily encountered so many difficulties to get to me ; and I feel for the honour of my nation, which is concerned in it : but my hands are tied, and I can only work with poor expedients and borrowed aids. But my fortune is in its flood, and as the current of popular opinion floats with it, these together may bring about my decent acquittal of this charge more effectually than anything that I can do to accomplish it. Unfortunately his character gains, instead of losing, by acquaintance. His faults are trivial, and all grow out of his good qualities, and the best of these is his temper, which is incomparably cheerful and accommodating to every situation that he is placed in. Was he mean, or arrogant, or petulant, or unfeeling, or a fool, or vicious, I could easily let him shift for himself. As he is the reverse of all this, I must either contrive to restore him, "with credit and safety," (these are the terms of the Board's instructions,) to his father, or leave him here, or be loaded



with him to Calcutta. The first is scarcely to be effected but by means which I may not use, and the last I cannot allow even in supposition; and I have many great objections to his remaining at Benares, which I regard as the place of my own peculiar patronage, and I am afraid that his presence and influence (for he has sad people about him) will hurt the police of the city, which has gained me great and extended reputation. God knows how it will terminate. The expectation is not a great encroachment on my time, for I am not very anxious to change the dry and open plain of Sukrowl for the deadly steams of Calcutta at this season of the year; nor, was I in Calcutta at this time, should I be of much service. Yet it is probable that I shall think of moving about the middle of October. I think to make another short visit to Chunar, partly to gratify the hospitable inclination of the good old colonel, and partly my own curiosity, as I was unable to go abroad while I was last there, on account of the excessive heat of the weather. We have had a late repetition of heavy rain, and hope we shall have no more disagreeable heat.

Sir Thomas Mills, whom I left sick at the time of the crash of my budgerow, has been since in great danger. He is now on the recovery, and mends fast; but it will be long before his constitution can have got the better of the shock which it has received.

The above has been written with a view to its being copied by another hand, as I mean to send the whole letter in duplicate, not for the value of what precedes this, for if you can interest yourself in the detail of the little events and casualties of my life, there is no one else to whom they would not be disgusting. I now proceed to the purport for which the letter was intended, and for which, as it is of consequence that you should be fully apprized of my intentions upon the subject of it, I shall make a duplicate of it.





On the 8th instant I received the packet of the Surprise, with letters dated down to the 24th of April. By these I received the first knowledge of the dissolution of Parliament, and the confirmation of the power of the administration which then existed. Some intimation was also imperfectly given me of an intention to begin the new sessions with a Bill for the regulation of the superior government of India, with assurances that my credit stood very high both with the Company, the Ministers, and the public, and that new and distinct powers were to be added to my office. Scott, in all his letters, mixes, with a natural apprehension for my health, and a feeling for what I must suffer in a protracted separation from you, both his own wishes, and those which he assures me are the wishes of the public, for my continuance another year in India. He will doubtless have told you what he has written, and you will also know the more recent expectations of others upon this point, and these may deceive you with wrong conclusions respecting my own resolution upon them. Hitherto nothing has passed which either has, or ought to have made any change in my original plan. On the contrary, I am more confirmed in my determination of leaving India in January next, by every argument which has been urged against it. Major Scott tells me that people are greatly alarmed at the expectation of my going away, and that some person of high authority said to him, "Good God, what shall we do if Hastings should throw up the government!" I am provoked at such exclamations, and almost displeased with Scott for being the dupe of them. If it is expected that I should remain, why am I not told so by authority, and trusted with the powers necessary to my station, and the expectations which they build upon me, that I may remain for some useful purpose? To me it is apparent, from every observation that I have made, that it is not the wish either of the



present or any other administration that I should remain but as a cypher to keep the office open for the gift of their own patronage. I am not pleased to be made so pitiful an instrument, and had I no other reason, this alone should determine me to disappoint those who treat me so unworthily. That I may not appear too hasty in forming this conclusion, I will tell you why I do it. When Mr. Fox introduced his Bill, he began with declaring, for the satisfaction of my friends, that no injury was intended against me; yet he immediately went on to a string of invective and abuse of my conduct as the only groundwork on which he could support his own question, or prove the necessity of wresting the authority from the Company, which he attempted to show was insufficient to control that which had been delegated to me. Mr. Pitt with great ability defended the rights of the Company, but weakened his own argument, by maintaining a profound silence with regard to every argument of his adversary which bore any relation to me. Had he replied to those, he must have said something in my vindication, and unless that vindication had been as strong as the charges which had been urged against me, his cause would have suffered in the debate. But if he had taken this line, he would have put it out of his own power at a future time to remove me, for with what grace could he attempt such an act against one to whose merits he had himself borne such ample testimony? His private declarations made to Major Scott in his closet are mere words, which cannot be quoted as binding on his future decisions, and may be forgotten, or explained to any arbitrary meaning, and were perhaps only intended as compliments of encouragement from Mr. Pitt, who wanted materials, to Major Scott, who could best furnish them, for the support of a great and critical question. He is now at liberty to act by me as he pleases, to reappoint me with





proper powers to my office, or to extend his own interests by conferring it on another better able to repay the obligation. It was well known, when the Surprise was yet in England, that I had fixed the period for my departure, and that period must have been as well known. If it was expected that I should defer it, I ought to have been apprized of it by the only packet that could apprise me of it in time. I shall not probably receive any subsequent despatches of a much later date before the month of November, and by that time I shall have made all my preparations, at least all that require expense, for my return. I have already spent a little fortune in changing my first purpose of returning to England when you did, for one charge would have sufficed for both, both for the voyage, and for our future household. I cannot afford to lay out another sum and allow the purpose of it to be defeated. Perhaps it was intended to wait till something more decisive should have passed in Parliament. That cannot have happened, for it is not possible, before the month of July, or at the soonest very late in June, and at that season of the year, allowance being also made for the time requisite to prepare the consequent despatches, no advices could be sent to Bengal which could arrive there before next February. And who will say that I ought to wait their arrival, in the uncertain and surely unreasonable expectation of their containing the motives for my longer stay? Or on what pretext can I wait? I have declared my peremptory resolution to depart, and have called upon the Court of Directors to obtain the nomination of my successor. The execution of this declaration was indeed announced for the last year, but protracted on account of the distracted state of the province of Oude, and my sense of the obligation which it imposed upon me to continue for the means of retrieving it. I am now pledged, or committed, to use a more fashionable word, to give up my



place; and if I do not, I must assign some reason for not doing it. I must either change my purpose, in obedience to authority, or assume an air of contemptible self-importance, and say on my own authority that my services cannot be spared.

If I was to be asked in what manner I could be authorized to remain, I would answer thus:—

The Court of Directors are authorized to send out what orders they please to the Governor-general and Council, which the Governor-general and Council are bound to obey. They may order the Council to yield me the lead, with the responsibility, in all points in which I shall think it of importance sufficient to assume both, and they shall differ from me. Let the Directors issue such an order, and require me, in virtue of it, to remain; let their superiors, if such be their wish, intimate it to the Directors; and let it be personally signified to each of my colleagues that such a conduct is expected from them, with a similar intimation to myself. I am far from presuming to expect such a deference to be paid to me. I only show the mode which might be adopted by those who think, or affect to think, more highly of me than I myself do. And with such a mode of application I should deem myself bound, against every consideration of domestic comfort, of life, and of fortune, though I were now to sacrifice them for ever, to remain. The mode is obvious. If it is practised, I must and will remain; if not, I will not, though all my friends should unite in soliciting it, unless you too joined them, which I hope and believe is impossible. Something like what I have written above, but not so full and explanatory, I have written in my former letters, if in more than one. You will now know by this with certainty whether you are, or are not to expect me, by the knowledge which you will possess of the orders which have been written to Bengal





within the period necessary for my being in India to receive them.

For my determination, and the grounds of it, as I have stated both, I shall refer Major Scott to you, because I think it a subject in which you are most concerned; and because I wish to accustom you to a familiar acquaintance with such as have a near relation to my reputation, even though they were not, as this is, connected with our common happiness. I could assign other motives of equal weight in the scale of common sense for my adhering to my present purpose, such as my declining health, the loss of domestic happiness, the probability of rendering this everlasting by a longer residence in a climate become so noxious to me, my inability to conduct the necessary measures of this Government, with associates who are bound in an opposition to me, and will not act on their own authority; the certainty of incurring censure for the effects of such an opposition, both for what is, and what is not done, for who will distinguish? and the hazard of some fatal disaster, perhaps of utter ruin, in consequence of the same want of union, which is a want of government. Add, that my income is not equal to all my present expenses; that I shall have hardly a competency, let me arrive in England at whatever time; and that, as I must go at some time, or yield to the course of nature, I cannot go at a time of more quiet or public ease than the present; that it seems now necessary to compel my superiors to put an end to a state of suspension which has now lasted thirteen years, if anything will; and that it is yet possible for me to arrive in time to yield my assistance, if I may be thought of consequence enough to be consulted, in framing some plan for the government of our possessions in India, which may render them more profitable and lasting; or in preventing some plan that may accelerate their ruin. It



is hard to see the good that I could do, and am not permitted to do it; and harder to be made accountable for the acts of others, and to be regarded as the only manager of affairs, when I have no more than a single vote with others who are determined to say no to all that I propose.

So much for my public concerns. Read as much of this to Major Scott as you think necessary for his knowledge, and store it all in remembrance for your own. What a letter have I written; and who that read it without the direction would suspect it to be written by a fond husband to his beloved wife? Perhaps my other letters, if intercepted, would appear to bear too much of the real character of their writer, and atone more than they ought for the contrary deficiency of this. But the subject and occasion required it. The first part was intended for a duplicate by another hand, and all that follows to this page for communication. I have now carried forward the history of my life from the 10th of January to this time, comprising the following parts or divisions: 1st, My residence in Calcutta to the 17th of February; 2d, My journey to Lucknow, ending the 27th of March; 3d, My residence at Lucknow, a long chapter, closed the 27th of August; 4th, Journey to Benares, 12th of September; Lastly remain to follow; 5th, My residence at Benares; 6th, My return to Calcutta; 7th, Preparations for my voyage; and 8th, The voyage. What variations, fortune, or the will of God may have yet in store, I dare not attempt to conjecture. I fear a multitude of unseen obstructions, for the great and interesting events of my life have hitherto been ever regulated by an influence overruling and defeating my determinations, making these the instruments of its own decrees. But, excepting my separation from you, I have no great cause to murmur; but the contrary. In one instance of disappointment, which I thought at the time a cruel one,





I now believe that I was most fortunate. You will probably recollect to what I allude. I will flatter myself that the worst is past, and the best yet to come at the period to which my hopes originally fixed it. I have yet no news of the Royal Charlotte, the ship expected from St. Helena.

1st of October.—I am indeed a fortunate man, and am tempted to adopt the term even to superstition; and no wonder, for the belief has seized others long since, and universally. The last sentence of the preceding paragraph was the beginning effort of a continuation of my letter, and would probably have been followed by some very foolish reflections, which were prevented by some abrupt, I know not what interruption. Last night, at about nine o'clock, Major Sands brought me the news of Phipps's arrival at Calcutta, and may God bless them both for it! a short but blessed letter from you, dated the 15th of May, the day of your departure from St. Helena, and written on board the Atlas. It tells me only that you were safe on board and well, but it tells enough, and it is written in the language of cheerfulness and of affection. I have also letters from Mr. Corneille, Markham, and Phipps himself, which all assure me that you had received benefit from the voyage, and looked better, Markham says, than he had ever seen you. I am satisfied; I have no fears for what was to follow. My dread proceeded from the reiterated affliction which you had suffered from the first ceremonious parting with your friends in Calcutta, and with Calcutta, to the departure of the pilot, and from the violence of the sea-sickness, with poor Cleveland's death in addition, acting on a frame too delicate for such accumulated agitations. All my past doubts, and the fixed gloom which has so long overspread my imagination, are dissipated, like the darkness before the equinoctial sun rising on the plains of Suckrowl—(do, my Marian, allow me to



talk nonsense,) and have given place to the confident hope that every dreaded obstruction will follow them, and that I am once more destined to happiness. I am already happy; for as God is my witness that I prefer your happiness to my own, I feel the measure of my present joy full, with the information which I have recently received. Captain Phipps writes that he had your orders to deliver your packet to me with his own hand, and he is coming with it. I have written to accelerate his coming by relays of bearers from two or three stages beyond Patna; but as the roads have been unusually overflowed by the rains and the swelling of the river, he may not be here this week yet. But I have food enough for my heart to feast on for more than a week to come. Now gravely attend to what follows, and judge whether I have not reason to be superstitious. The despatches which Phipps is bringing were closed, and delivered on the 15th of May, and were the first which you have written. My first letters which were written for conveyance by land, and probably the first that you will have received written after my departure from Calcutta, were also despatched on the 15th of May. The same coincidence of dates has likewise appeared in that of your arrival at St. Helena, and the departure of the *Surprise* from England, both on the 28th of April. I shall compare your journal with my own for more similarities.

At what a time will you have arrived in England! If nothing has happened between the *Surprise's* departure and your landing, to change the public opinion of your husband, (and I think it not likely that it should have been changed,) you will find his name standing in high and universal credit, and what a welcome will it be to you! I have now but one wish remaining—(yes, one more,) viz., to be able to leave the stage of active life while my fortune is in the zenith of





its prosperity, and while I have a constitution yet repairable.

I must repress myself, for if I write all that the fullness of my heart is ready to dictate, I shall never come to an end, and I have this to copy. How it is to go, I know not. I shall trust one to Mr. Boddam, and the other to Mr. Hay in Calcutta, to be despatched as each shall find means. Adieu, my beloved, my most deserving and lovely Marian. May the God whose goodness I have so wonderfully experienced, bless you with health, safety, and comfort, and me with the repossession of my sweet Marian! Amen! Amen! Amen! I never loved you so much as I do at this instant, and as I have loved you since the delightful news of last night.

P. S.—Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Motte.

8th of October.—Phipps arrived yesterday morning before seven, and delivered me your letter. I am the happiest man living; but it is not in a P. S. that I can answer it, or say—no, nor can a folio volume describe—what my feelings have been, and are from the perusal of it. Let me only assure you that I will comply most sacredly with your injunctions. I leave you to recollect them. One you cannot have forgotten. May the God of goodness guard and bless you. How wonderful has been his goodness to both, and I will trust in its continuance. I will not believe that I have been raised in my hopes above the heights of mortality, to be dashed to the earth with a severer fall. Your permission, my Marian, was unnecessary. All mankind knew it as soon as I did, and some before, and in truth I think all the world is mad with joy for it. But I forgot myself. I shall hasten to Calcutta, and, if possible, leave it again before the end of this year. Adieu, my most beloved! Adieu!

11th of October.—The shawl commission which you gave to Johnson is executed. I have not seen the



shawls ; but Cashmeereemall has brought me others of his own taste, which are beautiful beyond imagination ; and I have countermanded the shawl handkerchiefs ordered in your letter. Why should I provide paltry things for you, when I carry with me inimitables ?

To the same.

Calcutta, 14th November, 1784.

My dearest Marian,—I despatched my last number on the 20th October from Benares to Mr. Boddam to be forwarded by land with public advices of the death of Mr. Wheler. This event determined me to quicken my return to Calcutta. Having accordingly crowded into two days the business which I had before allotted to ten, I took my leave of the Prince on the 21st, and began my departure the next morning at four o'clock ; and thus ended the "Chapter of Benares." The Prince had before fixed on the 29th for beginning his march to Furrukhabad, there to treat for his return on terms of honour and safety to his father's court. I have given him the attendance of my own body-guard, and provided for the additional retinue of five battalions of the Nabob Vizier's sepoys ; besides employing what personal influence I possessed to promote his success. My feelcheria carried me that night to Buxar, where I slept, and proceeded (to the great regret of Mr. Eaton) the next morning, the 23d. At eight that evening I arrived at Patna, halted one day, and returned to my boat after supper. At half-past ten the following night I reached Baugulpoor, where I found Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, with a host of friends ; your good friend, Mrs. Powney, among the foremost, standing on the ghaut, and almost in the water, to receive me. I must not omit Miss Touchet. Here I waited two days for Dr. Balfour, who had insisted on accompanying me to Calcutta, and had promised to join me at Patna, but





missed me. On the 27th, after supper, I took my leave of my two excellent friends, and departed. (Mrs. Chapman is, in your sense of the word, very happy.) At twelve we passed the dreadful rocks of Cohlgon, and as the moon was full, and shone very bright, I ordered the manjee to steer between them and the shore, expecting to find some remains of the memorable vortex of 1782; but my virtue was not worth the trial: my curiosity only was gratified by a clear display of the cause of the eddy, which was a nulla tumbling down in the month of August with a flood from the hills, and meeting the stream of the river rendered more rapid by the obstruction of the rocks. The nulla was now dry, and only showed a hollow, like a notch, in the bank. But I must abridge my journey. I arrived at Rangametty on the 29th, at sunrise, stayed there a day and a half with Sir John and Lady D'Oyley, and by making a small journey from Dowdpoor to near Nuddea by land, got to Sooksaugur at noon on the 31st. The Begum sent me more than one message expressive of her disappointment at my passing the city, as she had prepared an elegant display of your couches and chairs for my entertainment. These are since arrived, with a letter for you, recommended most earnestly to my care. There are two couches, eight chairs, and two footstools, all of the former patterns, except two of the chairs, which are of buffalo horn, most delicately formed, and more to my taste than the others; not designed for fat folks, nor romps; nor proper for you, my elegant Marian, to use in the presence of your husband. I had originally determined to make Sooksaugur the termination of my journey, and Mr. Stables's absence, whom I had left at Rangametty,—not so rapid a traveller as Mr. and Mrs. Hastings, rendered my speedier return to Calcutta every way unnecessary. Here I received letters



from Major Scott, dated the 15th May, followed by an overland packet, without a letter from him; it was not his fault; but with one from the Court of Directors, dated the 15th June, as unpleasing as any that I ever received from that body in the time of General Clavering. Scott will tell you its purport, and my conduct regarding it. I can learn nothing of my own destiny by this packet, and indeed I suspect that it was hurried away without notice, lest I should. The only circumstance which it contains to please me is that the news of your arrival at St. Helena had already reached England. I hope it will contribute to make them more decided before the next despatch. I am literally *sick* of suspense; yet I will wait for one more packet to take my final resolution. In the meantime I have engaged a passage in the *Barrington*, and as the Board (that is Mr. Macpherson) had before destined her despatch to take place on the 20th of this month, I have desired them to revoke the order, which they have agreed to, and she is to wait for me. Thus far I have proceeded with great deliberation. My most zealous friends are very desirous of my remaining till I am relieved by an appointed successor; but their reasons are such as I can never adopt, nor allow; nor will I on any consideration stay till my successor arrives, if I can get away, though it be but a day, before his arrival. I still abide by the resolution which I communicated to you in my letter of the 24th of September, that is to say, "If I am required by authority to stay, and have the powers given me which ought to belong to my office, and proper objects are assigned for my stay, I will stay, however repugnant it may be to my own feelings, or hazardous to my health: but I will not stay with my present colleagues to thwart me, and impede all my endeavours; nor will I stay, merely to fill up the gap of my office until it





may suit the convenience, caprice, or worse motive, of my superiors to fill it." As yet I am at liberty to make my option; but I think that I cannot remain so longer than till the arrival of the next despatch from England, which I suppose must be here in another month. I am not sure that I ought to wait longer for it, but form my conclusions and my determination on the delay itself. My health I shall make no consideration, nor will I form my determination on any injuries done me by the Directors, *my new friends*. At the same time I must tell you that I fear that I have gained no more than a suspension from sickness, but have added nothing to the strength of my constitution by my late absence from Calcutta. I have been ailing ever since my return. Every night I have a regular return of feverish symptoms, for I cannot call them a fever; and the swelling in my ancles, which I thought had totally left me, has again returned. In short, I am little better, but surely something better, than I was this time last year. I am resolved, however, that I will not be sick; nor, if I shall be compelled to sacrifice another year of my life to the service, will I stay beyond June in Calcutta, while there are such climates as Baugulpoor and Benares to repair to. I intend to get the Barrington's saltpetre given to her immediately, and shall propose to load her, with the declaration of my resolution to depart. I do not apprehend that either of my colleagues will attempt to stop me. I wait with inconceivable anxiety for the news of your arrival, and with terror for the event which must have passed long before this. May God preserve you, whatever may be my lot; and yet, if possible, reunite us! Adieu, my beloved!

We have yet met but three in Council, but hitherto have sat in good humour. Macpherson is sick; and so am I; yet I am sure that it is wholly constitutional. I



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have laboured hard, and my mind harder : my spirits sink with the state of suspense and doubt which I remain in. O, that I could reveal to you all that it is filled with. Gloomy as my thoughts are, you would be pleased with the review of them. Again, may God bless you, my beloved ! I dare not add more, though my heart swells with the addition.

To the same.

Calcutta, 26th December, 1784.

My beloved Marian,—I have received your letter of the 3d of August, informing me of your safe arrival in England. I received it on my return from the play. I could not go to bed, but sat reading it till past two, and afterwards lay long after counting three without being able to close my eyes. Whether I was happy, or unhappy in reading it, I cannot tell you. I fear, my disappointment on one subject equalled my joy for your safety, the close of your perils, and the promise that you would soon be as well as you ever had been at any period of your life. I have since thought only on the good ; and I thank God for it. The attentions shown to you on your arrival, though what I expected, make no small part of my rejoicing. Something might at the first have been yielded to you on my account ; more, surely, to your character which had preceded you, and your character is marked with virtues, all original, and such as would naturally excite curiosity and respect ; but I am certain that they who were your first visitors would have wished to repeat their visits early and stimulate others with the same desire to see you.

I read much in your letter to admire, to be delighted with ; but nothing that I can reply to. I am pleased that my sister received you at Portsmouth, and that you like her. I am pleased, too, that you are pleased with Mrs. Caillaud.





You say, "you fear they will keep me another year from you." No, my Marian; they shall not; nor do I apprehend it to be the wish of those who have it in their power to detain me. Upon this subject I have written fully to Scott, who will show you what I have written. The sum of it is, that as I have received the most incontestable proofs of the minister's indisposition to me, if I receive no other advices, or no letter from England by the 31st of January, I will wait no longer, but instantly embark. Still one chance may detain me, which will be the refusal of my present colleagues to give me the assurance, which I promised the Nabob Vizier that I would demand, of their punctual adherence to my engagements with him. I have no doubt that they will promise it in the manner that I shall prescribe; and it will not be safe for them to break it. As to the Fox, I do not expect to see her here, though I should wait for her till the end of February.

I have written so much by the Surprise, that I have nothing left but repetition. She sailed from Culpee the 14th, and carried four letters from me. One, No. 26, a duplicate; the original gone to Bussora. No. 27 contained a copy of my letter to the Court of Directors, dated 22d of November; a translation of your firmaun, and a list of shawls given in charge to Captain Price. No. 28 contained a letter from Munny Begum, a letter written to you by the Prince, and translations of both. Both letters, indeed all three, are intolerably long. The captain had also charge of two shawls in one package, and your firmaun. The first was a present from the Prince; but of no other value.

I shall enclose in this nothing but a correct copy of the Prince's narrative. If it is good for nothing else, it is at least a beautiful specimen of good penmanship.



But what have I to do with letters or enclosures? If I am in luck, I shall be with you as soon as this; for since I wrote the preceding, I have received and studied Mr. Pitt's bill, and receive it as so unequivocal a demonstration that my resignation of the service is expected and desired, that I shall lose no time in preparing for the voyage. It is now determined, not absolutely, because I must first exact from Mr. Macpherson his engagement to abide by my settlement with the Nabob Vizier, and I have no doubt of his acquiescence. This point settled, it is determined absolutely, absolutely. I will wait for no advices. They have given me my freedom, and opened the road to my happiness. Yet, my Marian, forgive me. I do not feel the joy which I ought. I am too much attached to my public character and its relations, and dread the ruin which I see impending over them. But I have acquitted myself of all my obligations, and am not accountable for the crimes or errors of others. I have given Sands and Francis their charge for preparing everything for the embarkation, and am going as soon as this is closed to whisper Mr. Barton to hasten the lading of the Barrington. May Heaven prosper my design, bless my Marian, and speedily reunite us with every necessary means of happiness in our possession! If I have enough for a decent subsistence, I want no pensions, and despise titles. At this instant I have but one wish, and a *little one* annexed to it; and, O God, grant them! Amen.

To the same.

Calcutta, 10th January, 1785.

My dearest Marian,—I believe I said in my last that I should sail early in this month. I did write so to Major Scott; but it was from a recent impression, which a slight consideration effaced, and left in its place the resolution which I had before formed of





waiting till the 31st; and on the 31st I intend to take my leave, if no great event intervenes, and I can form no conjecture of any that can detain me longer. It is, indeed, very much my desire to be gone before any advices can arrive from England for a reason which I cannot trust to writing, but which you, my Marian, will applaud, and the public ought to applaud if they knew it.

I have declared my intention to Mr. Macpherson and to Mr. Stables. Both have assured me that they will not break my engagements with the Nabob of Oude; and Mr. Macpherson has promised me in the most pointed manner that he will in everything make my example the rule of his conduct.

We shall touch nowhere in the voyage, and Captain Johnson hopes to complete it in four months. It is therefore probable that I shall be with you before you receive this letter. Why, therefore, should I lengthen it?

I have not been well since my return to Calcutta; but I do not charge my complaints entirely to my constitution, nor entirely to the climate, nor to both; for my mind has been kept in continual fatigue, and will have little repose till I am out of pilot's water.

May God preserve you in health, and promote and prosper our meeting!

Till then, adieu, my beloved! Look at the date of this. How different are my present prospects from those which I had at this time the last year.

This day I shall keep sacred. I shall give much of it to business, but no part of it to society. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Motte.

To the same.

Calcutta, 31st January, 1785.

My dearest Marian,—To-morrow morning I take my leave of Calcutta. The captain is gone, and will be



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ready to weigh as soon as he sees my flag. The Hussar, a Danish ship, is also on the point of sailing, with Mr. and Mrs. Halhed, passengers. As she has the reputation of greater speed even than the Barrington, and Captain Johnstone himself (our captain) thinks that she may get home before us, I therefore write this in prevention of such an event, lest you should be alarmed by it, to inform you of the probability that it may happen, that I am on the way, and that I am well, in defiance of all my cares, anxieties, and troubles. More I need not say, as I cannot easily support the thought of its being of use to say even so much as I have said.

May God prosper me in my voyage, and preserve you, my sweet Marian, in health and safety.





## CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Hastings's position at Home and Abroad—Departure from India—Return to England—Reception—Re-union with Mrs. Hastings—Correspondence with the Court of Directors.

BEFORE I turn my page in the history of the great man of whose long and chequered career I have undertaken to be the chronicler, it will be necessary to advert to certain circumstances, which, though vaguely hinted at in some of the letters introduced into the previous chapter, have not yet received, either there or elsewhere, the full measure of notice which they deserve. Enough has, indeed, been said to show, that of his high, and responsible, and thankless situation, Mr. Hastings had for some time become weary. Thwarted in all his favourite measures, or else compelled to carry them out by a species of moral violence; checked and reproved by his superiors at home in cases where he had a right to anticipate praise; made the subject of frequent and bitter and acrimonious debate in the House of Commons, and of censure in the King's Cabinet; no motive of inferior weight to that which swayed him, namely, an earnest desire to serve his country in spite of herself, could have detained him one moment, after the departure of Mrs. Hastings for Europe, upon the



stage of public life. Yet such was the strength of his feeling on this head, and so clear and well arranged were his ideas regarding it, that to the last he seems to have deluded himself into a persuasion that all would come right in the end. From the change in the King's Councils, which brought Mr. Pitt and his friends into office, Mr. Hastings anticipated much. He was aware, no doubt, that they, not less than their predecessors, were, in some sort, pledged to effect great and important changes in the constitution of the Company's governments. But he believed that these changes would neither affect the existence of the Company's rights, considered as a chartered body, nor fail to strengthen the hands of the local authorities where they most required it. Moreover, Mr. Hastings, having repeatedly communicated with the different Cabinets, and stated his own views clearly and explicitly on the subject, was encouraged to expect not only that they would serve as a groundwork for the ministerial device, but that to him, as the real author of the improved system, the care of bringing it first into play would be entrusted. Accordingly he lingered on, after all the ties of his home were severed, and he had formally communicated to the Court of Directors his desire that a successor might be appointed, for the single purpose, as his correspondence shows, of ascertaining how far in the Bill which Mr. Pitt was understood to have proposed, justice would be done,





not to his views alone, but to his public and private character as a statesman. It is not worth while to insert any of his letters, written at this time, which, whether official or otherwise, breathe the same spirit throughout, namely, a self-devotion, a zeal for the public service, and a total forgetfulness of personal interests and feelings to which I have nowhere found a parallel. For the only one among them all which might have thrown some new light on the history of the writer's character, namely, that addressed to Mr. Pitt, I have not been able to discover, though I have searched for it in every quarter where there appeared the smallest chance of success, and find constant allusions to it in other portions of the correspondence which he kept up all this while with his friends and supporters.

Mr. Hastings's opinion of the talents and disposition of Mr. Pitt appear to have been at one time very high. "I wish," he says in a communication to Major Scott, in which the fact of his having written to the new prime minister is noticed, "that he would take the trouble to read my other letters concerning the prince, which you will have in succession in the present despatches. Do you present my letter to him. I do not choose to give you a copy of it, out of respect to the person to whom I have addressed it. Indeed, I have not time, if I thought it right, as it was with difficulty, with the aid of two hands, that I could get it written fair in time. It contains much informa-



tion little known, and though laboured to be concise, it fills six sheets. Would to God that I was in England. I could give to such a man my labour with pleasure, without office or reward, or desire of either." The letter from which this extract is taken bears date 11th December, 1784. It was written ere any information respecting either the India Bill or Mr. Pitt's method of introducing it into the House of Commons had reached him, and is therefore filled with proud and happy anticipations of the benefits about to be secured by it to the Company, to the people of India, and to himself. But the passage of a few days sufficed to dispel the illusion. The following tells its own tale in language which I could not improve, and I therefore insert it at length.

To Major Scott.

Calcutta, 26th December, 1784.

My dear Scott,—On the 20th I had the inexpressible happiness to receive your land packets of the 3rd of August, with one from Mrs. Hastings, containing the first intelligence of her safe arrival in England. Yours were dated the 11th June and 2nd and 3rd of August. I suspect that the original of the first, for this was a copy, was intended for the Directors' packet of the 19th June. All my feelings on the perusal of these despatches were engrossed by a private subject; I could, therefore, well bear my disappointment in the public advices. I regret that you could not send me a copy, or an abstract at least, of Mr. Pitt's bill. I received an abstract from





Mr. Boddam; but it was very imperfect, and in some parts erroneous. I have, however, studied and corrected it by the newspapers and printed debates, and have conceived a full idea of its tenor, scope, and substance. It has destroyed all my hopes, both here and at home; for, let its defects be what they may, I conclude that that is for some years at least irrevocable and irreparable. There is one which I suspect nobody foresaw in it: that it will throw all the wealth of the Company's servants into the hands of the foreign traders, and drive many, by the dread of a tribunal, which is already regarded with all the horrors of an inquisition, into other countries.

My situation is become worse than it was, and I fear I must form my final resolution upon this unofficial report of it, as I cannot expect the Fox to arrive before the month of March, to which period I cannot wait with the moral certainty that her despatches, come when they will, will contain the prescribed grounds of my recall.

Mr. Pitt's introductory speech is a very unpleasant indication of his disposition towards me, and is in effect more inimical to me, as, under the cover of moderation and candour, it admits all the slanders which Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke rendered ineffectual by the personal rancour which they manifested in their first promulgation of them. It contains the same indiscriminate abuse of the Company's servants, and this is expressed in the same trite epithets, on which he dwells with a most disgusting emphasis and reiteration. Nor will it avail me that my name is not mentioned, nor any allusion made to my conduct, since the criminations must have been heard and read in connexion with slanders, which were recent in every man's remembrance. Take the following examples from the printed debates which you have given me:—



Page 135.—“It must on all hands be admitted, that there doth exist a great and urgent necessity for the interference of the Legislature with regard to the East India Company and the future government of our possessions in India.”

Page 140.—“The first and principal object will be to take care to prevent the Government (*i. e.* Bengal) from being ambitious and bent on conquest. Propensities of that nature have already involved India in great expenses, and cost much bloodshed. Ambition and trouble are companions but too often; and they have proved particularly hurtful to our interests in India, &c. &c.”—What follows is worse in its principle than in its implication of my character.

Page 148.—“The retrenchment of our establishments in that country.—At present it is a well-known fact that all our establishments there are very considerably overcharged; at any rate, therefore, there must be no augmentation suffered, &c.” “It will be necessary by proper provisos to compel the execution of these points, and the better to guard against the continuance of that rapacity, plunder, and extortion, which is shocking to the feelings of humanity and disgraceful to the national character, &c. &c.”

Page 149.—With regard to disobedience:—“Such persons shall be considered as guilty of offences punishable in the degrees stated in the bill, which shall contain a special exception of those guilty of disobedience of orders, and other crimes, which, from the consequences being of a most fatal tendency, must be punished with great severity.”

Page 150.—“Either a new process must be instituted, or offences equally shocking to humanity, opposite to justice, and contrary to every principle of religion and humanity, will prevail unchecked, uncontrolled, and unrestrained.”





Page 152.—“And as a further means of rendering such a tribunal awful, and its plans of preventing the perpetration of crimes shocking to humanity from continuance effectual, it should be armed with the power of examining the parties charged as delinquents by interrogatories as to the value of their effects, &c. &c.”

Why, Scott! what devil has Mr. Pitt dressed for his exemplar, and clothed with such damnable attributes of ambition, spirit of conquest, thirst of blood, propensity to expense and troubles, extravagance and improvidence in creating overcharged establishments, disobedience of orders, rapacity, plunder, extortion!!! It is a pity that the thirst of blood was out of its place. Had it closed the list, it would have made a complete climax, gradually heating the imagination to a degree of abhorrence due to the utmost perfection of human guilt. But lest this effect should be lost, Mr. Pitt winds up his description in a general display by which the great prototype of the mighty master's mind shines forth in the full blaze of complicated horror; armed with crimes shocking to the feelings of humanity, disgraceful to the national character, fatal in their tendency, opposite to justice, and contrary to every principle of religion and morality!!! And am I this character? Assuredly not: but most assuredly was it the declaimer's intention to fix it upon me; for much of this, and the whole in substance, but with less aggravation, had been before given to me by my avowed enemies, and no part of it to any individual but myself. I am therefore the sole proprietor of the whole aggregate allowance.

Perhaps, if I were to reproach him with the gross injury which he has done me, he would deny the intention. But why should he? He is above my reach; and a mind capable of using such insidious means to taint an innocent character with such a mass of infamy



may easily affect to glory in the consciousness of its own virtue, and lay claim to the public applause for such a manifestation of it. But it may be said, that the crimes which Mr. Pitt has enumerated were designed only for argument, theoretically proving by a necessary deduction that such must be the consequences of a government not constituted on systematic principles, and subsisting without an efficient control. He has taken care to obviate this construction of his expressions; he does not state what might be, but affirms that it actually existed, and declares the object of his bill to be to prevent the "continuation" of it—a word six times implied by the construction, and thrice used in direct terms.

I will do nothing precipitately, nor determine on any act while I feel my mind warmed with a sense of personal injury; neither shall such impression be allowed to have any, even the faintest, share in forming my ultimate election; but I may be allowed to draw conclusions from the demonstration which the minister has afforded me of his dispositions towards me, in default of the arrival in time of those orders from home which I have declared shall determine me to resign the service or to retain it. It may not have been prudent or convenient for him to have proposed my removal from office directly; but it is impossible that, thinking me, or affecting to think me, such a man as he has described me, he should either desire me to remain, afford me his confidence, or add to my powers. And as the new system has thrown the whole authority of the Company into his hands, I may conclude with a moral certainty that the next regular official advices, come when they may, will be such as I have stated to be—if not an express, equivalent to an express, order for my recall.

If I hear no more from England by the 31st of





January, I will allow that period to elapse; but will most certainly form my determination then on the knowledge which I already possess, though not, official, nor such as may be called authentic. This is in strict consistency with all my past declarations; but these seem not to be credited; and even you, my friend, write as if I had never made them.

By the Surprise I wrote to Mr. Pitt, and sent the letter to you sealed, deeming this a necessary respect, with a request that you would deliver it. I do now most heartily repent that I wrote it, though I most enthusiastically believed every syllable that either bestowed praise on him, or implied a trust in his candour for the effect of my opinions. These too I find, in all points, diametrically opposite to his; and the only reception that I now expect for it is such as Mr. Francis would give it—that it will be sneeringly called a fine poetical fiction. And let it be so. But enough of it.

I have begun a plan of retrenchment, which already comprises almost the whole civil establishment. On the 20th I read it privately to Macpherson and Stables in Council, the secretaries being ordered to withdraw; and I premised it by an offer to make it in terms the joint act of the Board, if they approved it. They seemed pleased with it; and Stables, in a very earnest manner, thanked me for it; but both desired to consider it (which I thought very proper), and Mr. Stables took it home with him. I have not talked with either upon it since; but I think it will pass; and I will follow it with a larger retrenchment of the military establishments. Both will be publicly ascribed to me, and will draw on me infinite odium; for a multitude of servants will be deprived of very lucrative emoluments, and some of them men who have strong claims upon me by patronage from home. Perhaps, too, Mr. Pitt,



instead of thanks, will reproach me with these attempts at reformation as demonstrations of the truth of his representation of the corruptions requiring it. Yet I will steadfastly pursue my purpose, and most fervently pray that this good act may close my service. I shall leave nothing else to be done.

One more good work has been effected ; and that too is liable to the same unpopular consequences. I found Mr. Macpherson on my arrival engaged in a contest with Colonel Gordon about military authority. The Government of Madras had sent seven broken corps of the King's forces, with above eighty officers, to Bengal, to be subsisted or sent home ; some without any official notice. Colonel Gordon, the King's senior officer, had received orders from General Campbell, his superior on the coast, restricting the recruiting service ; and Colonel Gordon denied the right of the Board to act in this or any other point which respected the King's service but by his authority, and *that* he refused to grant, except in the terms of his orders from General Campbell. He on a late occasion went further, and protested against the appointment of a court martial held without his warrant.

On all these points the decisions have been complete. I will get copies of them made to go with this. The sum of all is this :—

1st. That as many of the King's officers as can be accommodated with passages to England on the Company's ships shall be allowed them, with an allotment of seven for every ship.

2nd. That such officers as choose it shall be allowed a liberal allowance as passage-money, and provide for themselves.—This has given general satisfaction.

3rd. That all the King's soldiers whose term of service is expired, according to the King's proclamation, and are willing to enlist with the Company, shall





be recruited without regard to General Campbell's exceptions.

4th. That neither Colonel Gordon nor General Campbell, nor any King's officer, has a legal right to grant warrants for courts martial, that authority being exclusively in the Board.

The other regulations are mere provisions to render these effectual.

Colonel Gordon is a genteel and liberal officer; but he seems to be too much in dread of the reproach of deserting the cause of his corps. He and I are still on the best terms; and I yet hope to make him instrumental in procuring for us the recruits which we want. They are absolutely necessary, when we are on the eve of a large reduction of the native corps; for, if they should say we will not be reduced, I do not know how we could compel them but by a greater strength in our own countrymen.—I am, my dear Scott, your most affectionate.

P.S. I forgot to mention that Mr. Macpherson and Mr. Stables, who have both seen the debates, draw the worst conclusions to my interest, and no good ones to their own, from them. But their fears are over. They see themselves fixed, and me unsupported at home. I will put their moderation to the test in the course of the next week.

I thank you for your speech of three minutes in vindication of the service. Neither arithmetic nor geometrical reasoning can furnish a reply to such an argument; yet the flippancy of Mr. Francis's logic may prove, or affirm without designing to look for proof, that of the numbers who have not returned from Bengal with fortunes, one half spent them abroad with extravagance, and the rest are dead with debauchery.

December 27th.—I have seen, read, and abstracted Mr. Pitt's bill. It has determined me. I shall make



an early trial of my colleagues on the affairs of Oude; and if they will engage to abide by my engagements there, I will depart as soon as the *Barrington* is ready. She is now loading.

The determination avowed in this letter Mr. Hastings lost no time in carrying into effect. He made his appeal to the Council; he received from them an assurance that the affairs of Oude would be carried on according to the system which he had devised; and he conveyed to the Court of Directors a formal resignation of his powers in the following terms:—

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

Fort William, January, 1765.

Honourable Sirs,—Some authentic advices which I have received by land from England since the despatch of the *Surprise* have determined me to leave this Government at the close of this month, and to take my passage for England in your ship the *Barrington*.

It would be to assume an unwarranted self consequence to assign the reasons for this departure from the letter, though with a strict adherence to the principle of the declarations which I made in my last address, dated 22d November, by the *Surprise*. Yet I may be allowed, in a very few words, to state that I conceive it to be now impossible for your commands to require my stay in the terms which I might have had the presumption to suppose within the line of possibility, were such to be your pleasure; that it is scarcely possible for your commands on any subject which could concern my stay to arrive before the season requisite for my departure; that I rather feel the wish to avoid the receipt of them than to await their coming; and





that I consider myself in this act as the fortunate instrument of dissolving the frame of an inefficient Government, pernicious to your interests, and disgraceful to the national character, and of leaving one in its stead, such as my zeal for your service prompts me to wish perpetual in its construction, to every purpose efficient.

After a service of thirty-five years from its commencement, and almost thirteen of that time passed in the charge and exercise of the first nominal office of this Government, I do not part from it with indifference. I owe to my ever honoured employers the service of my life, and would with the devotion of a heart animated with the highest sense of gratitude offer it even with life, if the service could be accepted, or could, when accepted, contribute to the advancement of their interests, in return for the unexampled instances which I have received of their generous support and protection. Such professions are indeed easily made, and I know not how mine can ever be put to the test. But my conscience both avows them, and prompts me to declare that no man ever served them with a zeal superior to my own, nor perhaps equal to it. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and attachment, honourable Sirs, your most obedient and most faithful servant.

Having sealed and delivered over for despatch this official paper, Mr. Hastings turned his undivided attention to the adjustment of the petty matters, such as leave-taking, and the winding up of his private affairs, which alone stood between him and a satisfactory removal from the scene of all his labours. His property, inconsiderable in the extreme, when the length of his services is taken into account, and a comparison is instituted be-



tween his savings and those of men, I do not say of a rank analogous to his own, but in every respect his inferiors,—he had already converted into good bills, except only such ready money as sufficed for the purchase of two or three valuable diamonds. His houses and lands were either sold or ordered for sale, his old and faithful servants pensioned, and letters of farewell written to all the native princes and chiefs with whom, for thirteen years, he had been accustomed to correspond as an equal. Then followed,—to him the most trying ordeal of all,—the reception of addresses from his countrymen, who, whether in the civil or in the military services, lamented his departure as a private misfortune not less than as a public calamity. Finally, he made his will, entrusted it to the keeping of his friend and secretary, Mr. Thompson, and on the 1st of February rendered up, in the last Council which he attended, the keys of the public treasury and of Fort William. He accompanied the act by a minute strikingly characteristic of the man. I do not know how the document may be accounted of by others, but to me there is something very touching in the style, and I therefore insert it.

1st February, 1785.

Governor-general,—I have summoned this meeting of the Board to comply with the preliminary forms which the usage of the service has prescribed as necessary on my departure from the presidency. These do





not require the formality of a written address, but I could not trust to the feelings, which would naturally be excited by the most awful and important act of my public life, for the verbal delivery of the sentiments which I may wish to express in the performance of it. The last duty which it will remain for me to discharge will be that of my resignation of the service, which I reserve to the time when the ship in which I am about to depart shall quit her pilot, and I shall send it in writing by the hands of Mr. Larkins, with whose attendance I request the Board to dispense, that he may accompany me so far on my way. I now deliver up to the Board my keys of the treasury, and to Mr. Macpherson the keys of Fort William, both under the necessary reservation of my right to resume them in the event (which God forbid) of any accident befalling the ship in her passage to the open sea, or any other contingency compelling my return.

I take my leave of the members of the Board with the warmest and most affectionate wishes for the prosperity and success of their public administration, and for their private ease, credit, and happiness. I regret that the custom of the service has not provided any regular channel by which my acknowledgments might be publicly made to the civil servants of the Company for the benefits which I have experienced from their labours. Yet it will be an alleviation of the pain of my approaching separation from them if the Board will permit my sense of their general merits, and the testimony of my particular estimation of them, to be recorded.

It is a pleasure to me to reflect that amidst the multiplied and the pressing occupations of my station, I have not been prevented from bestowing a large portion of my time in a participation of the current duties of the executive offices of every department; and these



communications have afforded me the means both of knowing their several talents and of viewing those qualities which form the common character of the service, which I pronounce to be eminently marked with a liberality of sentiment, a susceptibility and firmness of attachment, a disdain of sordid emolument, with a spirit of assiduity, and the consequent expertness in business, exceeding, I dare venture to affirm, the habits of any community under the British empire. The time may come when my testimony, feeble as its present influence may prove, will help to disperse the clouds of prejudice with which the infection of party, and the malignity of particular vengeance, have obscured their real worth, and to display it in its full lustre. In the mean time it would not be presumption in me to attest it who know it, although my testimony were to be opposed by the clamours of a world of ignorance and infatuation.

From the council chamber Mr. Hastings returned to his own home, where a crowd of admiring and sorrowing friends waited to greet him. He accepted their parting adieus not without considerable agitation; and, as if anxious to shorten the trial, proceeded the same afternoon to the quay, where his budgerow, or barge, lay ready to receive him. He immediately went on board, Messrs. Larkins, Thompson, and Thornhill bearing him company, and began that night to move with the tide towards the Barrington's anchorage, at Kidgeree. On the 5th the ship was descried; on the 6th he was in occupation of his cabin; and on the 7th, which in his diary he has marked





as Mrs. Hastings's birthday, the shores of India faded from his view. Next day the pilot left him, and his three faithful friends departing in the boat, Mr. Hastings was left to indulge undisturbed both in retrospects of the past and anticipations of the future.

I have nothing to record of Mr. Hastings's homeward voyage, except that in every point of view it appears to have been propitious. The letters in which he alludes to it, and of which it will presently be my business to insert a few specimens, all speak of the time spent on board of ship as spent agreeably; while the appearance by and bye of a narrative of the last three months of his administration, which he compiled during its progress, as well as of two or three imitations in verse of the odes of Horace, show that it was not left altogether unimproved. Moreover, a brief sojourn at St. Helena, where every mark of respect was shown to him, served to break in upon the monotony of a sea life, and supplied him with materials with which to fill up a few pages in his journal, with other records than those which owed their existence to changes in the weather. But the most agreeable feature in the whole matter lay in this, that the progress made from day to day was great, insomuch that within the space of little more than four months from the date of his embarkation, he found himself once more upon



English ground. Mr. Hastings landed at Plymouth on the 13th of June, 1785, and set off at six on the following morning, as rapidly as post-horses could convey him, to London.

I do not know that much good would arise were I to describe at length how great was his disappointment at not finding Mrs. Hastings in town, or how he sent off an express to Cheltenham, whither he learned that she had removed, urging her to return without delay, and proposing to meet her on the road. In like manner I suspect that the reader would scarcely thank me for dwelling on the facts that he waited, as in duty bound, upon the several members of the Cabinet, and on the chairman of the Court of Directors,—from the whole of whom, not less than from a wide circle of friends and admirers, his reception proved to be in the highest degree flattering. Let me, then, be content to state, in few words, that his proceedings were in every respect conformable to the temper and constitution of his nature; that he went with excellent tact through the routine which public duty required; and then flew off to embrace the object of his tenderest regard. They met at Maidenhead Bridge on the evening of the 17th, and on the following day came up again to London. But I must not pursue this subject any further, more especially as in the following letter Mr. Hastings has told his own tale in language more





appropriate by far than any which I could select. It is addressed to the gentleman whom he had for some time employed as his private secretary; and for whom he was anxious permanently to provide in the civil service of the Company. It will be read, I think, with great interest.

To Mr. THOMPSON.

Cheltenham, 21st July, 1785.

My dear Thompson,—I have been unfortunate in missing the Surprise's packet, which I regret extremely, because I know that it will be a great disappointment to you and some other of my special friends, though you will know more particulars of my situation and prospects from others than you could from myself. The best that I can tell you is that I found Mrs. Hastings in better health than I have known her possess for some years, and that my reception has been as flattering as pride could wish it. I have experienced the distinction of *digito monstrari, et dicier, hic est*; but my humility preserved itself by the influence of a monitor within that whispered, All this will expire in less than three months. I think much of it is already gone. But as much of it as I wish to retain will, I am persuaded, remain yet for years,—the esteem of those whom all esteem.

I had a pleasant voyage, without bad weather; a clean and tight ship; officers of skill and attention, and even of science; a society that I loved; and a rapid course. The worst of the voyage was that my mind was stupid, and that I never passed a night without a slight fever. Thompson, never take the counsel of a physician that shall bid you go to sea for health. I believe that my first sufferings were from vexation; for you were scarce out of my sight when I recollected



that my old bureau, which contained all my most secret papers, and some things of intrinsic value, had been left behind; Francis having, with admirable discretion, sent it out of my sight, and therefore out of my remembrance, as a piece of lumber, to the old house. What heightened my ill humour at this discovery was, the consideration that, though you were almost within hail, it would not be possible for me to apprise you of my distress in less than eighteen months; and that unless you or Larkins had the prudence to suppose that every article of my furniture that could contain anything valuable was worth looking into, these would not only be lost, but, what would be infinitely worse, fall into strange, and possibly scoundrel, hands. I wrote to you about this foolish business from St. Helena, but to little purpose. Your own good sense and recollection had long before provided my relief, or it is past for ever. I am yet vexed whenever I recur to the subject.

We landed at Plymouth on the 13th of last month, and passed through a Lucknow heat to London, where I passed two most uncomfortable days by Mrs. Hastings's being at Cheltenham. Having performed all the duties of loyalty, respect, and civility, I ran away to this place, where I have been since the 5th. We have been drinking the waters ever since, but without any benefit hitherto, and rather the reverse, which people say is a sign that they will do us good.

I had an early visit from young Mr. Anstey, who brought me a very polite letter from his father, whom I am anxious to see, as with his aid I may be more successful in a personal application than I have been by letters. The Directors are to a man friendly to me, and Mr. Smith both obtained the order for publishing the Gheeta with a very handsome preface, and himself attends to the impression. My friends tell me





that I defeated my own recommendations in your favour and Turner's, by a subsequent remonstrance against overloading the service with writers and cadets. This checked their zeal, and served as a plea to others; and the next year appointments were made as usual and mine were forgotten. I fear that in the article of patronage even the most virtuous men of this kingdom want virtue. Nevertheless be you sanguine. I cannot wholly lose my influence, and I will not desist from my purpose till I have obtained your appointment, with the arrears of time, though you may lose the intermediate advantages of emolument.

*Tunbridge, 22nd September.*—The preceding sheet, and if more it is lost, was written long ago under the impulse of recent disappointment, and the apprehension of losing the next packet, the despatch of which was uncertain, to me at least. I have since had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Anstey, and flatter myself that, short as our acquaintance yet has been, we shall not meet again as strangers, nor without a mutual welcome. I have received yours by the Cornwallis. It is dated the 4th of March, and is the first of yours that I have received. I wished for one by the *Surprise*, and expected one by the *Lord Mansfield*; and I must tell you that I shall feel a repeated and mortifying disappointment by every ship's arrival that does not bring a letter from you. But my greatest disappointment arises from your total silence in that which I have received concerning my bureau. It contained many letters and other papers which I would not for the world have seen by strangers, and some not even by you, implicit as my confidence is in you. There are also some miniature pictures which I should grieve to lose, and trash immeasurable. And why do I tell you this? The life of man will have run out much of its course ere you can avail yourself of this informa-



tion, if you have waited for it; and how can you avail yourself of it? I have letters from Larkins, but these, too, give me no intimation of what I want.

I have led a most idle life, but not wholly unprofitable, having been allowed to contribute some little good to the service, which would not have taken place perhaps had I stayed in Bengal. I have not time to detail the particulars, nor am I sure that it would be proper. I am sanguine in the hope that I may be instrumental in undoing the mischiefs created by the last Indian Act. I will try at least, and shall think it the best deed of my life if I can effect it. Let my friends, but only special friends, know that I have such hopes and such intentions.

How much have I to write, could I indulge my inclination; but I must be short.

We are both well, but neither very well. Mrs. Hastings always remembers you, and speaks of you with an affection kindred to my own. We are at this time in a community, among which Lord Mansfield's partiality has made it fashionable to regard us with an uncommon degree of attention and respect. Indeed, my dear Thompson, I should wrong your sensibility, were I to conceal from you what would afford it the most pleasing gratification, that I find myself everywhere and universally treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country. Yet this blessing (for such it is, and I would not forfeit it for lacs), is not without its alloy, since it holds me up as an object of public calumny, which I could well support were I the sole object of it. Nor is it malice that assails me. Such is the profligacy of the ruling manners, that there are multitudes who get their bread by detraction; but so little of system is there in this vile science, that even the similitude of character is scarce ever preserved in the





features which are held forth to the public in such compositions; and for the newspapers, even indifferent anecdotes of persons are often published without a spark of truth to justify them.

I am yet unsettled, but am in treaty for an old family estate of no value, which has employed me in a longer negociation than would have served for the acquisition of a province; and if I get it, I shall pay almost twice its worth, according to the common market price.

Your sentiments of the person who is the principal subject of your letter are literally mine, and, what is more, I hear them from the mouths of all men. Yet, bad as he is—but enough.

I did not tell you that I was early summoned to receive the thanks of the Directors for my services, and the chairman who read them dwelt with a strong emphasis on the word *unanimously*. From the King and Queen my reception was most gracious. The Board of Control has been more than polite to me, for they have quoted me as authority, and so have the Court of Directors—both a little more than I like, and in a way that I dislike. My friends expected more, but I can almost assure you that I have received the full recompense of all my services, and I am thankful for it; for the King cannot bestow any honour superior to a good name; and with a larger income I should lose what my present will compel me to—retirement. No, I have not said all. Lord Thurlow has been more substantially my friend than King, Ministers, and Directors.

Tell Wilkins that his *Gheeta* is printed, presented to the King, and published. Mr. Smith inspected the press, and zealously promoted my application for the patronage of the Court of Directors, by whose authority it was printed. I have yet but one copy, but I



believe that some will be sent for his use. I don't know how the public will relish it. If it is abused, Wilkins has a good shelter by standing behind me.

In the voyage I amused myself in writing a history of the last three months of my government, in which I wound up all the preceding years. It has been of signal use, and is in the hands of the two rulers of the two great Indian Boards, *i. e.* Mr. Dundas and Mr. Devaynes, who both (and others with them) profess to have derived much instruction from it. I am myself not dissatisfied with it. It will be an antidote against the poison of false "*statements.*" I wish you could see it.

Don't forget to send a good horse for Mr. Corneille. I promised him that you would write to him, and offered your services for other commissions. He is a worthy and most hospitable man.

My Arab arrived in excellent condition, and is wonderfully admired. I ride him in spite of his beauty and long tail, though both valid objections; for this is a land of ostentation, and therefore every body detests it in others. I give them little cause.

I must trouble you with a few commissions:—

1. All my shawl goats by Carr died in the voyage. Pray get me some, and send one, or at most two, but not more, by every ship that will take them, and bespeak an inclosed berth in each for them; otherwise they will die of ill usage.

2. Send me some seeds of the lichee. Tie them loosely in a coarse cloth or bag, and give them in charge to some one who will take care of them.

3. Seeds of the cinnamon in the like package. Both must be suspended so that a little air may get at them. Turner promised to send me some Bootan turnip seeds, and he must assist you with the goats; that is, he must get them.





4. Custard apple seeds, from my Allipoor trees, whoever is the proprietor of them. Adieu. Yours ever, my dear Thompson, most affectionately.

To the information conveyed in this letter I have very little to add. Mr. Hastings could not speak in terms too strong of the flattering reception which was meted out in all quarters both to himself and Mrs. Hastings, neither were the hopes which he ventured to build upon the circumstance by any means extravagant. For Mr. Hastings seems to have coveted retirement rather than the entrance on a new field of public life; and he was surely not sanguine if he presumed to anticipate that he would be permitted to indulge his own moderate wishes unmolested. Nevertheless he had not long breathed the air of his native country ere causes of discomfort began to present themselves; the first of which, strange to say, emanated from the very body which had loaded him on his arrival with praises and honours. He had resided but a short time in Cheltenham when he received from the secretary to the Court of Directors a letter, reiterating the Court's desire to be informed of the amount of the several sums which he had accepted as presents from the princes of India, and of the particular uses to which they had been severally applied. The following, while it gives of the subject all the explanation which the writer felt himself capable of communicating, refers to an



occasion when the demand had been previously made, and specifies, neither peevishly nor in the tone of one whose self-respect has been wounded, the circumstances which caused him to treat the Court's request with neglect. I do not know how the letter may be regarded by others, but to me it appears in every respect satisfactory.

To WM. DEVAYNES, Esq., Chairman of the Hon. East India Company.  
Cheltenham, 15th July, 1785.

Sir,—The Honourable Court of Directors in their general letter to Bengal by the *Surprise*, dated the 16th March, 1784, were pleased to express their desire, that I would inform them of the periods when each sum of the presents mentioned in my address of the 22d May, 1782, was received; what were my motives for withholding the several receipts from the knowledge of the Council, or of the Court of Directors; and what were my reasons for taking bonds for part of these sums, and for paying other sums into the treasury as deposits on my own account.

I have been kindly apprised that the information required as above is yet expected from me.

I hope that the circumstances of my past situation when considered will plead my excuse for having thus long withheld it. The fact is, that I was not at the presidency when the *Surprise* arrived; and when I returned to it, my time and attention were so entirely engrossed, to the day of my final departure from it, by a variety of other more important occupations, of which, Sir, I believe I may safely appeal to your testimony, grounded on the large portion contributed by myself of the volumes which compose our consultations of that period, that the submission which my respect would have enjoined me to pay to the command in-





posed on me, was lost to my recollection, perhaps from the stronger impression which the first and distant perusal of it had left on my mind, that it was rather intended as a reprehension for something which had given offence in my report of the original transaction, than as expressive of any want of a further elucidation of it.

I will now endeavour to reply to the different questions which have been stated to me, in as explicit a manner as I am able; to such information as I can give the Honourable Court is fully entitled, and where that shall prove defective, I will point out the easy means by which it may be rendered more complete.

First, I believe I can affirm with certainty, that the several sums mentioned in the account transmitted with my letter above mentioned, were received at, or within a very few days of the dates which are prefixed to them in the account; but, as this contains only the gross sums, and each of them was received in different payments, though at no great distance of time; I cannot therefore assign a greater degree of accuracy to the account. Perhaps the Honourable Court will judge this sufficient for any purpose to which their inquiry was directed; but if it should not be so, I will beg leave to refer for a more minute information, and for the means of making any investigations which they may think it proper to direct, respecting the particulars of this transaction, to Mr. Larkins, your Accomptant-general, who was privy to every process of it, and possesses, as I believe, the original paper which contained the only account that I ever kept of it. In this, each receipt was, as I recollect, specifically inserted with the names of the persons by whom it was made; and I shall write to him to desire that he will furnish you with the paper itself, if it is still in being, and in his hands, or with what he can distinctly recollect concerning it.



For my motives for withholding the several receipts from the knowledge of the Council, or of the Court of Directors, and for taking bonds for part of these sums, and paying others into the treasury as deposits on my own account, I have generally accounted in my letter to the Court of Directors of the 22d of May, 1782;—namely, that “I either chose to conceal the first receipts from public curiosity by receiving bonds for the amount, or possibly acted without any studied design which my memory at that distance of time could verify; and that I did not think it worth my care to observe the same means with the rest.”

It will not be expected that I should be able to give a more correct explanation of my intentions after a lapse of three years, having declared at the time that many of the particulars had escaped my remembrance; neither shall I attempt to add more than the clearer affirmation of the facts implied in that report of them, and such inferences as necessarily, or with a strong probability, follow them.

I have said that the three first sums of the account were paid into the Company's Treasury, without passing through my hands. The second of these was forced into notice by its destination and application to the expense of a detachment which was formed and employed against Mahdajee Sindia, under the command of Lieut.-colonel Carnac, as I particularly apprized the Court of Directors, in my letter of the 29th December, 1780. The other two were certainly not intended, when I received them, to be made public, though intended for public service, and actually applied to it. The exigencies of the government were at that time my own, and every pressure of it rested with its full weight upon my mind. Wherever I could find allowable means of relieving those wants, I eagerly seized them; but neither did it occur to me as necessary to





state on our proceedings every little aid which I could thus procure, nor do I know how I could have stated it, without appearing to court favour by an ostentation which I disdained; or without the chance of exciting the jealousy of my colleagues by the constructive assertion of a separate and unparticipated merit, derived from the influence of my station, to which they might have had an equal claim.

I should have deemed it particularly dishonourable to receive for my own use, money tendered by men of a certain class, from whom I had interdicted the receipt of presents to my inferiors, and bound them by oath not to receive them. I was, therefore, more than ordinarily cautious to avoid the suspicion of it, which would scarcely have failed to light upon me, had I suffered the money to be brought directly to my own house, or to that of any person known to be in trust for me.

I therefore caused it to be transported immediately to the Treasury. There, you well know, Sir, it could not be received without being passed to some credit, and this could only be done by entering it as a loan, or as a deposit.

The first was the least liable to reflection, and therefore I had obviously recourse to it. Why the second sum was entered as a deposit, I am utterly ignorant. Possibly it was done without any special direction from me. Possibly, because it was the simplest mode of entry, and therefore preferred, as that the transaction itself did not require concealment, having been already avowed.

Although I am firmly persuaded that these were my sentiments on the occasion, yet I will not affirm that they were. But of this I am certain, that it was my design originally to have concealed the receipts of all the sums, except the second, even from the knowledge of the Court of Directors. They had answered my



purpose of public utility, and I had almost totally dismissed them from my memory.

But when fortune threw a large sum in my way, of a magnitude which could not be concealed, and the peculiar delicacy of my situation at the time in which I received it made me more circumspect of appearances; I chose to apprize my employers of it, which I did hastily and generally. Hastily, perhaps to prevent the vigilance and activity of secret calumny,—and generally, because I knew not the exact amount of the sum of which I was in the receipt, but not in full possession. I promised to acquaint them with the result as soon as I should be in possession of it, and in the performance of my promise I thought it consistent with it to add to the account all the former appropriations of the same kind; my good genius then suggesting to me a spirit of caution which might have saved me the trouble of this apology, had I universally attended to it; for if I had suppressed them, and they were afterwards known, I might have been asked, what were my motives for withholding part of the receipts from the knowledge of the Court of Directors, and informing them of the rest.

It being my wish to clear up every doubt upon this transaction, which either my own mind could suggest, or which may have been suggested by others, I beg leave to suppose another question, and to state the terms of it in my reply, by informing you that the endorsement on the bonds was made about the period of my leaving the presidency in the middle of the year 1781, in order to guard against their becoming a claim on the Company as part of my estate in the event of my death occurring in the course of the service on which I was then entering.

This, Sir, is the plain history of the transaction. I should be ashamed to request that you would commu-





nicate it to the Honourable Court of Directors, whose time is too valuable for the intrusion of a subject so uninteresting, but that it is become a point of indispensable duty; I must therefore request the favour of you to lay it, at a convenient time, before them. In addressing it to you personally, I yield to my own feelings of the respect which is due to them as a body, and to the assurance I derive from your experienced civilities, that you will kindly overlook the trouble imposed by it. I have the honour to be, &c.

It does not appear, from the tone of Mr. Hastings's correspondence, nor from any notices which I discover in his diary at this period, that the demand of the Court of Directors, alluded to in the preceding letter, gave him serious annoyance, or excited the smallest apprehension respecting the future. He wrote, indeed, to Mr. Larkins, and requested that from the records in that gentleman's possession, as much fresh light as possible might be thrown upon the subject; but he did nothing more. On the contrary, he resigned himself for some months to the pleasurable feelings which a reunion with a beloved wife, and a return to his native country, were eminently calculated to excite in a heart like his; and passed from place to place, happy in each as it received him, and adapting himself without scruple to the manners of those with whom each change of scene or circumstances required him to associate.



## CHAPTER IX.

Personal Proceedings of Mr. Hastings—Purchases Beaumont Lodge—Correspondence with Mr. Dundas, Lord Thurlow, and Mr. Thompson—Mr. Burke's hostility—Charges brought into the House of Commons—Mr. Pitt's Defeat—Correspondence with Mr. Anderson.

FROM the date of the preceding letter up to the spring of 1786, the stream of Mr. Hastings's existence flowed on with so steady a current as to furnish few materials out of which his biographer might succeed in weaving a narrative worthy either of him who should be the subject of it, or of those to whom it might be offered. The ideas which had been generally entertained, previous to his arrival in England, of the enormous fortune which the Governor-general of India had amassed, the quiet and unostentatious tenor of his domestic life wholly dissipated. Mr. Hastings's only home was, for a while, a house in St. James's Place, which he hired ready furnished, and from which he passed by and bye into another, similarly fitted up, in Wimpole Street. His establishment went in nothing beyond what may be accounted necessary for the wants and conveniences of a private gentleman. His movements, no doubt, carried him from time to time to Cheltenham, and Tunbridge Wells, and Bath, and other places then in request; yet they





were uniformly performed in the most inexpensive manner, and they invariably left him the very same man that they found him. It is true that his acquaintance was sought by the noblest and most distinguished persons in the land; and that his own presence, and still more, the presence of Mrs. Hastings, at Court was always acceptable. But these were distinctions which his personal merits had thrust upon him; they were not the results either of sycophancy on his part, or of an unworthy deference to overgrown wealth on the parts of those who offered them. For there never lived a man of simpler habits, or more richly endowed with a becoming self-respect than Warren Hastings. He knew and felt that his legitimate place in society was among the most distinguished of his contemporaries, whether from rank or station; and he passed to and fro from the glitter of fashion into the absolute repose of his own happy home, without being in the most remote degree conscious that any remarkable transition had been effected.

I took occasion, at the opening of this narrative, to state, that one of the earliest dreams in which Warren Hastings indulged, turned upon the repurchase of the Daylesford estate, where the evening of his days might be spent amid scenes which a thousand personal as well as traditional associations had endeared to him. More than once he had written from India, reminding his attorney that to



this end his wishes pointed ; and now the first movement which he made after having fairly established himself in London was to open directly a communication with Mr. Knight, who was then, as his family for two generations had been, in possession of the domain. Moreover, he went from Cheltenham to visit the spot; and wandered, in a state of excitement such as I cannot undertake to describe, over all the haunts of his childhood. For the mind of Hastings was of that rare texture which permits the enthusiasm, or, to express myself more correctly, the poetry of feeling to flourish side by side with the clearest judgment and the loftiest and best ordered ambition. It was, therefore, quite as natural to him that his heart should be touched, and his imagination warmed, at the prospect of recovering the patrimony of his ancestors, as that the laudable desire of winning an honoured name to himself, while he conferred lasting benefits on his country, should have carried him through a long career of labour, and difficulty, and annoyance.

It will be seen, from what he says in the concluding paragraphs of his letter to Mr. Thompson, that Mr. Hastings had early made up his mind not to allow the consideration of an exorbitant rate of purchase to stand between him and the accomplishment of his wishes. The offers which he made to Mr. Knight went in consequence far beyond the





value of the estate, yet they were rejected. The London merchant did not choose to lay down the distinction which appertains to a landed proprietor; and Mr. Hastings, not without a bitter pang of regret, ceased to importune him. Yet as both the bent of his inclinations and the state of his finances rendered it desirable that he should establish himself somewhere in the country, Mr. Hastings did not abandon his efforts to discover a fitting residence. The results were that he became by and bye the purchaser of a small property on the skirts of Windsor Forest, called Beaumont Lodge, whither, so soon as the mansion-house was made ready for his reception, he removed, and where he spent two or three years in the enjoyment of as much of peace as was at all compatible with the extraordinary turn which party malice contrived, in the interval, to give to his fortunes.

It is not to be supposed that an active and vigorous mind like that of Mr. Hastings would abstain from all interference, even during its season of retirement, in public affairs. He had early conceived a dislike to some portions of Mr. Pitt's India Bill; and finding that it was about to undergo a revision, he freely proffered his assistance, in order to render it more equitable. Not that he wantonly or impudently forced his opinions on those in power. His opinions were held in too much value not to be eagerly sought; and he was



too much of a patriot, in the best sense of the word, to withhold them from the members of the King's Government, be they, as individuals, whom they might. Accordingly, when Mr. Dundas applied to him for information concerning certain transactions in which the Nabob of Carnatic was mixed up, he supplied it with the same good will which actuated him in a correspondence into which soon afterwards he entered with Lord Thurlow. I subjoin one letter to the former of these statesmen, and two to the latter, all of them, but especially those addressed to Lord Thurlow, eminently characteristic of the writer. With Lord Thurlow, indeed, Mr. Hastings appears always to have stood upon the very best terms; and to his Lordship he at this time propounded his own device for the better government of the British provinces for the future. But the paper, however valuable, is too voluminous for insertion here. I must, therefore, for the present, lay it aside, not without an impression upon my own mind that it may yet find a place among the literary remains of one who, if he had not attained to greatness as a statesman, would have certainly become great as an author.

To the Right Hon. HENRY DUNDAS.

Cheltenham, 21st August, 1785.

Sir,—I had not the honour to receive your letter till late yesterday. I well remember the letters of which





the enclosures in yours are copies, and the construction which the Nabob put upon them. I am certain that these are the same in substance, and of course they must be literally the same, as the copies I received from the Nabob, whether by the hands of the minister Assim Cawn, or by any other channel, I do not distinctly recollect. There was no assurance expressed in either letter, such as the Nabob seems to have inferred from them, not even the most remote sense of it in that from the King; but in the conclusion of that from the Company, I then thought, as I do now, that a mind, sanguine and eager as the Nabob's was in the pursuit of a favourite object, might have allowably drawn such a conclusion from it; since it acknowledges, in very strong and pointed terms, the justice done them by so signal a mark of his confidence, which was ill placed, if it was received without any intention to verify it; neither could the "deposit" be said in any other sense to be "so momentous to his august house."

In a translation from a book of Hindoo morality, I lately met with the following definition of truth: "To communicate to another person what we have heard, seen, or know, in such a manner as to impress and convey the same meaning as passes in our own minds, without using any ambiguity of expression which may be true in one sense, and false in another." It is not impossible that the Nabob, whose reading is very extensive, may have met with this maxim, and applied it to the most obvious sense which the words of the letter conveyed, and in which it most suited his own wishes to understand them; but I cannot think that he intentionally asserted a claim without the conviction of its being well founded.

You owe me no thanks, Sir, for the communication of the manuscript presented to you by Major Scott, because it is my duty, and you have made it equally



my inclination to offer you whatever knowledge or materials of knowledge I possess, which may be of use to you in the department over which you preside; but I am much indebted to you for the candour and indulgence with which you have read this paper, and you will allow me to say that I feel my pride highly gratified by your approbation of the sentiments which it contains. I have the honour to be, &c.

To Lord THURLOW.

Bath, 13th January, 1786.

My Lord,—I took the liberty, very soon after my arrival in England, to represent to your Lordship my apprehensions of the consequences which some clauses in the late Act of Parliament respecting India were likely to produce on the minds of the Company's servants, and the peace of our establishments in India; and your Lordship is since in possession of my opinion at large upon the subject. From the advices newly received from Bengal by the Swallow packet, I conceive yet greater cause of alarm; because what was before but predicted is now verified, as far as it can be, in the first operation of a general discontent, and affords the stronger reason to apprehend worse in the sequel, if early means are not taken to prevent it. If your Lordship is of opinion that the Act, or the exceptionable parts of it, ought to be repealed, permit me to suggest that it ought to be done before the receipt of any public remonstrance against it, that the repeal may appear the result of the justice and wisdom of the parent state, not a concession extorted by popular clamour, and by the dread of a revolt following it. For your Lordship knows that there is one great example running in a parallel line with the present case which will both warrant such a suspicion at home, and its success operate as an incitement abroad.





If it shall be determined otherwise, that is, if the Act is to stand, and to be supported by force, either it will not produce that extremity, but the Company's servants will passively submit to it, and the service will in consequence lose its best and ablest hands, which will be supplied with inefficient men from home, and necessity will introduce among those that remain the worst habits of perjury and corruption; or it will provoke a resistance to it which no power from England will be able to overcome: nor is it in the reach of human foresight to say what emergencies will arise out of the effects of such a resistance, when the bonds of subjection are once broken, not only with impunity, but with an ascertained superiority.

For these reasons, my Lord, if I could have had immediate access to you, I would have earnestly solicited it to state the necessity of some immediate steps to be taken for the repeal or amendment of the Act in question, that what is to be done may be done with dignity; and I believe I should have run to town for the purpose, but for a domestic impediment, and for the kindness of my active friend Major Scott who has offered on this account to anticipate the necessary term of his departure for town by a few days: and he will request your Lordship's permission to wait on you in my stead. To him, therefore, I shall refer for all that I could wish to say myself upon this subject, and I do a violence to myself in thus closing it. Only, my Lord, do me the justice to believe that I have a conviction amounting almost to a moral certainty of the truth of my own predictions, so far as they relate to consequences abroad, and that I can have no possible interest of my own in the earnestness with which I make this representation, unless the self-applause may be termed such, which I may hope to derive from being even thus feebly and remotely instru-



mental in saving a valuable part of the national property from ruin. It is only to your Lordship that I can look for the effective agency of this deliverance; and, had I the influence of your Lordship's place, and possessed the ascendant of such a mind as yours, I would command the redress for which, in my present insignificant state, I can only be an humble solicitor.

I beg your Lordship's pardon for this liberty and intrusion on your time. I have the honour to be, &c.

From Lord THURLOW.

Tuesday, 31st January, 1786.

Dear Sir,—After I saw you yesterday I had an opportunity of reading the plan for transferring the debt from India to England. And it is to you I must again recur at some time or other, for effacing the melancholy impression it left upon my mind; which, I hope, is, in some degree at least, the effect of my ignorance.

If the bills now expected are four millions sterling; if to these are to be added the Arcot debts, and the probable amount of accumulation vested in other funds; the amount of fortunes already amassed in India seems truly formidable. If the immediate investiture of six millions more is expected, that appearance is terribly aggravated, and yet it does not much exceed the conjectures of Sir Elijah Impey on the fortunes of the servants, particularly those officers of the army, the brigadiers, who have enjoyed advanced stations. Whether plunder or parsimony produces this aggravated amount, it seems equally pernicious to the country, if the whole is to be drawn out, never to return.

But does the mischief end here? Will not the same causes continue to produce the same effect, and produce a perpetual course of sending home, by a forced channel of trade, all the produce of Bengal, which the





existence of the country can spare, for the benefit of the servants only? And is that preferable to the allowing the competition of foreign stations to be fed by that support, as far as that will sustain it, against the advantages which the possession of the revenue and country will give to the Company?

But, above all, is it necessary that the servants should be allowed to accumulate and remit above a million annually, beyond their current expenses? and if it be, where is the wisdom of calculating upon ten years possession of these provinces?

Perhaps these thoughts are too wide of all mark to be intelligible. But, whatever they are, I propose them only as the subjects of some future conversation; and not to give you the trouble of writing upon them. I am sensible that I have not got far enough into the subject to make that a convenient way of consulting you. I am, dear Sir, sincerely yours.

Early in the following month Mr. Hastings waited upon Lord Thurlow, and laid before him certain remarks which he had compiled with great care. The following correspondence arose out of that interview.

To Lord THURLOW.

1st February, 1786.

My Lord,—The subject of your Lordship's letter is indeed of an alarming nature. I wish it may be in my power to lessen its impression. I would not attempt to efface it, for the truth would be against me.

That the government of a great kingdom, equal in extent and population, and in its natural resources superior to great Britain itself, exercised by a power held at the distance of half the globe by foreign agents, who are precluded by the difference of com-



plexion, manners, religious and political habits, and language, from assimilating with the native inhabitants of it, should be productive of the evil of which your Lordship complains, is a consequence so necessary, that all the powers of legislation, control, and executive, however complete in each, never will, nor is it possible that they should remove it. It is an evil which has arisen out of the constitution, and grown into bulk from the means which have been applied to it from home; and this too, my Lord, is one of the effects of a discordant administration, and the curse of patronage depressing the regular authority. In Bengal, to which I wish to confine the immediate consideration of the question, there are three distinct classes of British subjects; the civil servants of the Company, the military officers, and the free merchants, to which a fourth has lately been added, the judges and dependants of the Supreme Court of Judicature. These make up a number of about 1500 men, who rank in the line of gentlemen, and lay claim both to the means of present subsistence as such, and to a competent provision against the season of repose. The far greater part of this number die without acquiring more than a sufficiency for their daily expenses. Some amass enormous fortunes, which will of course find their way by some channel of conveyance to England, whether for the use of the original proprietors or their heirs; and numberless besides are the calls for little sums in England for the support of near relations or the purchase of necessities. I cannot pretend to estimate the sums which have been yearly remitted on these accounts, nor prescribe the bounds to which the annual remittances might with proper care and suitable means be reduced. If liberal allowances are expressly granted, with the necessary checks to prevent excesses, they will be deemed exorbitant at home from their





comparison with the salaries of similar offices in England. If they are reduced below the necessary means of subsistence, and present subsistence is not enough, the difference will be made up from perquisites—and when men are once let loose from the obligations of strict integrity, and get the habit of carving for themselves, the transition is natural, and will be rapid—to the extremes of fraud and corruption; especially if they are bound by oaths, and impelled by the pressure, or terrors of want to break them.

But your Lordship is not to form an opinion of the profusion of these drains from the plan lately adopted by the Court of Directors for transferring the Company's debts in India to England, nor from the amount of those debts. These are the accumulation of many years, and are the effect of a war, which immediately involved two of the presidencies as parties in it, and was chiefly maintained by the wealth of Bengal. In this war we had our paymasters, contractors, agents, commissaries, (proverbial titles of corruption at home,) commanders-in-chief, and commandants of corps: who all had the means of making, and many, no doubt, did make, large profits: though, if I may trust to common report, in no degree equal to those of similar appointments near home. Besides, there are to be reckoned the fortunes of men who have long quitted the service, and estates of deceased servants, which have remained for years in India, and which at this time constitute a large part of the Company's bonded debt, both in Bengal and the other presidencies, the service for many years affording no means, or at most but scanty means, of transferring them to England, and the foreign channels being such as the former might not deem safe, nor the assignees of the latter deem legal.

Of the debt in Bengal, much, and I believe the greatest part, belongs to the native inhabitants of



Calcutta, who have made it their practice to buy up the Company's bonds, since they have fallen in their value. I repeat, my Lord, that whatever regulations are made for the service, however wise in their institution, or forcible in their application, large fortunes will be made by individuals, which must be remitted to England, and by indirect channels, if direct are withheld: and that every remittance that is made will occasion a loss of so much of the circulation of the country; whether it be exported in specie, or by any other medium which would otherwise produce a return of specie.

To this must be added the Company's investment, and the supplies sent to Bombay, Fort St. George, and China, which have been of late years excessive. I have been aware of the ruinous consequences of drawing so much of the circulating specie from the provinces of Bengal, and have laboured incessantly to prevent it. During the war, indeed, the supplies of money given to Bombay and Fort St. George were indispensable, and they were made with a liberal hand. In the same period, too, we continued to send treasure, or opium, which was equal to treasure, to China.

This I constantly either opposed, or yielded with reluctance to the peremptory commands of the Court of Directors, and the prompt spirit of acquiescence which prevailed with my colleagues. But in the year 1783, the same causes becoming less urgent, and the urgency of our domestic calls very great, the Board resolved to discontinue the supplies to Fort St. George and China, and to limit those of Bombay to sixteen lacs. I soon after left the presidency, and was absent during nine months. On my return, I found that the Council had permitted the government of Fort St. George to draw upon them to an amount which grew, before their drafts could be stopped, to near ninety lacs; and from Bombay





they had answered drafts for more than thirty lacs. It was then proposed and agreed, that no more money should be sent in the course of the year, which ended with last April, either to Fort St. George or Bombay, nor any to China. These arrangements have also, as I fear, been broken: yet, at this time the bonded debt is but what it had been these three years, about 160 lacs, and the Treasury orders and arrears of pay much diminished.

Many have been the remonstrances upon these subjects to the Court of Directors, but with little effect, as they still continue to press the Government of Bengal to make the same supplies, and in a late publication, that to China is mentioned among the advantages which are to facilitate the increased provision of tea for consumption in England.

Upon the same principle that I used all my endeavours to prevent the provinces from being exhausted of their specie, I have also laboured to open new channels for recruiting it. The first adventure to Egypt was undertaken with my encouragement, and partly at my own cost.

Had it succeeded, it would have thrown the whole internal commerce of Africa into our hands. It failed because the Court of Directors were in the habit of reprobating every measure that they could ascribe to me.

At the same period I began the first attempt to open an intercourse with Tibbet; and in defiance of all the discouragements which I met with, and notwithstanding the most untimely death of the Lama, who had eagerly adopted the plan, and had even solicited and obtained the countenance of the Emperor of China in favour of it, I had so far succeeded as to have obtained the permission of the regency of that part of Tibbet, with which our intercourse had been established, for the



passage of a caravan from Bengal to its capital. I do not know what has been the event of it; but I doubt whether the plan is generally known at the India House, or if it is, whether it is not regarded as a project of mere whim or curiosity.

Yet, unless such expedients are tried and brought to effect, and more moderation observed in the calls upon Bengal for foreign disbursements, the time will come when its inhabitants will want money for the interchange of the articles of internal commerce; and when that happens, the failure of the revenue and investment will be consequence of it.

Why this calamity has been so long protracted many causes may be assigned. The trade of Bengal, notwithstanding the large share of it which is monopolized by the Company, and may be termed gratuitous, is still considerable. Its productions and manufactures are of a high price, and are paid for almost entirely with money. Two great divisions of our army have been subsisted for more than ten years past on two subsidies paid from the province of Oude, some part of which has been expended in Bengal. Above 800,000*l.* in specie have been sent to Bengal, from Oude, in payment of the stipulations made by the treaty of Benares in 1773. Large fortunes were made by individuals of our nation, during more than fifteen years from the same source, and these were also thrown into the circulation of Bengal, or into the Company's cash, which was the same in its effect.

The capture of Bidjeygur, a fortress belonging to Cheyt Sing, in 1783, yielded a booty to the officers in silver and gold to the value of near 400,000*l.*, which was almost wholly and instantaneously conveyed to the provinces of Bengal. The province of Benares also has since that time contributed a fixed annual revenue of 400,000*l.*, instead of an uncertain one, which it





before paid of 240,000*l.*, and is well able to spare a large portion of that sum from its own currency, on account of the continual resort of wealthy pilgrims from all parts of India to its capital; and this has been so much augmented by late regulations made for that effect, that the present magistrate of Benares informs me, in a letter which I received by the *Swallow*, that in the course of three years, 2,500 new houses have been built in that city. Yet, this is now the only remaining source of supply; the others were all accidental, except that of Oude, which is dry, and all that it can now afford is the payment of a single brigade, residing within it, and returning a part of its subsidy in exchange for the necessaries of daily consumption.

The recapitulation and inferences of the preceding detail may be reduced to the following propositions:—

1. Bengal has been annually drained of its currency since British possession of it, by the Company's investment, by supplies sent to China, Fort St. George, and Bombay, and by the remittance of the fortunes of British subjects to Europe.

2. These drains must be continued in a degree both for the Company's investment, and for the remittances of the fortunes of individuals.

3. They may and ought to be diminished by the forbearance of supplies to China, and the other presidencies, and by laying equitable restrictions on private emolument.

4. If Fort St. George and Bombay cannot maintain their own expenses in time of peace with their own resources, and furnish besides a profit to the Company, the nation ought to part with or abandon them.

5. The means of laying equitable restrictions on private emolument do not consist in multiplying penal laws, or increasing their rigour at home, but in establishing an efficient control in the government abroad



in affording liberal allowances, in constituting proper and competent offices for checks on contingent expenses, and above all, for the speedy and regular audit of accounts.

6. Every encouragement should be given, and every expedient adopted, for the enlargement of the existing trade, for opening new channels of trade with other countries, and for drawing new inhabitants into our own provinces, which their fertility and security, and the miserable desolation of the royal demesnes, would render at this time an attempt of easy accomplishment.

7. But neither can the improvement of actual resources, nor the creation of new, nor the reformation of abuses, be made, except by a single, strong, and despotic hand. The members of a collective government are irresponsible : they will all have their claims to wealth and to remittances, each will have his favoured dependants, for whom he will claim a share in the emoluments of office, and protect them in the abuse of it : and the Governor himself, let his integrity be what it will, will be forced to yield in a degree to the general torrent, or he will be assailed and overborne by his associates, and not have a friend or an instrument in the service to support or assist him.

I beg your Lordship's pardon for the loose and incorrect state of this address. I have scarce had time to write it, as it is, and have omitted many facts and arguments which would have rendered the subject more complete ; and some which, I fear, will be necessary to illustrate or explain some of the positions of it. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect and attachment, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and most faithful servant.

The following, written about the same time with the preceding, gives a correct view of the





writer's position at the moment, especially as regarded his hopes of rest, if not of honour. How misplaced these expectations were, the lapse of a few weeks sufficed to show.

To Mr. THOMPSON.

Bath, 19th December, 1785.

My dear Thompson,—I write at a distance from your letters, and can neither reply to them, nor inform you which of them I have received. In all I miss what has been uppermost in my mind whenever I have received them, the news of my old bureau and its contents. These, as I have already mentioned, consisted of secret letters and other papers which I have ever kept concealed from all eyes but my own, and some valuable portraits, valuable both for their execution, and their representation of old and dear friends. It used to stand in my own apartment, and was the first package that I thought of, but by Francis's admirable care it was sent to the old house, and so either escaped my recollection afterwards, or recurred to it (if at all) as being dismissed to the ship. It is not possible, after so long a lapse of time, to recover either the bureau or the things that it contained, if you have not already and long ago secured them. Yet I must continue to write my feelings about them till you tell me that they are safe, or that they are lost for ever.

I cannot write many, nor long letters. This must serve both for you and Larkins, for in three hours it must go to the post, or miss the packet, and in three hours I have three hundred things more to do; things which stand in the place of obligations, but belong to no class of duties which morality enjoins, prudence prescribes, or pleasure recommends. Yet, such as they are, they are indispensable, and have filled up the great



void of my life during the last six months of it, and, vanishing like a mist from my remembrance, have left the void of greater apparent extent than if they had never occupied it.

You and Turner stand where you originally did in my recommendations, but precluded, first by the spite of my enemies, and the indolence or pique of my own friends concurring, and lastly, by an Act of Parliament which prohibits all appointments to the service till lists of the necessary servants are received from India, and fixed establishments formed upon them. Yet it is a point which I will never lose sight of, and am determined to accomplish it.

I have described my life as unprofitable. But it has not been absolutely misspent. I had an early occasion given me to enforce the design of opening the Bengal treasury for bills to an indefinite amount; and to recommend with success some useful principles in opposition to others that would have done mischief. I drew up a recital of the three last months of my government with a review of the whole period of it interwoven with the events of that short interval; and it has been read and studied as a rule of conduct by those whom I wish to think as I do. I have drawn up a series of arguments in examination of Mr. Pitt's Act, and heads for a new one: these I have presented to the Chancellor, the only man who can make any useful application of them; and he was, I know not if he is, disposed to it. These papers are voluminous, and I have nobody to copy them; but if I can, I will send copies of them to you, for you and my friends to read, and see that I have not grown torpid to the interests of the Company or the rights of its servants. Another deed I have done very lately, which has effected no good, and I wish it may not have done myself harm; I mean, an attempt to prevent the conclusion





of a weak or wicked agreement with the new French India Company. The effect has served only to open my eyes on some discoveries which I do not venture to commit to writing. Two conclusions only I may write, viz. that the directors have totally lost their agency, and that the property of the Company is to be cut into slices, and dealt out for the purchase of advantages to the general state, and those perhaps ideal.

My health is but feeble. Yet I certainly gain gradual strength, though tardily. My reputation stands as well as I can wish it, and I see or think I see, the beloved partner of my life stand as high in the public estimation, which I prize far beyond my own credit. She is also improved in health beyond what I had dared to hope, and I trust will be restored in time to a confirmed strength of constitution. As to rewards and honours, I have almost given up the expectation of either, though the wishes of many, and of many to whom I am personally unknown, are sanguine yet in the belief that they are in store and ready for me. With respect to the former, I have been informed that they were withheld by Mr. Pitt, when proposed a little before my arrival, on the plea that Mr. Burke having threatened to bring some criminal charges against me in the approaching meeting of Parliament, it would have been indecent to forestall them. Whether this man really means what he has threatened, I know not, having heard nothing about him for many months, nor have I ever made him the subject of my inquiries.

We have heard of Lord Macartney's flight to Bengal; but I do not learn what impression it has made on those whom it first concerns.

Tell Larkins I have received his letters in (I think) quintuplicate, and if the next that I receive are in the same tenor, I am afraid I must offer my service to those



who will accept it, and begin the world again. Give my love to him, and other friends to whom it is due. I must make an end to this. Mr. Anstey and I are as much friends as if we had rode round the Calcutta course together every day for the last fifteen years. Are you not glad of this? Mrs. Hastings desires me to assure you that you have a place in her kindest remembrance, and that she reproaches herself even for her inability to answer your letters, which however she will do in time for the next despatches. I cannot omit to mention that I had a very pleasing testimony shown me by Colonel Gordon and the other officers of the King's army returned from India, of their esteem, in an elegant entertainment provided for me; many of them remaining in town, though eager to revisit their families and friends, for that express purpose.

Adieu. I am ever, my dear Thompson, your most affectionate friend.

From the tone of the preceding letter, as well as from certain entries in his diary, which, though brief, and in themselves unimportant, may be regarded as evidences of the state of his feelings when they were made, I am led to the conclusion that there existed at this time a settled conviction on the mind of Mr. Hastings, that the hour of his final triumph over all his enemies could not be very distant. No steps had indeed been taken to erase from the journals of the House of Commons the votes of censure which stood there on record against him. Neither had Mr. Pitt exhibited any remarkable zeal in favour of a man to whom, more, perhaps, than to any other subject of the Crown, he owed his present place in the councils of his