MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

IAARN DEPURE INE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON THE

AFFAIRS

OF .

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY;

AND ALSO AN

APPENDIX AND INDEX.

IV.

Judicial.

rdered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
16 August 1832.

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EXTRACT from the REPORT of the COMMITTEE.

IN the Judicial Department such Evidence, oral and documentary, has been taken, as seemed best calculated to exhibit the actual state of the Judicial Administration in India, during the period which has elapsed since the last renewal of the East India Charter.

Shortly after the passing of the Act of the 53 Geo. 3, c. 155, important alterations were introduced into the Judicial Code of the Madras Presidency. The Regulations of the other Presidencies have also been modified at various times, in several particulars; and in Bengal changes of great extent have succeeded each other at recent periods.

The Inquiries of Your Committee have been directed to the nature and extent of those several alterations, the success that has attended such as have been for some time in operation, and the anticipations formed of the probable effect of the more recent measures.

In the prosecution of this branch of their Inquiries, much valuable information has been received as to the nature and causes of the delays in the administration of Civil and Criminal Judicature; the forms of proceeding in the Indian Courts; the duties and qualifications of the Vakeels or Native Bar; the mode of taking Evidence; the efficacy of Judicial Oaths, and the credibility of Native Testimony; and the Costs attending the prosecution and defence of Civil Suits. Inquiry was also made into the efficiency of the Criminal Courts, and the duties and qualifications of the Mahomedan Law Officers, whose opinions, or verdicts, were required to be taken in all trials before the Courts of Circuit.

Your Committee directed their particular attention to the question of what alterations it might be necessary to introduce into the system of Judicial Administration if Europeans should be permitted to resort freely to India, and to settle themselves in our Territorial Possessions. Connected with this subject was that of the preparation of a Code of Laws defining rights more distinctly than has yet been done, and laying down principles which should govern our Judicial Tribunals in adjudicating on questions of tenure, inheritance, succession, and contract, and the expediency of establishing Legislative Councils abroad, or the best means of otherwise providing for the preparation of local enactments calculated to ensure the pure and speedy administration of justice.

The System of Education employed for preparing the Civil Servants of the Company to discharge the various and high duties which devolve upon them, and more especially those of a judicial nature, has been inquired into. The Investigation embraced the studies at the East India College at Haileybury, and particularly that portion of them which was dedicated to the acquisition of the principles of general and particular Law; and it was extended to the System of Instruction prescribed to Writers on their arrival in India, and the course of their employment and promotion in the several branches of Indian administration.

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both Civil and Criminal, being a subject of peculiar interest and importance, minute inquiries were made into the extent to which Hindoos and Mahomedans had heretofore been engaged in those functions; the education by which they had been prepared for their duties, and the effect of national habits and feelings on their moral character; the nature of the institution denominated "Punchayet," its resemblance to that of juries or of arbitration; the fitness of natives to sit as jurors or as assessors in the courts, and their qualifications for discharging the duties of justices of the peace, exercising jurisdiction over Europeans as well as over their own countrymen.

To the oral Evidence, the chief points of which Your Committee have now briefly stated, they have added a considerable number of valuable Documents, which they have arranged in Classes.

Appendix 1.

The First Class consists of a series of Letters from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to their Governments of Bengal, Madras and Bombay, reviewing severally the operations of the Civil and Criminal Courts at those Presidencies.

Appendix II.

The Second Class embraces Discussions relative to the Measures recommended by the Home Authorities in 1814, and the operation of the Changes introduced into the Madras Code in 1816.

Appendix III.

The Third Class exhibits the grounds on which the appointment of the functionaries denominated "Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit" took place.

Appendix IV.

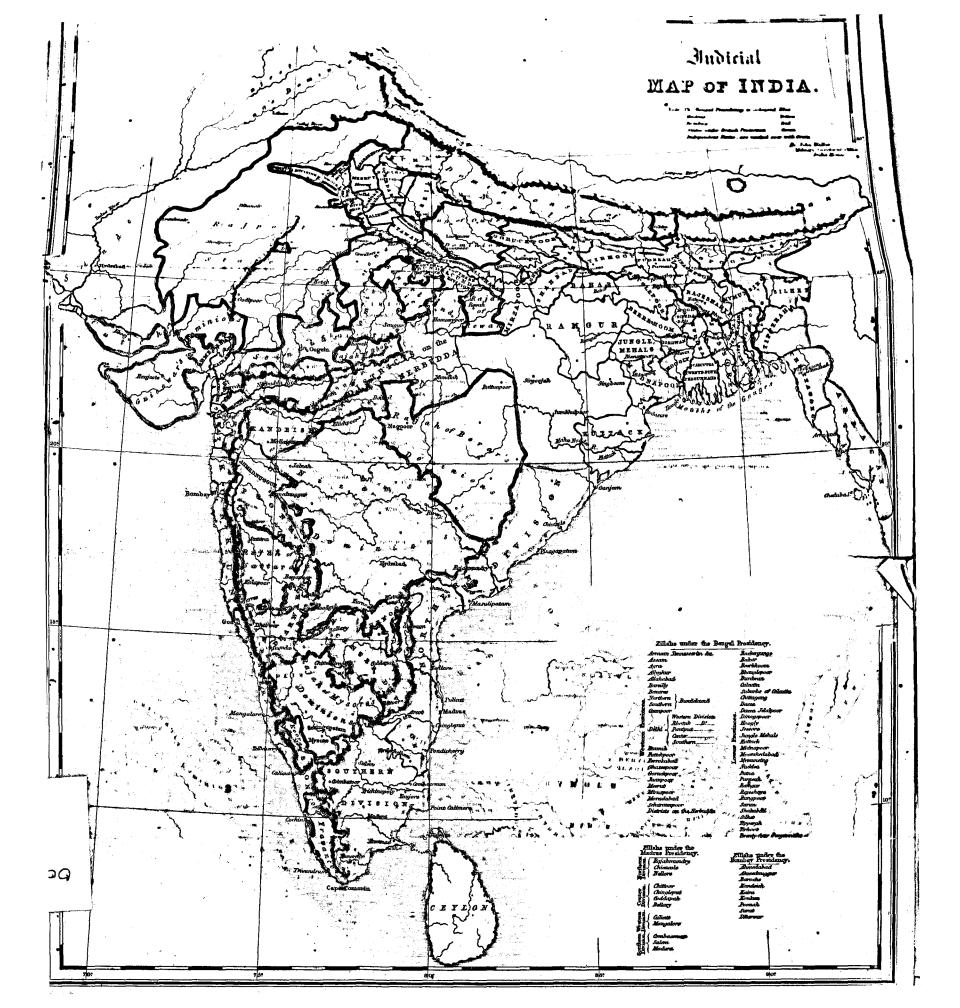
The Fourth Class contains important Documents relative to the alterations in the Judicial Administration, which were suggested chiefly by the Calcutta Finance Committee, and the Changes which have in consequence been introduced, or are in contemplation.

Appendix V.

As illustrative of the details of the foregoing Documents, Your Committee have added a series of Statements, some of which have been prepared in this country, and some in the office of the Judicial Secretary at Calcutta, showing the extent, operations and expense of the Judicial Establishments.

Appendix VI.

The Laws, to the consideration of which the labours of Your Committee have been devoted, being spread over a number of large volumes, which it is not easy to consuit, and it being frequently desirable to refer either to the course of legislation on the several topics of Local Law or Regulation, or to the subject of any particular Enactment treated of or referred to in any Document under consideration, Your Committee have caused an Abstract to be prepared of the Judicial Regulations of the Bengal Code (which has principally served as the text-book from which the Regulations of the other Presidencies have been framed), and, as the provisions of the Revenue Laws are found to blend themselves so intimately with those for the administration of Civil Justice, and the duties of the Collectors to partake, in so many instances, of a judicial character, the Committee directed the preparation of a similar Abstract of the Bengal Revenue Regulations. These Abstracts constitute the Sixth Appendix.



MEMBERS BEFORE WHOM THE FOLLOWING EVIDENCE WAS TAKEN.

Mr. Robert Grant.

Mr. Shiel.

Mr. Cutlar Fergusson

Mr. Serjeant Wilde.

Mr. Edward Stewart.

Mr. O'Connell.

Mr. Whitmore:

Mr. Bonham Carter.

Mr. Ewart.

Lord Viscount Milton.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Martis, 28° die Februarii 1832:	Veneris, 13° die Aprilis 1832:
Richard Clarke, Esq p. 1	Robert North Collie Hamilton, Esq. p. 68
Martis, 6° die Martii 1832:	Luna, 16º die Aprilis 1832:
Richard Clarke, Esq p. 7	William Butterworth Bayley, Esq p. 78
Veneris, 16° die Martii 1832:	Martis, 17º die Aprilis 1832:
Holt Mackenzie, Esq p. 13	Thomas Fortescue, Esq p. 105
Luna, 26° die Martii 1832:	Alexander Duncan Campbell, Esq p. 111
David Hill, Esq p. 25	Mercurii, 18º die Aprilis 1832:
Veneris, 30° die Martii 1832:	Alexander Duncan Campbell, Esq p. 115
David Hill, Esq p. 33	Veneris, 29° die Junii 1832:
Martis, 3° die Aprilis 1832 :	James Mill, Esq p. 119
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Thomas Fortescue, Esq p. 47	William Empson, Esq p. 128
Lunæ, 9° die Aprilis 1832:	Veneris, 6° die Julii 1832:
James O. Oldham, Esq p. 53	Sir Alexander Johnston p. 136
. Jovis, 12º die Aprilis 1832:	Jovis, 9° die Julii 1832:
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