



Pray accept, sir, the respects of my wife and family. We have the honour to present them equally to Madame the Marquise.

I have, &c., &c., M. FOURNIER.

85. *Extract from a letter from Admiral Watson to Council, Fort Saint George, dated 25 August, 1756.*

'And having further considered this expedition, I am apt to think, if it is delayed, 'till the last week in next month, there will be a much greater probability of success attending it than if the ships were to proceed immediately, as they will then escape the rainy season, which is allowed by every body to be the most unhealthy part of the year, and in all appearance, if the ships were to go now, one-third of the men would fall sick before there would be an opportunity of doing any service.'

86. *Translation of extracts from a letter from M. Pierre Renault to M. le Marquis Dupleix, dated Chandernagore, 26 August, 1756.*¹

SIR,—I heard with the greatest satisfaction of your happy arrival in France. The great interest which I take in all that concerns you makes me eager to enquire after the most trifling circumstances. That which has pleased me most, is the good health which you enjoy: I pray to God to preserve it: may you enjoy it as long and with as much satisfaction as I desire you to.

* * * * *

I will now, sir, tell you of a very extraordinary event which happened last June. This is the expulsion of the English from Bengal, and to make you understand what caused it I will begin from the beginning.

The Nawab Aliverdikhan having become infirm and at last fallen into a kind of lethargy, the chiefs of the province, to avoid the misfortunes with which they thought themselves threatened by the government of his grandson Siraj-uddaula who was to succeed him, a young man of 25, of haughty character, violent, and of an unheard of cruelty, all conspired against him. His aunt, widow of Nawajis Muhammad Khan, known under the name of the Begum of Moti Jhil, who had at her disposition a party in the

¹ Bibliothèque Nationale MSS., Paris.



State with a considerable body of troops, having put herself at their head, it seemed that nothing could resist this faction. The English under this impression, thinking the ruin of Siraj-uddaula, by whom they were not loved, inevitable, and possibly supposing this period of dissension favourable to their aggrandisement, entered into a conspiracy with the *Begum* and took into their charge a portion of the wealth belonging to this faction, but however great the precautions they took to hide their intrigues, if possibly Siraj-uddaula had not a complete acquaintance with them, he at any rate knew enough to conceive a lively resentment. In the meantime Alivardikhan died, and his officers having immediately recognised Siraj-uddaula, this prince did not delay to fall with his grandfather's troops on the faction of the *Begum*, and this woman, who by the considerable preparations she had made seemed inclined to vigorously dispute the government with him, surrendered at the first attack, and by this weakness she occasioned the ruin of her faction. Certain persons, declared enemies of the Nawab, retired to Calcutta to avoid his fury. The Nawab demanded their surrender, but the English who, in receiving them, had sold their protection at a high price,¹ found themselves obliged to stand by what they had done, and by this thoughtless conduct, not only refused to give them up but even wrote to the Nawab with hauteur and in ill-considered terms. The Nawab enraged at this behaviour, advanced his army against the English factory at Cassimbazar which was taken on the 3rd June without a blow being struck. All the English, men and women, except the wife of the chief, who was sent to the French factory, were taken to the *kacharis*² in Muxadavad, where they suffered many indignities. All the goods found in the factory were also carried away to the same place.

The Nawab encouraged by this prosperous beginning, immediately set out for Calcutta, where he arrived on the 17th with an army of 50 to 60 thousand men, 250 cannon and 500 elephants. He attacked it on the 18th and took it on the 20th of the same month. The Governor of that place, forewarned of the disposition

¹ This accusation was afterwards made the subject of inquiry by the Court (see Letter from Court, March 23, 1759, paragraph 132, and Holwell's Letter to Clive, November 5, 1759).

² Law Courts or Offices.

of the Nawab towards him at the same time as he heard of his march, had, they say, made all preparations for a vigorous resistance, and every one thought the Nawab would fail in his enterprise. However on the second day of the attack, although he had from 7 to 8 hundred men, of whom 600 were Europeans, the Governor, after having embarked the greater part of the wealth which the inhabitants had deposited in the fortress as in a place of safety, himself embarked with a portion of the garrison and all the ladies of any importance. The commandant of the troops followed him the same day with certain of the councillors and chief inhabitants of the colony. In short this unhappy town which had been expected to make the strongest resistance, whilst waiting for the succours which the English had demanded from the [Madras] Coast, was taken the third day of the attack and exposed to the most terrible disorders. The English lost here about 200 men.

Of the Christians, some of the women were carried off by the Moors, many others whilst trying to save themselves were put to the sword or were drowned in the Ganges, and those who escaped came to this colony to the number of 3,000, in the most deplorable condition. The Armenians and Gentiles were equally ruined. The Governor had taken so little precautions for his retreat that on the twelve ships which they used for it there were none of the articles most necessary for life, not even rigging or ballast. Three of the ships were wrecked and fell into the hands of the Moors, who found a great booty in them, the others got down to Fulta, where up to now the English have suffered the greatest misery.

The factory which they had at Dacca has also been surrendered without any fighting. The Moors found there more than fourteen hundred thousand rupees in merchandise and silver. The Company's servants at Jugdea and Luckipur escaped and rejoined their countrymen at Fulta, but left a large quantity of merchandise in their factories.

It will doubtless appear surprising to you that a nation, established and accredited in this province for so long and making in it a considerable trade, should have been expelled from all the factories it possessed almost as soon as the intention to do so occurred to the Nawab. Although the English had given this Prince reason for being irritated against them, it appears certain that if



they had had to do with a man more capable of reflection and less headstrong, they would not have suffered a fate so rigorous, but this Nawab, as ferocious in his way of thinking as he is cruel in action, took hold of the first pretext to satisfy at the same time his hatred for the English and his cupidity, without any regard to the difference which this conduct might make in his revenues. His mistrust as to the success of his enterprise against Calcutta, which passed amongst the people of the country for a very strong place, obliged him to demand assistance from us, though he threatened at the same time to treat us like the English if we did not give it. However rigorous this necessity might appear we did not think we could submit to it. I excused myself by all the most plausible reasons, but with this Prince, who recognises no will but his own and who wishes everything to submit to it, our refusal evidently exposed us to his most lively resentment, and we had every reason to think he would come and attack us. A rumour to this effect was spread abroad. The alarm in this colony caused by the capture of Calcutta was extreme when we saw his army defiling in our direction, crossing the Ganges by a bridge of boats, and camping almost at our barriers. His army elated with its success over the English only waited for orders to fall upon us. The Prince, with the pride of a conqueror asked us for a contribution of 20 lakhs, threatening not merely to throw down our fortifications and our flag but even to abolish our *dastak* and all our privileges. My indignation at such an unjust demand was extreme. I would have liked to oppose such tyrannical pretensions by force, but what could we have done in the situation we were placed in with a garrison of about 80 men, the greater part foreigners, who from what we could judge of their feelings might have failed us at the first attack? Besides we had few munitions [of war] and were in a fort, the defences of which were only half completed, and which is commanded by many houses or has them too close to it. Though we flattered ourselves we could have held out 10 or 12 days, which would have been very difficult, having no hope of speedy succours, we should without doubt have found ourselves in the most cruel extremities, and forced to save ourselves in the ships, by a retreat which, distant as we were from

the bank of the Ganges, would have caused us, with all our families, to run very great risks. What loss would not the Company have suffered in the abandonment of this establishment which would have drawn along with it that of the smaller factories! What would it not have cost to re-establish ourselves! How much time would it have taken, and what would have been the conditions! All these considerations, carefully considered, made us choose the path of negotiation as the most sensible and the most suited to the Company's interests. We hope that if the Company will carefully examine into the reasons which have determined our conduct, it will not merely approve, but even be grateful to us for having saved it, as we have done, from the danger to which this Establishment was exposed. In spite of all my efforts to save us from the unjust demand of the Nawab, we have had to pay to him and his officers 340 thousand rupees, a sum certainly very considerable, but which cannot be compared with the dreadful results which a foolish resistance would have brought upon the Company and ourselves. The Dutch who found themselves in the same position as we did, though they had 500 able-bodied men in their factory, all of whom were Europeans, preferred to submit and pay 450 thousand rupees rather than drive matters to extremities.

The violent action which the Nawab has taken against the English, and the contributions which he has exacted from the [foreign] nations, ought to open people's eyes to the character of this Prince. Filled with pride by the success which he has had over the English, and ruled by an insatiable cupidity, one ought not to expect him to have more consideration for us. Apart from the contempt into which we [*i.e.* the Europeans generally] have fallen since this event, it is inevitable that we should experience considerable outrages on the smallest pretext—of which there will be no want. We are no longer able to do anything in our factory, either in construction or demolition, which does not give offence, and which is not treated as a crime on our part. The Government at Hugli¹ now treats us with unbearable haughtiness, stops the course of our business and cheats us without any pretence in the simplest matters, so that even a solitary *peon*

¹ The residence of the *Faujdar*, or military governor of the province.



thinks he has the right to come and insult us in our own town. With such dispositions you can easily guess, sir, what are the intentions of the Moors, and how difficult it will be to escape from the hold which they think they have over us. It is then absolutely necessary if the Company wishes to preserve this factory with its privileges and to assure its commerce, which otherwise will be in great danger, that it should put us on another footing, or that it should expect not only exorbitant and excessively onerous expenses, but even worse things. We have relied too much on the protection and goodwill of those who governed the country in previous times; we have also counted too much on the interest they have in protecting the [foreign] nations, and if this security has had [in the past] the success which we promised ourselves from it, then it can no longer have such success now owing to the mode of thinking of the new Nawab, who acts on other principles or rather upon those of Aliverdikhan his predecessor, who took the greatest umbrage against the Europeans for what had passed upon the [Madras] coast. Old age prevented him from executing his designs, but he took care to suggest them to the present Nawab, as I have been assured, in recommending him to humiliate the Europeans and to act so as to reduce them to the condition of the people of the country. If that is his plan, as one can hardly doubt from the disposition which we see him in, what inconvenience will not result from it for us and the commerce of the Company! Besides the continual outrages to which we shall be exposed on the part of the Government, of which we are already beginning to have the saddest experience, even the people who are in our service, being no longer restrained by any motive of consideration or of fear, will be the first to fail us and will give us no account except when and how they like to do so.

You will see, sir, from what I have said, that there is only one means to hinder a result so injurious to our privileges and to the interests of the Company, and that is to put ourselves in a condition to make ourselves respected. It is not a question of making war on the Nawab or of trading at the point of the sword—I know these are incompatible with the objects of our Establishment—but it is necessary that we should have a garrison of at least 500 Europeans to support us on occasion; the Moors if they saw us capable of



self-defence would not readily dare to insult us, and I think our commerce would go on with more safety and ease. If we had had this number of men when the contribution was demanded, we would have disputed the matter with him, and possibly forced him to restrict his pretentions to the *nazarani* of 30 or 40 thousand rupees, which we are accustomed to pay at every change of the Nawab. I own the expenses would be heavier, but as they are a necessity it is for the Company to proportion its trade accordingly. The flight of the English, whom I do not think in a condition to re-establish themselves quickly, opens to the Company an efficacious way of recouping itself advantageously. The Nawab appears to hold that nation in aversion, and if he persists in these sentiments, as he may well do, especially if our commerce increases, they will attempt to re-enter their Establishments only in vain unless they do so by force. If I am to believe the servants of their Company, of whom some are well qualified to speak, it will not for a long time be in a position to pay the expenses which will be necessary to re-establish it here by a composition, not to speak of force, estimating the loss which they have just had at 50 *lakhs* exclusive of the Establishments themselves. However this may be their colony of Calcutta being entirely ruined and their credit lost, it is hardly possible, even if they re-establish themselves promptly, that they can give their commerce the same extent as heretofore.

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Yours, &c. &c. RENAULT.

Permit, I pray you, that Madame Dupleix may find here a thousand assurances of my respects.

87. *Letter from Mr. Manningham to Council, Fort Saint George, dated Massulipatam Pettah, 28 August, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—I had the honour to forward from Vizagapatam and Bandarmalanka two copies of the dispatches from Bengall advising your Honour, &c., of the Governour and Council having deputed me with Monsieur Le Beaume to entreat the aid and succours of your Presidency in order to effect the re-establishment of our Settlement in Calcutta. I had flattered myself with



hopes of a speedy journey, but the violent rains in this part of the country, together with a failure in our *palankeen* bearers (from the difficulty and fatigue in travelling through a country overflowed) impedes our passage to such a degree we greatly fear our arrival at Madras will be very late. Considering therefore the pressing occasion of our being deputed to your Honour, &c., and the necessity of the Bengall affairs, which require our greatest diligence being exerted, we have been induced (in earnest hopes of obtaining the desired end) to pursue the remainder of the journey separately. Your Honour, &c., will therefore receive this by Monsieur Le Beaume, a gentleman fully capable of acquainting you with the nature of the supplies needful and operations necessary to be performed. I have furnished Monsieur Le Beaume¹ with bearers and some *seapoy*s well acquainted with the road, and have great hopes by the favour of M. Moracien to obtain the assistance of horses at the different Settlements under his command in this province, which may enable Monsieur Le Beaume to proceed with greater expedition, and prove a resource in case the *palankeen* boys are incapable of pursuing the journey.

I have, &c. &c. CHARLES MANNINGHAM.

88. *Translation of a letter from the French Council, Chandernagore, to the Council, Masulipatam, dated 29 August, 1756.*²

GENTLEMEN,—We take advantage of the departure to-day of the ship *L'Union* to acknowledge receipt of the letter you did us the honour to write on the 21st of last month by the *Sieur Contest*.³

No event of importance has happened in this country since the capture of Calcutta, and the English have not as yet made any movement. All who were made prisoners have been sent back by the Nawab and have joined their ships. Several craft have joined them from the [Madras] coast, but amongst these only one, a Company's ship, has brought 240 soldiers from Madras.

There is little likelihood that with so small a reinforcement

¹ The Council of Fort St. George decided (September 6, 1756) that 'Monsieur Le Beaume being a Frenchman, the Board do not think it advisable to give him any insight into their affairs or intentions.'

² Pondicherry Records.

³ The MS. has *Sr. Contest*. Broome writes *Saint Contest*.



they will undertake any enterprise, being also destitute of many things necessary for doing so. The rumour is that they have been trying for some time to arrange matters with the Nawab so as to be readmitted to their Settlement, but have not been successful. It is now said that their ships of war have arrived at Madras and that strong forces are assembling there to revenge the affront given to their nation. It is to be presumed that if they delay some time longer, these here will determine to . . . and for this will avail themselves of the little monsoon.¹ Some assert that they will probably wait for orders from Europe before undertaking anything.

The Prussian ship² has just been lost whilst entering the Ganges owing to the fault of the English pilot. Only the crew and money were saved.

89. *Letter from Council at Fulda to Court of Directors, dated 17 September, 1756.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOURS,—I. As it is probable a vessel may be dispatched for Europe by the President and Council of Fort St. George or some other nation settled on the coast and a conveyance offering from hence to Vizagapatam, we think it our duty to give Your Honours some account of an event which must be of the utmost consequence to your trade. It is with the greatest concern we find ourselves under the necessity of transmitting Your Honours such disagreeable news, and shall beg leave to confine ourselves to generals for the present referring to a future address for the particulars of this affair.

2. Upon the receipt of your packett by the *Delawar* we thought it necessary to put ourselves in the best posture of defence we could, and for that purpose gave directions to have the line of guns towards the river repaired and strengthened. While we were carrying on this work a *perwannah* arrived from the Nabob Surajud Dowla (who had succeeded to the Government upon the death of Alyver de Cawn) forbidding us to erect any new works, or dig a ditch which he was informed we were doing.

¹ The cold weather (*Memoirs of Lally*, p. 96).

² The *Prince Henry of Prussia*, wrecked by the misconduct of Hendrick Walters, an English pilot, whom the Board dismissed for his carelessness.



3. As we esteemed this a very unreasonable prohibition, the President made the following reply by the approbation and consent of the Board; that we were not erecting any new fortifications, but only repairing our wharf which had been much damaged by the Freshes, and that he had been misinformed in regard to the ditch, having dug none since the invasion of the Marrattoes which had been executed by the request of our inhabitants and with the approbation of Alyver de Cawn himself; that we had received advice of there being a likelihood of a rupture between the French and us, and as they had disregarded the neutrality of the *Mogul's* dominions in the last war by attacking Madrass, we were under some apprehensions of their making some attempts upon our Settlement should there be a declaration of war between the two nations, for which reason we thought it necessary to be upon our guard and make our place as defensible as we could.

4. The Nabob was at that time encamped at Rajamaul, and the gentlemen at Cossimbuzar a few days after informed us that he was much incensed at the foregoing reply and had ordered their factory to be invested with a party of horsemen. This was confirmed in a second letter from them with advice that a large body of troops were actually placed upon them, and that more were daily expected, for which reason they desired a reinforcement of military and a supply of stores. Another letter from those gentlemen advised us that troops were daily stationed on them, that the Nabob himself was returning from Rajamaul, that a Train of artillery was ordered to be planted against them, and that he threatened to attack their factory as soon as he arrived. In this letter they requested us to complain against Hukumbeg and his *duan*, for their extortions of late years, as they looked upon them to be the instigators of these disturbances.

5. Upon the receipt of this letter, we transmitted them a blank *aradsass* for them to insert the complaint against Hukumbeg and his *duan*, as they who were on the spot must be the best judges what to write, and directed them to remonstrate in that *aradsass* the injury done us in surrounding our factory upon so frivolous and unjust a pretence; the falsity of which he might be satisfied of by sending a person to examine and report the works we were carrying on. We likewise ordered them to endeavour all in their



power to accomodate the matter, but on no account to mention the demolition of any works; that in the present situation of affairs we thought it more adviseable to sooth the Nabob than to provoke him, which sending up a reinforcement might occasion, and therefore we thought it best to defer the supply they had requested, and directed them that in case the Nabob carried matters to extremity and attacked their factory to make the best defence they could till the waters rose, and then to retreat with their garrison to Calcutta.

6. Two other letters arrived from Mr. Watts and his Council with intelligence of a further number of troops having surrounded their factory, and that the Nabob was daily expected at Muxadavad, when it was imagined they would actually be attacked. In the former of these letters they informed us that one of the principal *jummadars* placed upon them, told their doctor, the Nabob was angry with the English on no other account than a drawbridge we had built at Perrins and an octagon at Mr. Kelsall's garden, and that if we would destroy those works the forces would be immediately taken off their factory. In consequence of which information they gave it as their opinion, if the President would address the Nabob and promise to demolish the drawbridge and octagon the affair would be accomodated.

7. This letter was taken into consideration by the Board and for many strong reasons it was judged more adviseable to promise the demolition of those works than hazard a rupture with the Nabob at a juncture that we were so little prepared for it. Accordingly an *arasdass* was wrote to that effect and triplicate of it forwarded to the Chief and Council at Cossimbuzar for them to get delivered. These letters Messrs. Watts and Collet acquaint us were not received while the factory remained in our hands.

8. On the 7th June we received the disagreeable news of Cossimbuzar factory being delivered up to the Nabob, who had made Mr. Watts a prisoner upon his going to visit him, that the Nabob on his arrival before Cossimbuzar demanded the Chief to come out and see him, the Nabob's *duan*, who commanded the van of the army, writing the Chief a letter that he might come out with great safety, that he would introduce him to the Nabob. Upon this it was thought proper to send the surgeon of the factory to



the *duan*, who returned and assured the Chief he might go out with great security; from these assurances and the *pachoweterah droogah* (or collector of the Customs) being sent by the *duan* to the Chief with a present of *beetle* and to conduct him to the *duan* who was to introduce him to the Nabob, he by the advice and opinion of all the gentlemen of the factory and officer of the garrison went and was by the *duan* presented to the Nabob, who ordered him into confinement, and forced him to sign a *mutchulka* to the following purport; that we should give no protection to the King's subjects, that we should destroy any new fortifications we had raised and fill up the new ditch, and that if it could be proved, we had granted *dusticks* to any persons that were not entitled to them, the loss sustained by the Government in the Custom should be made good by the Company. These letters likewise informed us the Nabob intended to march to Calcutta with his whole army which now amounted to 50,000 men, besides a very large Train of artillery.

9. Upon the receipt of this intelligence, we thought it expedient to put our town (which was extremely open towards the land) in the best posture of defence we could by throwing up such outworks as the shortness of our time would admit of, conformable to plans laid before us for that purpose, which was accordingly executed. The militia were likewise summoned and trained, and everything in our power prepared to sustain our attack in case the Nabob should be rash enough to carry matters to that extremity.

10. The 16th of June the van of his army appeared before the redoubt at Perrins, and about one in the afternoon attempted to force a passage that way in the town, but were bravely repulsed by the party stationed there, numbers of them being killed, which made them decamp in the night from thence, and enter the town from the eastward, at which quarter it was not in our power to prevent their getting in. On the morning of the 18th they begun the attack of our Lines, and after a very warm fire the whole day, one of our batteries were obliged to retreat; which made it necessary to recall the rest that they might not be cut off by the enemy in the rear.

11. The next morning they commenced a brisk fire upon the



fort which they continued the whole day and great part of Sunday the 20th; and having gained possession of the several houses near the factory and the church, they destroyed a great many of our officers and private men, who being harassed out with continual duty and the enemy overpowering us with their numbers, the walls were scaled on the evening of the 20th, and the fort surrendered upon promise of their civil treatment of the prisoners.

12. We have now given your Honours a summary relation of the Nabob's proceedings at Cossimbuzar, his march against Calcutta, the attack and capture of that place.

13. There being some country vessels in the river, such of the inhabitants as could escape have been confined in them and suffered the greatest distress, most of them having lost every thing they had and scarce saved the cloaths on their backs, which has induced us to take the liberty of maintaining them at Your Honours' expence, which we flatter ourselves will not be disapproved of, when it is considered how general the calamity has been, and what numbers had it not in their power to subsist themselves by any means whatever.

14. Our remaining here so long has been owing to our judging it absolutely necessary to keep the river in order to re-establish ourselves in these provinces, for which purpose we have applied to the President and Council of Fort Saint George to assist us with all the force they can possibly spare from the calls of their own Coast, and have deputed Charles Manningham Esq. to satisfye them of the necessity of exerting themselves on this occasion for recovering Your Honours' Settlements, rights and priviledges in these provinces. As yet we have received no answer from those gentlemen though we daily expect one, and we hope they will not refuse or delay sending us down a considerable body of troops as soon as they received our letter upon that head, as their arrival at this juncture would enable us to re-establish Your Honours in all the priviledges and immunities of the royal *phirmaund*, the country being involved in troubles by the appointment of another *Subah* from Dilly who is joined by some royal troops and several considerable *jummadars* that have deserted Surajud Dowla. There is likewise an invasion expected from the Marrattoes as soon as the



Rains take off, and by the intelligence we have received from Cossimbuzar the Nabob is greatly embarrassed.

15. We have likewise applied to the President and Council of Bombay for a supply of troops, and in case those two Presidencies give us the necessary assistance, we may hope in a short time to acquaint Your Honours of our being resettled upon a secure and respectable footing.

16. The gentlemen at Luckipore and Bulramgurry have safely withdrawn their factories pursuant to our orders and brought away all their military stores with what cash and effects were laying in their respective factories. Those at Dacca could not do the same for want of conveyances, all their boats being seized by the Nabob of that place, but were obliged to surrender after they heard of the loss of Fort William.

17. By the next conveyances we shall transmit Your Honours copys of our proceedings since the loss of Calcutta, with the cash account and what other papers are material.

And are, &c., &c., ROGER DRAKE, JUNIOR, WM. WATTS, JAMES KILLPATRICK, RICHARD BECHER, PAUL RICHARD PEARKES, WM. FRANKLAND, M. COLLET, J. Z. HOLWELL, W. MACKETT, P. AMYATT, T. BODDAM.

90. *Letter from Council at Fulda to Council, Fort Saint George, dated 17 September, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—Enclosed is duplicate of our address under date the 18th ultimo, since which we have received advices from Cossimbuzar that we think proper to communicate to your Honour &c. with our sentiments and resolution thereon.

Mr. Warren Hastings, one of the Honourable Company's covenanted servants at Cossimbuzar and now detained at that place by the Nabob writes Major Killpatrick to the following purport, that Surrajah Doulat is no longer *Subah* of Bengal which is conferred on the King of Delhi eldest son, that the Nabob of Perenea (Soukat Jung) has received a *phirmaund* from the King investing him with the Nabobship of Bengal, Bahar, and Orixia under his son, and great preparations are making at Muxadavad for a war with Perenea in consequence of the foregoing appoint-



ments, that the Nabob of Bannaras has sent 6,000 horsemen to the assistance of Soukat Jung, that most of the *rajahs* whose territories lie near Perenea have deserted Surrajah Doulat, and that on the 29th of last month a letter arrived from the Dutch chief at Patna with advice that the King, with his son and vizier was upon his march this way at the head of a formidable army, having crossed the River Jumna 20 days before with an intention first to reduce these provinces to his obedience, and afterwards to visit all the other parts of his dominions, that the Morattas likewise are expected soon, it being reported they have imprisoned the person sent to pay them their annual *chout*, with which they are not contented, and that Mirza Sallah the Nabob of Cuttack has joined them. That the Nabob begins to be much troubled at the impending dangers, and his *jemmidars* seem not very inclinable to serve him with that zeal which his present desperate circumstances require against their king, as they may expect to be treated like rebels, most of the principal of them having a great part of their fortunes, and some their families at Delhi. That notwithstanding all this, Surrajah Doulat is raising a great army, and extorting as much money as he can get from the *rajahs* and other people that are so unfortunate as to lie under his power, not sparing the Europeans.

The above is the substance of Mr. Hastings' information, upon which we beg leave to make the following remarks. First, that the whole of it is not affirmed by the gentleman to be matter of fact, and that in all probability great part of it may be no more than a report raised by the enemies of Surrajah Doulat, next that Surrajah Doulat is possessed of such immense riches, and has so large an army on foot, that it is very possible he will be able to extricate himself by one means or other from the dangers which threaten him at present, lastly, should he be cut off or expelled from his *subahship* we should find immense difficulties to re-establish ourselves in the priviledges and grants which the royal *phirmaund* sets forth, and upon a proper and secure footing, unless we can support our demands with a sufficient and respectable military force; These reasons we flatter ourselves will convince your Honour &c. of the necessity of assisting us to the utmost of your power for recovering the Honourable Company's Settlements,



rights and privileges in these provinces notwithstanding the intelligence we have received from Cossimbuzar.

We do not write this intelligence as a certainty or with any intention to check the resolutions you may have come to for the assisting us, but if you should be prevented from sending us so considerable a force, as we could wish, and have requested, by advice of a rupture between the Crowns of Great Britain and France, we are then to desire you will supply us with as large a number of military and artillery as you may judge consistent with the safety of the Honourable Company's possessions on your Coast, that we may be ready and in a condition to make use of any turn in our favor, for which purpose and in hopes of your Honour &c. complying with our request, we are determined to keep the river till we receive your answer and are ascertained if we may expect a further reinforcement, without which we apprehend it will be impossible to re-establish ourselves in Bengal.

We beg leave to remark that could we regain our Settlement during the troubles in the country, it would be of the utmost consequence in recovering our privileges, which we should find extremely difficult as well as expensive, if the Government should be settled before we repossess our colony. This consideration we flatter ourselves will have its due weight with your Honor &c. and we make no doubt will influence your resolutions for sending us as large a force to our assistance as you can possibly spare from the calls on your Coast, and that as early as you conveniently can.

Enclosed we transmit you the return of military and military stores now in our fleet, and are sorry to observe to your Honor &c. that sickness greatly prevails among them, having lost Captain Godwin, Lieutenant Sampson, Lieutenant Erdman, Ensign Vouga, and Ensign Walcott belonging to this establishment, and private men dead and now sick upwards of an hundred.

When Captain Dogan left Bengal in the month of May, he carried away some freight belonging to the Moors, which was retained in his sloop and by us demanded of him, but he peremptorily refused to deliver it upon our receipt, which we beg leave to mention to your Honor &c. that you may take proper notice of his behavior.



Enclosed we transmit you a packet for the Honourable Company which we request you will forward by any vessel that may be under dispatch for Europe from your Coast, and we likewise enclose a packet for the President and Council of Bombay to be forwarded by *pattamar* or shipping as you may judge most expeditious.

We are, &c., &c., ROGER DRAKE, WILLIAM WATTS, JAMES KILLPATRICK, RICHARD BECHER, PAUL RICHARD PEARKES, WILLIAM FRANKLAND, MATTHEW COLLET, J. Z. HOLWELL, WILLIAM MACKETT, P. AMYATT, THOMAS BODDAM.

91. *Opinion of the Select Committee (Fort Saint George) as to the conditions of the expedition to Bengal.*¹

1. As it may be supposed that one or more of the men of war will be sent before Calcutta, and the Moors driven out by her cannon, it is requested of Mr. Watson that he will land Colonel Clive with the Company's troops or a part of them to take possession again of that Settlement, and whatever may be found within the Company's limits as usually understood, from Perrin's garden down to Surman's garden, for the sole benefit of the Company, which request it is hoped will be thought reasonable as the Company have suffered an immense loss, and are to be at the whole expence of the expedition.

2. Should it be judged proper by the Company's representatives after the taking of Calcutta to request the assistance of the squadron to attack Hughly or any other Moors' town, or to makereprizals in the river upon Moors' vessells, it is hoped it will not be thought unreasonable that commissaries be appointed on both sides to dispose of the prizes that may be so taken, their produce to be deposited untill it shall be determined by His Majesty in what manner it should be distributed: A gratuity to be given for the present at the discretion of the Council of War, to the petty officers and private men, and to be deducted out of the portion which may be allotted to them.

¹ Fort Saint George Public Consultations, 29 September, 1756.



92. *Extract from Fort Saint George Select Committee Consultations,
1 October, 1756.*

Arguments offered by Mr. Orme on the subject of the present question, in which argument Mr. Clive declares he concurs.

Since Mr. Manningham's arrival what has happened to alter the resolution of the 21st September?

Mr. Manningham says much to exculpate the gentlemen of Calcutta from the two points which are principally esteemed the causes of the loss of that place :

1st, The protection of the Nabob's tenants.

2nd, The not endeavouring to pacify him when incensed.

But an inquisition of this kind is in my opinion not of the resort of this Board. It belongs to our Masters, the East India Company.

More, Mr. Manningham says, that the resolutions of the Council held by us September 21st, take away all power from the gentlemen at Fulta. That they are absolutely Governor and Council, and are so by Act of Parliament, that for his own particular he shall quit the service, that he believes the rest of the gentlemen now of the Council will do so too, as subordination and all good government will be destroyed and no more respect be paid to them.

What weight is this to have with us?

Shall the resolutions of Council of the 21st September be changed or no?

I cannot see any reason for altering the resolution of the 21st September. A particular tenderness to avoid a determination on the authority of the gentlemen of Calcutta has been exerted. The expedient of sending deputies to give orders to the military and to manage that part of the Company's property which shall be sent from this Settlement to Bengal, was thought by me a mean between two extremes. The one extreme that of declaring the authority of the gentlemen of Bengal absolutely null and void. The other extreme, that of putting so large a force and so large a part of the Company's property entirely under the disposal of those gentlemen. It is with great pain that I now find myself



obliged to declare that when the majority of this Board were of opinion that the authority of the gentlemen at Bengal was as valid as ever, I, with Colonel Clive, thought that opinion liable to objections and it is not minuted that that opinion was unanimous but that the majority were of that opinion. I have never met with the particular Act of Parliament referred to by Mr. Manningham and wait with impatience to see it. But I think I can venture to say that I know, had the town and garrison of Calcutta belonged to a Prince instead of the East India Company, the Governor from whom it had been taken could never have reassumed his authority there until the pleasure of his Prince had been known. And this parallell for want of the Act of Parliament is all I have to judge by, and it influences my opinion so strongly, though perhaps erroneously, that were I in the case of the gentlemen of Bengal, I would sooner reassume my lost authority in Calcutta from the donation of the Presidency of Madras, than I would assert it from my own authority, as in the one case I should proceed to act from the best authority I could get, and those who invested me with it would be responsible for the consequences till the pleasure of my Masters was known, whereas taking this authority as an indisputable right till that can be proved without contradiction, would subject me, if it should not be proved at all, to immense difficulties. These reasons I beg leave to add to those which are fully explained in the Consultation of the 21st September as determining me to think there is no occasion to alter the plan there digested. As to the authority of the Chiefs of Calcutta diminished by this deputation as urged by Mr. Manningham, it concerns me extremely that it should be so, but in such complicated cases as these, many inconveniences must arise, and the authority of those gentlemen will never, in my opinion, be properly confirmed, till it is so by the orders of our Honourable Masters from Europe.

ROBERT CLIVE, ROBERT ORME.

Then the second question was put: Who are to be esteemed the proper representatives of the Company in Bengal, and under whose direction is the intended expedition to be carried on?

Whereupon it was resolved that Roger Drake Esq., Colonel



Lawrence when present, Mr. Watts, Mr. Manningham and Mr. Becher, the Select Committee appointed for that Presidency, joined to Colonel Clive, are to be esteemed the proper representatives of the Company at Bengal, that they be desired to form and deliver to Colonel Clive a plan for the conduct of such treaty as they shall recommend to be made for the best advantage of the Company with the Nabob of Bengal; and also a plan of such military operations as they would recommend to be carried on against the Nabob untill he shall consent to such terms as the treaty may be concluded on.

But as the Committee think they could not answer putting the Company to the expence of fitting out this armament without taking at the same time all possible precautions to secure to them equivalent advantages, not merely the retaking of Calcutta but the re-establishment of their several former Settlements with all the privileges granted them by the *Great Mogul*, and as the Committee have an entire confidence in Colonel Clive's abilities and that he will exert his utmost endeavors to carry this our design into full execution, whereas it might not impossibly meet with interruptions or delays from divisions of opinion among the Bengal gentlemen, if it depended totally on them :

Therefore it is agreed that Colonel Clive be further instructed to weigh and consider well the plans he shall receive from the before mentioned Select Committee of Bengal, and in case he shall judge any part of them not to tend to the most speedy and efficacious method of obtaining the hoped for advantages to the Company, then to give his best advice on the subject to those gentlemen, and in case their opinions should still differ, then finally to pursue those measures which he shall judge to be most for the Company's benefit, transmitting to us in a very explicit manner his reasons for such a proceeding, which reasons shall be referred to the Court of Directors.

Thus the Committee are of opinion they have removed as far as in them lies all obstacles to the compleat execution of their intentions in sending this armament to Bengal, supposing that a war is not declared with France; for upon the first news of such a declaration, we shall hold it absolutely necessary to recall all the troops to the coast, except so many as will be necessary for the



immediate defence of Calcutta, esteeming the certain advantages of the Settlements and inland possessions of the Company on this Coast to be more worthy of attention than the uncertain hopes of regaining their Settlements in Bengal.

Therefore the Committee think it necessary to furnish Colonel Clive with independent powers on this head also, that in case upon the news of a war or other emergency it should be found necessary to recall a part of the troops for the defence of this Coast, and the Select Committee at Bengal should not think proper to return them upon our representation, then that Colonel Clive do follow the orders of this Committee and proceed hither with such part of the troops as shall be necessary, leaving only as many as may be requisite for the defence of Calcutta.

Messrs. Clive and Orme being asked whether they assent to the resolutions made upon the second question, deliver in the following answer:

In answer to this question, we beg leave to refer to the 4th article of the plan of instructions intended to be delivered to the deputies then resolved to be sent, as entered in the Consultations of the Council held September 21st which says:

‘That the deputies be directed to re-establish the gentlemen of Bengall in Calcutta as soon as Colonel Clive’s success shall render it *proper*, and that they do, when the place is in a sufficient state of security, put those gentlemen in possession of all such part of the Company’s effects as shall remain with them.’

By this resolution which Colonel Clive and Mr. Orme then agreed to with the rest of the Council, it appears that they had no objection to entrusting the gentlemen of Calcutta, after the service of the deputies to be sent was at an end.

It is now determined that the deputies shall not go; therefore Messrs. Clive and Orme think as they did the 21st September that, in lieu of deputies the gentlemen of Bengal are to be empowered; and therefore as the resolution of 21st September is laid aside, declare that they can think of no better expedient than that now resolved by the majority of this Board.

At the same time they beg leave to recommend to the serious consideration of the Board the necessary measures to be taken



that the gentlemen of Bengal may enter into our sentiments on the seclusion of plunder &c. to the Company's use.

ROBERT CLIVE, ROBERT ORME.

93. *Translation of an extract from a letter to the Directors at Paris, dated Isle-de-France, 2 October 1756.*¹

The affairs of the English also seem in great confusion throughout all India. M. de Leyrit writes that the last letters received by him from Chandernagore inform him that the Nawab of Bengal has taken possession of the English factory at Cossimbazar though it was protected by four strong bastions, that this Nawab proposes to besiege Golgotha,² and that the English are preparing to send there 500 of the Company's troops from Madras, which will be replaced by a King's regiment, &c. &c.

94. *Letter from Colonel Clive to his Father, dated Fort Saint George, 5 October, 1756.*

HONOURED SIR,—The expedition to Bengal which I am upon the point of undertaking will not allow me to write a long letter. I hope to write you fully and to your satisfaction by the next conveyance.

I have desired my attorneys to pay you the interest arising from all my moneys in England and the Bishop of Clenforts (?) annuity which is all in my power at present, having lost over £3,000 on the *Doddington* and I fear a greater sum at Bengal. This expedition if attended with success may enable me to do great things. It is by far the grandest of my undertakings. I go with great forces and great authority.

I have desired Mrs. Clive, who has nothing else to do, to write you all particulars and I am with duty to my mother and affection to my brothers and sisters,

Honoured Sir,—Your most dutiful and obedient son, ROBERT CLIVE.

¹ Archives Nationales, Paris.

² Calcutta.

95. *A Return of the Strength of the Troops ordered for Bengal,
5 October, 1756.*

| Fort Saint George, 8th October, 1756. | Lieutenant- Colonel. | Captains. | Captain- Lieutenants. | Lieutenants. | Ensigns. | Volunteers. | Sergeants. | Corporals. | Drummers. | Centinels. | Bombardiers. | Gunners. | Matrosses. | Total. |
|--|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|----------|------------|--------|
| Train of Artillery ... | — | — | 1 | 5 | — | — | 5 | 5 | 3 | — | 21 | 21 | 48 | 103 |
| Grenadiers ... | — | 1 | — | 1 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 94 | — | — | — | 112 |
| Captain Maskelyne's ... | — | 1 | — | 1 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 73 | — | — | — | 89 |
| Captain Gamppe's ... | — | 1 | — | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 77 | — | — | — | 91 |
| Captain Campbell's ... | — | 1 | — | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 73 | — | — | — | 89 |
| Captain Callender's ... | — | 1 | — | — | 3 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 73 | — | — | — | 89 |
| Total ... | — | 5 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 35 | 35 | 23 | 390 | 21 | 21 | 48 | 573 |

N.B.—2 captains, 2 lieutenants ... 4
 2 sergeant-majors, 1 quartermaster sergeant, 1 corporal ... 4
 and 12 camp colourmen not returned in the body of the Return ... 12 20

593

ROBERT CLIVE, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

96. *Extracts from a letter from Colonel Clive to William Mabbot, Esq.,
dated Fort Saint George, 6 October, 1756.*

Providence who is the disposer of all events has thought proper to inflict the greatest calamity that ever happened to the English nation in these parts, I mean the loss of Calcutta attended with the greatest mortifications to the Company and the most barbarous and cruel circumstances to the poor inhabitants.

This unhappy news has called me to the Presidency and the gentlemen thereof have thought proper to put me at the head of this expedition for the recovery of Calcutta, the Company's losses, rights and privileges.

* * * * *

I am not so apprehensive of the Nabob of Bengal's forces as of being recalled by the news of a war or checked in our progress by the woods and swampiness of the country which is represented as almost impassable for a train of artillery.



97. *Extract from a letter from Colonel Clive to Roger Drake, Esq., Senior, dated Fort Saint George, 7 October, 1756.*

A general calamity such as this must affect every well-wisher to his country and I am sure it must you in particular. I cannot help feeling for your nephew's misfortunes and if I did not my obligations to you would entitle Mr. Drake to all the respect and all the services in my power. I hope to have the pleasure of re-establishing him at Calcutta in a condition of recovering all the Company's and his own losses also.

My best wishes attend Mrs. Drake and all the family, and I am with esteem, &c. &c.

98. *Translation of an extract from a letter from M. Baussett to M. le Marquis Dupleix, dated Chandernagore, 8 October, 1753.¹*

Since my last letter, sir, surprising events have occurred in this country. The old Nawab, Aliverdikhan is dead, his grandson who has succeeded him, first made terms with Mansur Ali Khan, formerly *wazir* of the *Mogol*, who was marching with a considerable army to make war upon him and to make himself master by force of this *subah*, but a considerable sum, which the young heir caused to be paid him, has satisfied him, and he has gone back again. The latter, to find an opportunity of recouping himself for the money he has just paid, has taken it into his head to pick a quarrel with the [European] nations. He raised a considerable army, and presented himself before Cossimbazar to take the English factory, which, by the way, was well fortified and well provided with munitions of war. The Chief was advised to go out and enquire from the Nawab what reason he had for declaring war on the English. He went with his second in office, without a safe-conduct, to the Nawab, who caused him to be arrested and bound, after which he took possession of the factory. All the English, men and women, were obliged to go out, and a garrison was placed in it.

M. Law, the French Chief in the above-mentioned place, received all the ladies by the Nawab's permission, on condition

¹ Bibliothèque Nationale MSS., Paris.

that he would be responsible for them as English people. The Nawab then marched with all his army to Calcutta to besiege it. He sent and asked M. Renault, our Director at Chandernagore, for assistance, and offered to give him Calcutta for the Company when it should be captured. The Prince wrote to the same effect to M. de Leyrit. You will see in the Chandernagore correspondence what has been written on this subject.

It has been written from Chandernagore that the Nawab sent a letter and a *betel* to M. Drake, Governor of Calcutta, doubtless for the purpose of coming to some terms or other. He received the messenger very badly, trampled the letter and the *betel* under his feet, and told the messenger that that would show what he thought of anything that came to him from his master, and to go and inform him that he was waiting for him to come himself in order that he might rub his beard with a piece of pork. These expressions were very insulting and offensive; you ought not to be surprised if the young and conceited Prince, who is also naturally very vicious, swore the destruction of this beautiful and brilliant colony.

You will, doubtless, think that the English Governor after such an insult and misplaced bragging, would have put himself in a condition of defence, that he would have made the best disposition he could of the 200 troops he had under good officers and that he would have armed the inhabitants of whom he had four thousand fit to carry muskets. Not at all. He received all the wealth which the great merchants and all the private persons brought to him to be in safety in the factory—over 3 *crores*, i.e., 300 *lakhs*—and placed it in a ship upon which he had embarked 80 men, the commandant of the troops, and 2 councillors, and abandoned the place two days before the Nawab captured it. The Nawab entered [the town] on the 20th June, his troops broke down the gates of the factory with hatchets, killed many of the English including two other Councillors whom they made prisoners. They put in prison more than 120 persons, men and women, and forgot them there for seven days [? hours] at the end of which time when it was opened, only 14 came out alive, the rest were dead.

All the inhabitants, merchants, half-castes and Armenians, came out destitute of clothing [*lit.* in their shirts]. Our gentlemen



at Chandernagore received the ladies and many of the Englishmen by the Nawab's permission.

The Nawab of Dacca had orders to take by force the English factory in that town, but M. Courtin, our Chief, showed so much tact in quieting every one that the English consented in writing to evacuate [the factory] with their ladies and without taking anything with them, on condition that they should be prisoners on *parole*, and that M. Courtin would be responsible for them if authorized by the Council of Chandernagore. This act of humanity has done him much honour. Calcutta taken, the Nawab came to spend a few days at Hugli, where he ordered the European Chiefs to visit him.

He has demanded from the Company altogether 400,000 rupees and as much from the Dutch. His troops have plundered everywhere, they have committed the most dreadful robberies in our villages of Chandernagore without M. Renault daring to complain of them.

There is everything to fear from this Prince in the future. They write from Madras that he is going to raze Calcutta to the ground. This is a terrible blow for the English Company. It would have been better for it to lose all its factories on the Coromandel Coast than this colony, so beautiful, so rich, so flourishing, which was established over 100 years ago.¹

The Governor of Calcutta and all of both sexes who could embark themselves, have retired to Fulta where they have been sent succours of all kinds from Madras to enable them to retake [Calcutta]. We are informed from Madras that the royal ships are going there [Fulta] with 800 soldiers and 1,500 sepoys. We do not yet know if the King's regiment² has yet embarked. It appears that they will try to retake the place, fortify themselves there, increase their strength, and that they will even go and attack the Nawab in his capital.

It would be well for us to profit by the present circumstances to fortify ourselves at Chandernagore, and that 400 men should be sent to us. This would give offence to the English and force them to ask for our alliance or enable us to join the Nawab if the

¹ The English colony was originally at Hugli, and not at Calcutta.

² The 39th, under Colonel Adlercron.



English wish to act in this country as they have done on the [Madras] Coast. M. de Leyrit has felt the effects of it severely. In sending us troops it is necessary to send money also, that is what we want at Chandernagore.

In January we shall know perfectly both their operations and their designs. I will inform you of them. In these parts we have to fortify Chandernagore, Cossimbazar and Dacca, there is no use in thinking of Patna, it is too far away.

99. *Translation of a letter from M. Duval de Leyrit to the Council, Fort Saint George, dated Pondicherry, 9 October, 1756.*

SIR,—I have the honour to send you the enclosed letter which the Nawab of Bengal has written to you. It was forwarded to me by M. Renault, Director and Commandant at Chandernagore, and reached me recently by the frigate *La Gloire* which was despatched to us from that direction. I beg you will acknowledge its receipt.

I have, &c., &c.

100. *Extract from a letter from Colonel Clive to the Secret Committee, London, dated Fort Saint George, 11 October, 1756.*

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN,—From many hands you will hear of the capture of Calcutta by the Moors, and the chain of misfortunes and losses which have happened to the Company in particular and to the nation in general. Every breast seems filled with grief, horror and resentment, indeed it is too sad a tale to unfold and I must beg leave to refer you to the general letters, Consultations and Committees which will give you a full account of this catastrophe.

Upon this melancholy occasion the Governour and Council thought proper to summons me to this place. As soon as an expedition was resolved upon I offered my service which at last was accepted, and I am upon the point of embarking on board His Majesty's squadron with a fine body of Europeans full of spirit and resentment for the insults and barbarities inflicted on so many British subjects.

I flatter myself that this expedition will not end with the re-



taking of Calcutta only, and that the Company's estate in these parts will be settled in a better and more lasting condition than ever.

There is less reason to apprehend a check from the Nabob's forces than from the nature of the climate and country. The news of a war may likewise interfere with the success of this expedition. However should that happen and hostilities be committed in India, I hope we shall be able to dispossess the French of Charnagore (*sic*) and leave Calcutta in a state of defence.

101. *Letter from Council, Fort Saint George, to Colonel Clive, dated 13 October, 1756.*

SIR,—Judging the re-establishment of the Company's Settlements at Bengal to be of the highest importance to their welfare, we have requested of Admiral Watson to proceed thither with the whole squadron under his command.

We have embarked on the several ships of the squadron, all officers included, 528 military and 109 Train, and on the Company's ships *Walpole* and *Malborough* with the *Boneta* ketch and those on board His Majesty's ships 940 *sepoys* and 160 *lascars* with twelve field-pieces, one *haubitzer*, and a necessary quantity of ammunition, and reposing full confidence in your abilities we have appointed you to be Commander-in-Chief of the land forces to be employed on the present expedition.

You are therefore to proceed with this command to Bengal. In the river you will probably meet with most of the gentlemen of the late Council, of whom the following have been this year appointed by the Secret Committee of the Honourable East India Company to be a Select Committee for the management of all matters relative to the protection or preservation of the Company's estate, rights and privileges, *viz.* Roger Drake Esq., Colonel Lawrence when present, Messrs. Watts, Manningham and Becher.

To these gentlemen we have addressed a letter which we now deliver you together with a copy thereof, by which you will observe our intentions in fitting out this armament, and this letter will serve to guide you in acting up to the spirit of these intentions.

Conformably to these intentions we have desired the gentlemen of the Select Committee appointed as before mentioned to form and deliver you a plan of such treaty, as they would recommend



to be made for the best advantage of the Company with the Nabob of Bengal, and likewise a plan of such military operations, as they shall judge to be most likely to compel the Nabob to consent to the terms of the said treaty. They will probably desire your presence at their Councils. We need not recommend to you to assist them with your best advice, and we most earnestly require you to endeavour to preserve a good harmony throughout.

If any part of the plans you shall receive from the gentlemen before mentioned shall appear to you not to lead by the most speedy and efficacious (*sic*) way to the obtaining the hoped for advantages to the Company you will explain particularly your sentiments to those gentlemen, pointing out to them such alteration as you think will better answer the purposed end, in which alteration we flatter ourselves they then will concur. If not, you are empowered, and we do hereby empower you, to pursue such measures as you shall judge most conducive to the Company's benefit, transmitting to them, and to us, in the most particular manner, your reasons for so doing.

Our last advices from Europe have given us too much reason to fear there will be but a very short time for the execution of this project, it being our resolution, should we receive news of a war with France, immediately to recall you, and the greatest part of the troops for the defence of this Coast. Upon the receipt of such orders from us you are to leave so many men as you judge necessary for the immediate defence of Calcutta, and proceed hither with the rest without loss of time, notwithstanding any thing that may be urged to the contrary by the gentlemen of Bengal, for in such circumstances we cannot but regard the certain possession of the Establishments under our authority on this Coast, and in this country, to be an object of too great importance to the Company, not to employ our utmost attention. Should our orders for returning arrive with you before His Majesty's ships have left Bengal, you are to request of Admiral Watson, or the commander of the ships that may be there, to bring the troops to Madrass; but should none of His Majesty's ships remain with you, then you are to apply to the President and Council for such of the Company's ships as may be there, or employ such private vessels as may be procurable.



Enclosed is copy of a Council of War, held here by the officers of His Majesty's squadron the 30th September and 2nd October concerning the disposal of what may be taken from the Moors, with copies of three letters which passed between Mr. Watson and us on the same subject. As far as the shares of the sea forces are distributed we consent that the shares of such part of the land forces, as by their rank are to share with those sea forces, be distributed also. In case reprisals should be made, you are to consider jointly with Mr. Watson, and the Bengal Committee of the appointment of proper commissaries to take charge of the portion that is to be deposited.

We have appointed Mr. John Walsh to be paymaster of the forces to be employed on the present expedition, and Mr. Thomas Maunsell, commissary. They are to act in all things according to your orders, but we have delivered the paymaster for his guidance a copy of our military regulations relating to pay, *batta*,¹ &c., and a letter of instructions of which herewith is a copy.

Conformably to the paragraph of our Honourable Masters' commands therein referred to, no *batta*, or extraordinary allowance should be given to the troops in any of their garrisons, but as the state in which their Settlements at Bengal may be found is quite uncertain we leave it to you to regulate this in such a manner, as you shall see reasonable. When their Settlements are re-established and the inhabitants returned, so that provisions become plenty as usual, this order of our Honourable Masters must be strictly observed.

It has been customary here to diet the non-commissioned officers and soldiers in the field, instead of paying them *batta*, and this has always been done by contract. The last contract was 4 *fanams*² a day for each man, but as provisions have generally been much cheaper and more plenty at Bengal than on this Coast, we hope you will be able to contract for a less price. We leave it to you to settle this to the best advantage of the Company.

The military stores embarked for the service of this expedition, according to the enclosed lists, are under the charge of the re-

¹ Compensation for depreciation of money or for extra expenditure, as, *e.g.*, when serving in a foreign country.

² The Madras *fanam* was worth about twopence.

spective officers, who are accountable to you. You will give them orders to be particularly careful that none are lost or damaged, and cause very exact monthly accounts to be delivered you of the receipts and issues. You are to give copies of the lists of stores to the Committee at Bengal.

On the ships *Marlborough* and *Walpole* we have laden Arcot rupees 400,000 (two *lacks* on each ship) consigned to you for the service of the expedition. Out of this you are to make such issues to the paymaster as you shall see necessary, and in case you should have occasion for a further supply, you are to apply to the President and Council there, and if they should not be able to furnish you, you have liberty to draw upon us.

You are to cause a general muster to be made monthly by the commissary of all the forces, *lascars*, artificers, *cooleys* and others in the Company's pay. We desire you will be present at these musters as often as your business will permit, and when you cannot be present yourself, depute such person as you shall think proper. These musters should be taken as near as possible to the end of every month, because they are to be a guide to the paymaster for his issues of pay, and the commissary is to transmit copies of the muster rolls to us by the most secure opportunities that offer.

We deliver you herewith a letter from the President to the Nabob of Bengal, and a letter from Salabut Jung to the same Nabob, both which you are to transmit to him at such time as you shall judge most proper. Enclosed are likewise translations of the two letters for your perusal.

We deliver you likewise a copy attested by the *Caugee*¹ of Delly of the *Mogul's phirmaund* to the Company for the possession of their several Settlements, and a book containing a translation not only of the *phirmaund*, but also of the orders sent from Delly at the same time to the officers of the several *subahs*, enjoining them to put the Company in possession and permit them to enjoy the privileges granted by the said *phirmaund*. By this book you will be particularly informed what the Company have a right to pretend to in the province of Bengal, which will be a great assistance in your negotiations with the Nabob. When you return to the

¹ The Muhammadan Judge.



Coast you are to leave both the Persian copy and the book of translations in the hands of the Select Committee at Bengal.

We enclose Colonel Adlercron's warrant, empowering you, or the commander-in-chief of the expedition for the time being, to appoint courts martial and persons to officiate as Judge Advocate. With our wishes for your success we are, &c. &c., GEORGE PIGOT, STRINGER LAWRENCE, HENRY POWNEY, ROBERT ORME, WILLIAM PERCEVAL, ROBERT PALK.

102.—*Letter from the Council at Fulta to the Council, Fort Saint George, dated 13 October, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—The accompanying duplicate under date the 17th ultimo was intended to be forwarded by the ship *Fame*, but that ship not proceeding or any other sea conveyance bound now to the Choromandel Coast we forward the same by *pattamar*, and are not a little concerned that to this date we have not been favoured with any advices from your Honor &c. Council. Our situation becomes very irksome, and since our last the sickness has continued among our military who are daily dying. The Moors likewise being convinced that the season is too far advanced for our proceeding out of the river (which we before endeavoured to make them believe was our intention), have begun again to hinder us in the procurement of fresh provisions, which if continued will greatly add to our present bad situation.

We are, &c., &c., ROGER DRAKE, JUNIOR, WILLIAM WATTS, JAMES KILLPATRICK, RICHARD BECHER, PAUL RICHARD PEARKES, M. COLLET, W. MACKETT, P. AMYATT.

103. *Extracts from a letter from the Select Committee, Fort Saint George, to the Select Committee, Fort William, 13 October, 1756.*¹

GENTLEMEN,—I. The Secret Committee of the Honourable the East India Company in their letter to us dated 13th February, having advised us that they have appointed you (with Colonel Lawrence when present) to be a Select Committee with powers to take such measures as shall be necessary for the protection and preservation of the Company's estate, rights and privileges, and

¹ Received at Fulta, December 14, 1756.



having directed us, the Committee for the affairs of this Presidency, to correspond with you on all matters relative thereto: It is therefore to you, gentlemen, that we address the advice we have to offer on the subject of the late calamity that has befallen the Company's Settlements and estate in the province of Bengal, with an information of the efforts we have made for the re-establishment of the Company's possessions and the re-imbursement of the loss of property they have sustained.

2. We are to acknowledgé the receipt of the following letters:

From Roger Drake Esq. and the Gentlemen of the Council at Fulta dated 18th August.

From Roger Drake Esq. Messrs. Watts, Killpatrick and Holwell at Fulta the 19th do.

From Mr. Holwell dated at Muxadavad the 17th July 1756.

From Mr. Holwell dated at Hughley 3rd August 1756.

From Messrs. Watts and Collet dated 2nd, 6th, 7th and 18th July last enclosing a letter for the Court of Directors.

From Mr. Becher &c. Council at Dacca dated 13th July.

3. Of all which copies will be transmitted to our Honourable Masters.

4. By letter from the President and Council of Madras to Mr. Drake and the Gentlemen of the Council at Fulta dated 18th and 21st September, which was dispatched by the *King's Fisher* sloop, you were advised of the disposition that had been made for the departure of the whole of His Majesty's squadron and a large part of our troops under the command of Colonel Clive, for the execution of the service before mentioned.

5. Accordingly Vice-Admiral Watson with His Majesty's ships *Kent*, *Cumberland*, *Tiger* (sic) *Salisbury* and *Bridgewater*, with the Company's ships *Walpole* and *Marlborough* now sail for Ballasore Road and we have embarked, all officers included, 528 military and 109 Train and 940 *sepoys*, under the command of Robert Clive, Esq., who has His Majesty's commission as Lieutenant-Colonel.

6. It is our duty to represent to you that we think Mr. Watson should be present, and assist in all your Councils and deliberations held on the subject of war you shall carry on, or the treaties which you shall make with the Nabob. You will find in this gentleman, as we always have, the greatest disinterestedness as well as zeal



and willingness to promote the welfare of the East India Company.

7. Mr. Pocock likewise always assisted with Mr. Watson at our Councils and will at your request, we are persuaded, as readily assist at yours.

8. As Colonel Clive's rank in the Company's service is Deputy-Governor of Fort Saint David and to succeed to the Presidency of Fort Saint George, we doubt not but you will show him all the respect that rank entitles him to, and as his assistance in your Councils will be particularly useful, you will think it proper to offer him a seat at your Board. During his stay at Bombay he took the right hand of the President.

9. We could not have resolved to engage our Honourable Masters in the vast expense of fitting out this armament but with the hopes of obtaining equivalent advantages. The mere retaking of Calcutta should we think by no means be the end of this undertaking; not only their Settlements and factories should be restored but all their privileges established in the full extent granted by the *Great Mogul*, and ample reparation made to them for the loss they have lately sustained; otherwise we are of opinion it would have been better nothing had been attempted, than to have added the heavy charge of this armament to their former loss, without securing their colonies and trade from future insults and exactions.

10. Should the Nabob on the news of the arrival of these forces, make offers tending to the acquiring to the Company the before mentioned advantages, rather than risque the success of a war, we think that sentiments of revenging injuries, although they were never more just, should give place to the necessity of sparing as far as possible the many bad consequences of war, besides the expence of the Company's treasures, but we are of opinion that the sword should go hand in hand with the pen, and that on the arrival of the present armament, hostilities should immediately commence with the utmost vigour. These hostilities must be of every kind which can either distress his dominions and estate or bring reprisals into our possession.

11. We need not represent to you the great advantage which we think it will be to the military operations, and the influence it

will have in the Nabob's councils to effect a junction with any Powers in the provinces of Bengal that may be dissatisfied with the violences of the Nabob's Government, or that may have pretensions to the Nabobship.

12. And it is we think more immediately necessary at the opening of the military operations to request Mr. Watson to block up if possible all the passes of the river, through which the salt, rice, and other provisions are carried into the country, and to seize on all that shall come within the reach of the armament, consulting at the same time proper measures for supplying our own force with provisions.

13. We have directed Colonel Clive to apply to you, gentlemen, for a plan of such treaty as you would recommend to be made with the Nabob and also for a plan of such military operations by land, as you would recommend to be carried on against him, untill he shall consent to such terms as the treaty may be concluded on; and Colonel Clive will assist you with his advice in the forming these plans.

14. But as we have a particular dependence on Colonel Clive's ability for the management of this expedition, and as it is absolutely necessary that no division of opinion or other impediment should prevent its being carried into full and entire execution, our instructions to Colonel Clive will empower him to proceed to such military operations by land, as he shall judge to be most for the Company's interest, transmitting to us in a very explicit manner his reasons for any proceedings which may differ from your sentiments, which reasons shall be referred to the Court of Directors, and should we upon the news of a war with France find it necessary to recall him with a part of the troops, that he do immediately come away with such troops, leaving only as many as he shall think sufficient for the defence of Calcutta; as in that circumstance we must think the preservation of the Company's estate under our authority a concern of too much importance to be subjected to the risques which may be incurred by the want of those troops. We thought it indispensibly our duty to invest Colonel Clive with so large a power judging that the certain possessions of the Company on this Coast would in such a case require infinitely more our attention than the present circumstances of this enterprize.



15. We have laden 400,000 rupees on the *Walpole* and *Marlborough*, each two *lack* consigned to Colonel Clive for the service of the expedition.

16. We have appointed Mr. John Walsh Paymaster of the Forces and Mr. Thomas Maunsell Commissary.

* * * * *

20. We have delivered Colonel Clive a letter from our President to the Nabob of Bengal and a letter from Salabat Jung to the same Nabob, of both which we now enclose translations for your perusal.

21. We have also delivered to Colonel Clive a copy (attested by the *Caugée* of Delly) of the *Mogul's phirmaund* to the Company for the possession of their several Settlements, and a book containing a translation not only of the *phirmaund* but also of the orders sent from Delly to the officers of the different *subahs* enjoining them to put the Company in possession and permit them to enjoy the privileges granted by the said *phirmaund*. Colonel Clive is directed to leave both the Persian copy and the English translations with you when he returns to the Coast.

* * * * *

24. We cannot too much enforce to you the absolute necessity which appears to us that the houses and buildings of Calcutta from which an enemy can annoy the fort be immediately levelled, as otherwise we cannot conceive any method of preserving the fort from the same fate it has lately suffered.

We are &c. &c. GEORGE PIGOT, ROBERT CLIVE, STRINGER LAWRENCE, HENRY POWNEY, ROBERT ORME, WILLIAM PERCEVAL, ROBERT PALK.

104. *Letter from Mr. Pigot to the Nabob of Bengal, dated 14 October, 1756.*

I received the letter you was pleased to write me on the 30th of June, advising me that it was not your intention to remove the mercantile business of the English Company out of the *subah* of Bengal, and at the same time I received information that all the Company's factories in the said province with their effects,

amounting to several *kerows* had been seized by your people, also the effects of all the merchants who resided in the said Settlements amounting to a great many *lacks* more, and I was further informed that *the greatest part of the merchants were killed by your people in a cruel and barbarous manner beyond what can be described in writing*. I must inform you that the English have above all other nations enriched your province by a most extensive trade and the importation of immense sums of ready money. The *Mogul* was so sensible of the many advantages of our settling in Bengal that he has given us by his *phirmaunds* his protection, together with many privileges and indulgences in all parts of his dominions, and these privileges and indulgences the English have enjoyed from that time to this, according to the intent of the royal *phirmaund*. Indeed in Bengal the *Subahs* did not comply with the royal *phirmaund* but out of thirty-two villages given us by the King suffered us to possess but three, and moreover have often on trifling pretences taken large sums of money from the Governors of Bengal. However as it was the intent of the English to live peaceably and only to follow their trade in your province, they submitted and made no disturbance. All that the *Subahs*, your predecessors, have done is nothing in comparison to what you have lately done. I should have been willing to have believed that the violence and cruelties exercised by your army against the English was without your knowledge, but I find you commanded your army in person and after killing and murdering our people took possession of the Fort. The great commander of the King of England's ships has not slept in peace since this news and is come down with many ships, and I have sent a great *Sardar*,¹ who will govern after me, by name Colonel Clive, with troops and land forces. Full satisfaction and restitution must be made for the losses we have sustained. You are wise: consider whether it is better to engage in a war that will never end or to do what is just and right in the sight of God: a great name is obtained by justice as well as by valour. You have heard that we have fought and always been victorious in these parts. The Nabob of this province writes you how much we have assisted in his affairs, and always acted in support of the orders of the King of

¹ Military Commander.



Delly. Salabad Jung asked our assistance but we determined to obtain satisfaction in Bengal. Mr. Clive will explain all things to you. What can I say more?¹

105. *Translation of an extract from a letter from M. Barthelemy to M. de Moras, dated Pondicherry, 16 October, 1756.*²

After the death of Aliverdikhan his grandson Soujret Khan was recognised as his successor. He is a monster equally greedy of the blood and of the wealth of his dependants. The widow of the late Nawab, even during the life of her husband, sent the greater part of her wealth to Gougouta³ under the charge of her *diwan*. The new Nawab, being informed of this, did not hesitate to demand its return from the English, and when they did not obey, he seized the Company's factory at Cossimbazar and drove out the Company's servants, retaining the Chief and three other councillors as prisoners. After this he wrote direct to the Governor of Calcutta that if he did not do what he wished he would destroy his factory also. The latter, indignant at this haughty behaviour, replied in angry terms, but the Nawab had advanced too far to be able to withdraw [his demand]. Accordingly he set out with about 30,000 men of whom only one-third were soldiers. Mr. Drake, Governor of Golgota, did not maintain his bravado when it came to action. Hardly had the Moors approached when he embarked on a vessel and retired to Fulta, with the Commandant of the troops, two hundred soldiers, some of the women, and all the wealth deposited by different people in the factory, which amounted to a prodigious sum. The fort, rendered helpless by this desertion, made only a feeble defence. The enemy made themselves masters of it on the third day, and committed all those dreadful acts which are common in a place taken by assault at the hands of an uncontrolled soldiery. The Nawab chose one hundred women and as many white children of both sexes whom he sent to Murshidabad.⁴

¹ Letters were sent at the same time to the Nawabs of Purneah, Dacca, and Cuttack, asking their assistance.

² Archives Coloniales, Paris.

³ Calcutta.

⁴ As far as is known, the Nawab set free all the prisoners he took of both sexes.

106. Letter from J. Z. Holwell to Council at Fulta, dated Fulta,
25 October, 1756.

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—1. On a late perusal of your Fulta Consultations of the 14th July I find myself called upon (amongst others of the surviving members of the Council of War held in Calcutta the 18th of June last) to attest the assertion of Messrs. Manningham and Frankland touching their being ordered by that Council of War 'To embark the European women on board the *Dodaly* and *Diligence* with a detachment of 30 men to guard the said ships, with directions to move the *Dodaly* clear of the small craft with which she was encumbered and of the enemy's fire.' Most sorry I am, gentlemen, to find myself obliged to speak on a subject so very disagreeable to my memory, but the whole proceedings of that Council appearing to my conception of so extraordinary a nature joined to the consideration of my Minute and Dissent in Council the 20th August last¹ (against any allowance being made the owners of the *Dodaly* for her loss and damages) that I cannot remain silent without incurring my own censure as well as the imputation from you of much injustice in my Minute above referred to. Thus far I thought it necessary to apologize for giving you trouble at this juncture, and shall with your leave proceed to speak, with that strict regard which every gentleman owes to truth, not only to the particulars I am called on by those gentlemen to attest but to the whole proceedings of that Council of the 14th July, and consider the defence Messrs. Manningham and Frankland there make for depriving the Company's forts, effects and garrison of the succour of that ship, and then submit the justice of my said Minute and Dissent to the determination of yourselves and my Honourable Employers.

2. That the European women was ordered to be embarked by the Council of War of the 18th is true, but that Messrs. Manningham and Frankland should embark them was no part of the order. Those gentlemen tendered themselves for that service, to which none objected publicly though myself with many others thought their stations, both civil and military, were of such importance as might well have excused them from that service.

¹ See under date.



3. That there was any particular order relative to the *Diligence* I do not remember and think I can truly attest the contrary. Mrs. Drake, Mrs. Mapletoft, Mrs. Coales and Mrs. Wedderburn with their familys being embarked on board that vessel was purely the result of my own advice to them, imagining the *Dodaly* would be extreemly crowded, and they had my order to be received on board, the ship being under my direction.

4. That a detachment of 30 men was ordered for the defence of those ships I do not remember and should certainly have objected to any such measure had it been proposed whilst I was in the Council of War as it certainly was both imprudent and needless. Imprudent as it would have been a considerable weakening a fatigued garrison who had barely a relief for duty, and needless whilst the ships remained under the cover of our fort.

5. That those gentlemen had directions to remove the *Dodaly* clear of the small craft with which she was encumbered and of the enemy's fire are assertions to me totally new, and I can truly attest was no part of the order of the Council of War, nor know I from what quarter such directions went, but if she really was encumbered with small craft, there would surely have been more propriety in moving them than her, or on supposition that propriety was attended to, yet surely whatever directions those gentlemen had, did not, nor could imply that they were to remove her low as Mr. Margass's house, a station where she was more exposed to the enemy's fire, had they taken the advantage, deprived of the benefit of our guns and small arms, and rendered useless as to the defence or succour of the Settlement, and contrary to Mr. Manningham's express promise to me that she should not stir from under the cover of the fort.

6. Touching the other part of the charge laid against those gentlemen by the Colony as a just objection to Mr. Manningham being sent to the Presidency of Fort Saint George, viz. that of their refusing joining the Councils when sent for, I can form no judgment further than I can collect from the defence of those gentlemen as entered in the Consultation of the 14th July, being a stranger to the nature of the orders the President sent by Captain Wedderburn and subsequently by Mr. Holme for their return to the fort. I was myself but just come in from the center battery when the



Council of War in the evening of [the] 13th was called, and having been the preceding night and day exhausted with continued fatigue without rest or food, as soon as the Council of War broke up I retired in hopes of getting a little repose, not doubting but the resolution of it would have been strictly obeyed, which were that the European women, the Company's treasure, and I think their essential books and papers should be embarked that night on board the *Dodaly*, but whether this last was entered on the Minutes of that Council, I cannot be positive, but perfectly recollect a discourse I had with Mr. Manningham on the propriety of it just as the Council broke up, and indeed I ever thought untill I joined your Councils here, that both the treasure and books had been embarked, and here I cannot omit remarking that better no reason at all had been given for the neglect of a measure of such importance to the Company than that which stands on the Consultation of the 20th August. But it is time I come to consider the pleas made use of by Messrs. Manningham and Frankland for their not returning to the Fort: which are that 'a little after one in the morning Mr. Lindsay came on board and informed them he left a General Assembly sitting, that the Captain of the artillery had reported there was not two days ammunition, that many of the military and militia were in liquor and mutinous, that it was the unanimous opinion the Fort was not tenable, that a retreat was resolved on, that Mr. Holwell was strenuous of its being made immediately and opposed by Mr. Baillie particularly, that the whole of the common people were in confusion, and that nothing was determined on.' Without, gentlemen, my entering particularly into the merit of these pleas, let us consider the weight of these gentlemen's seats in Council and their importance as bearing the names and authority of field officers, and Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel of the militia, and I think an impartial eye will at first sight pronounce that there was not one of the pleas urged by them in defence of their not returning into the fort, but should have urged their immediate rejoining our Councils, though they had no orders from the President for that purpose, in place of waiting on board for the detachment and removing the *Dodaly* a second time that night as low as Govindpore, running that ship and the ladies on board into ten times the risque from the enemy.



They ought rather to have returned with the ship on the flood under our guns, to have favoured the embarkation of the Company's books and treasure, (which they knew were not on board) and the retreat of the garrison. Mr. Lindsay informed them the Council was sitting, that our councils were divided, and that when he left the fort all was in confusion, and nothing determined on, which was true, the Council not breaking up untill near four in the morning, without any thing being resolved on, but deferring the retreat without, in my judgment, a single reason being urged in defence of it. The presence, weight and authority of those gentlemen might have made our councils unanimous, or have given a happy majority for a general retreat, have prevented the unhappy defection of the President, the officers and part of the garrison the next morning, and have been the cause of saving the publick and private property lodged in the fort as well as the lives of many who fell a miserable sacrifice by our retreat being cut off, the primary cause of which I must still attribute to the retreat of the ship to Mr. Margass's house and Govindpore on the night of the 18th without order or the knowledge of any one in the garrison. It was urged I know and asserted by Mr. Frankland in Council the 20th August when I entered my Minute and Dissent to the payment of the *Dodaly's* loss and damages, that those gentlemen had orders for moving the ship down, and I beg leave to remind you that I asked the President touching this assertion, who in your presence declared, he neither gave such orders nor knew of any such being given—therefore on the whole I hope I stand vindicated in your judgment for such my Dissent, as it is to me not a little astonishing how the gentlemen composing that Council of the 14th July could unanimously on the defence before them pronounce it as their opinion, that those gentlemen had cleared themselves of the charge laid against them in that letter signed as I am informed by the greatest part of the Colony.

I am &c. &c., J. Z. HOLWELL.

107. *Extract from Fulda Consultations, 25 October, 1756, in Fulda River.*

'We in consequence of such power and authority granted to us by His Majesty's most gracious Charter do now declare and



nominate Bulramgurry (one of our former subordinate factories) to be the seat of our Presidency or principal Settlement for the Honourable Company in Bengal &c.

'Ordered such our Declaration be made Publick.'

108. *Letter from W. Tooke to Council at Fulta, dated off Fulta, 10 November, 1756.*

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,—Having observed an advertisement¹ affixed in several parts about Fulta, wherein the honourable President and Governour, (by approbation of this honourable Board) requests every one to send to him, or to any of its honourable members, to be delivered in Council, their sentiments in writing founded on truth, in what they think him blameable concerning the unfortunate loss of Calcutta; as the honourable Board cannot but be extremely sensible how dependant every junior servant is unfortunately obliged to be to the gentlemen of Council, more especially as all posts and little perquisites under them are more commonly distributed by interest than otherwise, how disagreeable a task it must be to any junior servant in such a case, to be obliged to accuse any such gentleman while in power, of ill conduct, I must submit to your superior judgements: for my part as I have always as yet made it my study and application to merit your good will and approbation, humbly request my being excused acting otherwise, till such time as our honourable Masters' pleasure is known on the occasion; when if they think proper to call any one's conduct in question, their directions will be a sufficient sanction then, to those that choose to accuse, whereas if they judge every one to have done their duty, there will be no need of accusations.

I am with the profoundest respect, &c. &c., WILLIAM TOOKE.

109. *Narrative of the Capture of Calcutta from 10 April, 1756, to 10 November, 1756, by William Tooke.*²

April 10th, 1756.—Alliverdi Khawn Nabob of this province departed this life aged 82 years, having governed 17 years; which

¹ Advertisement, dated ship *Fort William*, off Fulta, 31 October, 1756 (see Drake's letter to Council, 17-25 January, 1757).

² Orme MSS. O. V., 19, Bengal, 1756, pp. 5-46; also India, IV., pp. 885-942, where it is styled: 'Narrative of the loss of Calcutta, by William Tooke, a most satirical



Government he acquired by cutting off Suffech Khawn. Some-time before his death he appointed Seir Raja Dowlet his presumptive heir and adopted son; (as he had no sons of his own) who on his death, accordingly, took possession of his effects &c.; but Gauzeetee daughter to Alliverdi Khawn, and widow to Narwages Mahmud Khawn deceased, having under her care and tuition Morada Dowlet a minor, and son to Pachaculi Khawn also deceased; resolved to put up for the Nabobship in his behalf, being prompted to it, as is supposed, by her galant Nirza Alli; as likewise by the extraordinary ill character Seir Raja Dowlet bore among his people, being given up to all manner of luxury and debauchery; and as she was possessed of immense riches, got 20,000 of the military over to her party, with which she entrenched herself at Moota Geel, near Muxadavad, at the Chutah Nabob's¹ palace; and took care to be well supplied with all sorts of arms and ammunition; but in want of provisions, the Nabob having secured all the avenues leading to her camp, whereupon, many of her military, upon her refusing them to attack the Nabob's forces, deserted her; and her husband's friends interposing between her and Seir Raja Dowlet, she suffered herself to be imposed on, and compromised matters; which was no sooner done, but Seir Raja Dowlet took her forces in pay, and having her then entirely at his discretion, plundered her of all her riches, to put it out of her power to make head against him hereafter, he then banished Nirza Alli her galant and several others of her servants which he judged were not his well-wishers; upon which Radabullub her *duan*, either out of fear, or otherwise, pretended to go a pilgrimage to Jaggernaut, at Ballasore, and under that pretence, applied to Mr. Watts, Chief of Cossimbuzar, to write Mr. Drake, to permit his son Kissendasseat, with his family and effects (judged to be 53 *laucks* in treasure and jewells only) to reside in Calcutta; and that he would grant him protection during his absence, which was no sooner asked than

performance.' In the Index it is styled: 'A satirical narrative of the loss of Calcutta, by Mr. Tooke, June, 1756, with several other original pieces.' A copy of this, without the author's name, is to be found in the British Museum, Add. MS. No. 29,209, Vol. I., fols. 1-31.

¹ Nawajis Muhammad Khan.



assented to. Seir Raja Dowlet having settled affairs, and having nothing more to fear from the *Begum*; collected his forces together, and marched to Rajamull, in order to bring the Nabob of Purnea to subjection, named Sucajunk, (son to Site Mahmud Khawn) who thought he had some pretensions to the Nabobship, as it afterwards appeared he had, by a *phirmaund* he received from the *Mogul*, (for it is to be observed Alliverdi Khawn usurped the Nabobship, and kept it only by force), but Seir Raja Dowlet's quick march prevented Sucajunk raising an army sufficient to make head; accordingly for the present chose rather to submit and pay homage with such a sum of money as was demanded of him, and to wait a more convenient opportunity of claiming his right. While all this was transacting at Rajamull, Seir Raja Dowlet wrote his prime minister Huckembeg to demand Kissendaseat of the English, as he had acted as *duan* to his father Radabullub, while *Subah* of Dacca, during Alliverdi Khawn's time, and neither of them had given any account of their administration for many years; though they had the charge of one of the greatest provinces in the Nabobship, and upon our refusing to comply with this demand and some others he made afterwards, and treating the messengers he sent to Calcutta with the greatest ignominy, and ill language, he immediately quitted Rajamull, and on Monday 24th May 1756 in the afternoon, Aumebeg a *jemindar*, with his forces, about 300 horse, came to Cossimbuzar, by order of the Nabob.

25th May, 200 horse, and some *burgundosses*, reinforced him in the morning; and in the evening was joined with two elephants, and another body of forces; when he endeavoured to force his way in at the factory gate, but was prevented by the serjeant of the guards, calling the soldiers to arms, who fixing their bayonets kept the gateway. The *jemindar* finding he could not get in by surprize, told them he was not come to fight; during which, the Chief did his utmost to provide a quantity of provisions and water, notwithstanding he met with frequent obstructions, and, upon more forces advancing orders were given to load all the great guns with grape and round shot, and to keep a good look out the whole night.

27th May, the drums and 8 o'clock gun silenced, and the gate



kept shutt, which before was always kept open the whole day. And upon the enemy's forces daily increasing, Dr. Forth was sent to the *jemindar* to know the Nabob's intentions, which he informed him was to attack the factory unless Mr. Watts went to him and signed such articles as he required. The *mounsee*, or Persean interpreter, brought Mr. Watts the same intelligence. At this time all provisions and water were entirely stopt, of which, there was a great want, particularly of the former, as there was a great number of women, children, slaves and unnecessary persons in the factory. Our complement of men consisted of 25 Europeans and as many black soldiers, with a few *lascars*, Messrs. William Watts, Collet and Batson of Councill, and Messrs. Sykes, H. Watts, and Chambers, writers; Lieutenant Elliot commanded the artillery, as likewise the military, having his son under him a volunteer. As it was apprehended the Nabob had no other intent than what the former Nabobs had had, *viz.* to stop the Company's business till his demands were complied with by extorting a sum of money, letters were addressed him, wrote in the most submissive terms, to desire to know in what particulars the English had given him offence; but no other reply was sent, than that they must pull down their fortifications newly built at Perrins and the Octagon summer house of Mr. Kelsall's; (which he had also took for a fortification, by a parcel of shells having been proved there from time to time, both places adjoining and within a league of Calcutta). By this time there was near 50,000 men round the factory, and 70 or 80 pieces of cannon planted against it, on the opposite side the river, but not near enough to do any execution.

June 1st, Radabullub¹ came to speak with Mr. Watts, and brought with him three *jemindars*, who all advised him to go to the Nabob himself, and that everything might be very easily accommodated; upon which he was weak enough to inform them that if the Nabob would send him a *beetle*, as a token for his safety and security, he would very willingly and with pleasure wait on him. Whereupon, Radabullub took leave and went away, and soon after brought him a *beetle*, on a silver dish, from the Nabob; (at least as he informed him) and in the evening 2nd June

¹ Mr. Tooke confuses this person with Rai Durlabh, the Nawab's General.

Mr. Watts and Dr. Forth went to the Nabob, in company with Huckembeg's son, though the military for a long time endeavoured to persuade him to the contrary, nay even refused to let him go out of the factory. Upon Mr. Watts's going before the Nabob, with his hands across and a handkerchief wrapt round his wrists, signifying himself his slave and prisoner (this he was perswaded to do by Huckembeg, Radabullub, and others, who assured him it might be a means of pacifying the Nabob, his appearing before him in an abject submissive manner), he abused him very much and ordered him to be taken out of his sight, but Huckembeg's son telling the Nabob he was a good sort of a man, and intended on hearing of his arrival from Rajamull to have come and embraced his footsteps (*Hat bandky Sahebka kuddum pukkerna*), upon which he ordered him to Huckembeg's tent, where he signed a *mulchilca* and was made to send for Messrs. Collet and Batson, for the same purpose, but on their arrival they were all three confined. The purport of the *mulchilca* was nearly as follows *viz.* For to destroy the redoubt, &c., newly built at Perrins near Calcutta, to deliver up any of his subjects that should fly to us for protection, (to evade justice) on his demanding such subject, to give an account of the *dusticks* for several years past, and to pay a sum of money that should be agreed on, for the bad use made of them, to the great prejudice of his revenues, and lastly to put a stop to the *Zemindar's* extensive power, to the great prejudice of his subjects also.

The 4th June, Mr. Collet was sent back to Cossimbuzar, to deliver up the factory to the Nabob; which was punctually put in execution, with all the guns, arms and ammunition, notwithstanding the soldiers were against it, and congratulated his return with the respect due only to a Chief, by drawing up in two lines for him to pass through.

June 5th, Mr. Batson was sent back to Cossimbuzar and Mr. Collet demanded, when Mr. Watts and he were informed they must get ready to go with the Nabob to Calcutta. This morning upon opening the factory gates, the enemy immediately entered in great numbers, and demanded the keys of the *godowns*, both publick and private. They no sooner took possession of the arms and ammunition, but they behaved in a most insolent manner,



threatening the gentlemen to cut off their ears, slit their noses and *chabuck*¹ them, with other punishments, in order to extort confession and compliance from them. This behaviour of theirs lasted till the 8th when Lieutenant Elliot having secreted a pair of pistols, shott himself through the head. The gentlemen's surprize was so great that they immediately sent and informed the *dewan* of what had past, thinking by that means to procure themselves better treatment. He was then searching and examining the soldiers boxes and chests in order to return to them their cloaths and apparell, but on hearing this news he ordered all the Europeans out of the factory, and put them under a strong guard, at Mr. Collet's house, where they all remained that night, except Messrs. Sykes and Batson who happily found means to make their escape and get to the French factory.

The 9th, all the prisoners were sent to Muxadavad *Cutcherry*, and put in irons, where they remained, except after 15 days confinement Messrs. H. Watts and Chambers were permitted to go to either the French or Dutch factorys, provided those gentlemen would give a receipt for them, and be responsible for their appearance, when demanded by the Nabob.

The 10th July the military were set at liberty; as for the two gentlemen² who were sent to the *aurungs*, from Cossimbuzar, they were also released about the same time, but plundered as those at the factory were, of everything they had. The factory is situated close to the river side, and consists of four bastions, mounting each ten guns (nine and six pounders) also two eighteen pounders to defend the gate-way, and a Line of 22 guns (most field pieces) towards the water side. Some time before Cossimbuzar was attacked (but preparations only making for it) Mr. Watts acquainted the Governor and Council, that he was told from the *Durbar*, by order of the Nabob, that he had great reason to be dissatisfyed with the late conduct of the English in general, besides he had heard they were building new fortifications near Calcutta, without ever applying to him, or consulting him about it, which he by no means approved of, for he looked upon us only as a sett of merchants, and therefore if we chose to reside in his dominions under that denomination we were extremely wellcome, but as

¹ To whip or flog.

² Messrs. Hastings and Marriott.



Prince of the country, he forthwith insisted on the demolition of all those new buildings we had made. The Nabob at the same time sent to the President and Council Fucker Tougar,¹ with a message much to the same purport; which as they did not intend to comply with, looking upon it as a most unprecedented demand, treated the messenger with a great deal of ignominy and turned him out of their bounds, without any answer at all; upon which a second messenger was sent to Mr. Drake, to this effect, that unless upon receipt of that order he did not immediately begin and pull down those fortifications, he would come down himself and throw them in the river. This messenger was treated as ridiculously as the other, and an answer sent agreeable thereto, as likewise by a messenger that was sent some time before, to demand the delivery up of Kissendasseat. In the meantime we received intelligence that Cossimbuzar Factory was surrounded with a large body of forces, and a great quantity of cannon, but the Council were determined not to submit to the terms proposed; accordingly directed the Chief at Cossimbuzar to make the best defence he could, and promised him succours as soon as the season would admit of it.

The 7th June, advice early in the morning was received at Calcutta, of the loss of Cossimbuzar Factory, and that the Nabob was upon full march with all his forces for Fort William. The same day orders were sent to the Chiefs of Dacca, Jugdea and Ballasore, to withdraw and quit their factories with what effects they could secure, and the Governor by beat of drum, caused all the inhabitants of Calcutta, fit to bear arms, to be assembled; in order to form a body of militia, which was accordingly done the same evening, and the next morning being the 8th June, two companys of militia were formed, one under the command of Captain John Zephaniah Holwell, and the other under Captain William Mackett; and the following gentlemen were appointed officers under them, *viz.* Robert Mapletoft, Captain Lieutenant, Richard Court, H. Wedderburn, T. Holmes, and William Sumner, Lieutenants, C. Douglas, T. Coales and R. H. Baldrick, Ensigns; and William Dumbleton Adjutant.

June 11th, the whole body of troops the town was able to

¹ Coja Wajid.



furnish fit to bear arms, including the whole military and militia was 475 (Europeans and *topasses*); the number of Europeans being 235 (about 23 of which were afterwards obliged to attend the shipping they belonged to) were assembled on a green to the southward of the factory, and after being divided into four divisions, were cantoned as follows; Captain David Clayton with 149 military and militia (including officers and twelve *lascars*) was directed to take post at the Court House; Captain John Buchannan with an equal number of forces, took post at a house just without the Fossée, that runs to the southward of the town, known by the name of Mr. Burrow's house, near the powder magazine, and Lieutenant Peter Smyth, marched with the third division and was stationed with 80 men at the salt-petre *godowns*; Captain Alexander Grant was appointed Adjutant General; Charles Manningham Colonel of the militia, and William Frankland Lieutenant Colonel. The Armenians, a party the least confidence was reposed in, made the fourth division and marched to the factory, under command of Ensign John Bellamy, where Captain Commandant Minchin was also. In the mean time Messrs. Simpson and O'Hara, engineers, with a great number of *cooleys*, were employed throwing up a breastwork seven foot high and six wide, with a ditch twelve foot deep and nine wide, at the salt-petre *godowns*; another at the Court House, and another to the southward, a little without the Fossée; which being completely effected, without the least molestation were each of them supplied with two six pounders, and also with two field pieces (six pounders) and *chevaux de frizes*, and with a quantity of crows feet, &c., &c. to strew on the grand roads where it was judged the attack would be made. All the narrow passes leading to the town, were also furnished with a ditch and breastwork, but not supplied with cannon, and intrenchments were begun to be thrown up across the Park, with a ravelin to defend the front gate of the factory, but had no time to finish them.

The 10th in the afternoon 47 persons detached themselves from the militia, and entered volunteers among the military, to remain so during the troubles; 34 of whom were Company's servants.

June 13th, there was an order issued out to stop all Moors boats, and an order given to take two Moors ships lying a little way down the river, being just arrived, which was accordingly executed, and



the *Prince George*,¹ a ship belonging to [the] Madrass Establishment, in company with the *Dodley*,² the *Lively*³ ketch, and *Neptune*⁴ snow, which were taken in the Company's service (as many other vessels were) were sent to Mucka Tanna, to demolish the fortifications there. About noon they sett sail, and in the evening landed what men they had, who entered the fort without opposition, and spiked seven guns they found there; six of which they threw in the river, but the 14th about eleven o'clock in the morning the enemy, about 3 or 4,000, advanced with great precipitation to the fort, which obliged what men we had landed to take to their boats; the enemy took immediate possession of the fort, and fired very smartly with their small arms from the parapets, as also from two field pieces they had planted behind some bushes to the northward of the fort, about 150 paces. The shipping returned the fire of the enemy the whole day, and in the evening dropt away with the ebb having done no visible execution. In this attack Captain Best of the *Lively* ketch received a wound across his belly with a shott, and one *lascar* was killed on board the *Dodley*.

The next day being the 15th Lieutenant Bishop was detached with 30 men, to reinforce the shipping, in order to drive the enemy from Mucka Tanna, upon which they were directed again to their stations under command of Captain David Rannie, who was appointed Comodore in this expedition; but whatever were the reasons the military returned the next day, without either they or the ships, making the least attempt against the enemy, indeed, 5 or 6 shot were fired by them, which were returned; in the evening the ships were ordered to return also.

June 16th, advice was received early in the morning that the Nabob's forces had crossed the river a little above Hughley, and some at Chandernagore, and that they marched with surprizing expedition. About half past eleven the same day, the enemy appeared in great numbers at Chitpoor, and their cannon arriving soon after, they began to fire briskly on the *Fortune*⁵ ketch and *Chance*⁶ sloop (that had been sent up the river to assist the garrison of the redoubt at Perrins wherein was Francis Piccard Ensign and 35 men) from a seven gun battery, one of which was an

¹ Captain Hague.² Captain Young.³ Captain Best.⁴ Captain Austen.⁵ Captain Campbell.⁶ Captain Champion.



18 pounder, the rest 6 pounders ; however the vessels by keeping a quick fire maintained their stations ; upon which the enemy turned their whole force upon the redoubt and accordingly brought up their cannon on elephants to the edge of a small wood, to the northward of the fossée. They then attempted several times to force a passage over the fossée under the fire of their cannon and small arms ; but our little troop keeping a constant platoon fire on them, as likewise by playing smartly two three pounders which they had there, and being reinforced with a detachment of 50 men under command of Lieutenant Blagg, and the piquet under command of Captain Clayton advancing at about half past six, the enemy thought proper to retire. They must have sustained a considerable loss in this attack, for seventy nine of their dead were found the next morning, most of them killed with cannon shott at the corner of the wood where they had brought up their artillery. The enemy had no sooner quitted this attack, but they directly drew off their artillery and filed off in very large columns towards Dumdum plains. In this action we lost Mr. Thorsbey of the volunteers, six more men were also killed and 5 wounded. In the night the enemy having passed the old intrenchment at Cow Cross ; at Metres, and Omichund's Gardens (though we had 1,000 *peons* and *buckserays* to defend the bridge at Cow Cross, who upon seeing the enemy, joined them), entered the skirts of the town plundering and burning all they mett in their way especially the black merchants' houses. We had also intelligence of their having burned in their march all about Barrasut, Dumdum and Baranagore.

June 17th we caused all the *buzars* and *cajan*¹ houses to the eastward to be burnt, as likewise to the southward, almost as far as Govinpoors where many of our people being detected plundering were instantly punished with dicapitation. About four in the afternoon a party of *buckserays* under command of Narransing took a *jemindar* of the enemy's whom they brought to Captain Clayton's battery. Upon examination, he informed us that the enemy's number did not exceed 8,000 men, and intended to attack the batterys next day. In the meantime they had set fire to the *Great Buzar* and the adjacent places, as well as to many parts of the

¹ Thatched with palm leaf.

Black Town, which burnt till morning, and being so very extensive and near, formed a scene too horrible for language to describe. The enemy that day, and the night before, were encampt behind the brick kilns, and stretched from the bungalow¹ as far as Govinderam Metre's Garden on the Dumdum road, as we were informed by our spyes we sent to their camp.

June the 18th in the morning early Lieutenant Smyth finding the enemy close to his post, detached Ensign Walcott with fifty men and a field piece, to hinder them from plundering the houses and to drive them to a greater distance, accordingly upon his advancing about 200 paces, forced the enemy from the houses they were possessed of, and obliged them to retire to a considerable distance with some loss, though without the loss of a single man on our side. The same morning orders were issued out that no quarter was to be given to the enemy, the prison being but a very small place was full, and among other prisoners was Omichund who submitted himself to be taken the day before with a guard, without resistance, but Huzzaromull, his relation, acted otherwise, by which means he lost his right hand which was cut off in taking him close by the wrist with a scimitar; several of his *peons* were also killed and wounded in the skirmish, as also some of his women. Kissendasseat also stood on his defence, for upon sending a party of *peons* to fetch him, he bravely defended himself, drove them away, and took some of them prisoners, whom he treated very barbarously; however Lieutenant Blagg was detached with thirty men, who took him and all his arms; which was a very large quantity. In the meantime Monsieur Labaume, who was sent with seventeen men from Captain Clayton's battery to defend the Jail, was very briskly attacked by the enemy, who advanced on him through all the back lanes, and having possessed themselves of all the houses round about kept a very quick and smart fire; as likewise from behind every place they could find a shelter, upon which about 8 o'clock in the morning Captain Clayton detached Ensign Castairs (who had that day received a commission) with a corporal, six volunteers, and two field pieces to reinforce them at the Jail; posted a serjeant and six men at the top of Lady Russell's house, and a serjeant and 16 men at the

¹ Probably refers to the 'Bread and Cheese Bungalow.'